






# THE CMO'S GUIDE TO: THE SOCIAL LANDSCAPE

				GOOD	OK	BAD
CLICK TO SORT	CUSTOMER COMMUNICATION	BRAND EXPOSURE	TRAFFIC TO YOUR SITE	SEO		
 <p>GOOGLEPLUS</p>	<p>An excellent way to communicate with your followers, unique Google+ features include Hangouts, enabling face-to-face chats that can be used in a variety of ways. Circles provide a way to place people in relevant groups.</p>	<p>With Google's new update to its algorithm, the majority of searches for brands are showing Google+ pages near the top. The same goes for all content and pages that have received +1s. Google+ now estimates it has 90 million users, of which 65 million are active.</p>	<p>Content is heavily shared and has an excellent chance of receiving traffic to individual posts. Also, the more +1s to your content and pages, the more likely you will reach the top of the SERPs due to Google's favoring pages and sharing.</p>	<p>Receiving +1s to both content and pages has shown significant SERP increase. This is an excellent tool for brand management as well as content promotion for SEO purposes.</p>		
 <p>TWITTER</p>	<p>It's advisable to use keyword and brand search monitoring through programs such as Social Mention and HootSuite to track what people are saying about you and your competitors. Find where these mentions occur to increase frequency of tweets.</p>	<p>The microblogging network offers unique opportunities for Web site integration and to engage with customers in a viral way. Twitter has become a must for all companies--both for branding and PR management.</p>	<p>The potential can be large, but promotion is an art form: Promote your brand too heavily and turn off followers, yet don't promote enough and receive little attention.</p>	<p>The value to your site's SEO is limited, but tweets will rank high in search results--good for ranking breaking news, though shortened URLs are of no benefit. Your profile page will rank high for its username. If you are a company or consultant with a brand or name to build, then use your name as your username because it will rank highly for your brand/name.</p>		
 <p>FACEBOOK</p>	<p>The social network is stellar for engaging people who like your brand, want to share their opinions, and participate in giveaways and contests.</p>	<p>You can jump-start your brand exposure through the ad platform, or hire a Facebook consultant to help you grow your brand presence.</p>	<p>Like Twitter, sharing on Facebook is increasing rapidly and providing both traffic and exposure for content. Traffic is on the rise thanks to share buttons and counters.</p>	<p>Liking content and business pages has shown an effect when searching on Bing. However, with Google, shares and likes of content seem to help in the SERPs for only a couple of weeks because of Google's freshness update. Of note, the platform can help you gain insight about user intent, which could aid SEO efforts.</p>		
 <p>YOUTUBE</p>	<p>Whether you seek to entertain, inform, or both, video is a powerful channel for quickly engaging your customers, responding to complaints, and demonstrating your social-media savvy.</p>	<p>YouTube can be one of the most powerful branding tools on the Web when you build your channel, promote via high-traffic sites, and brand your videos.</p>	<p>Traffic goes to the videos. If the goal is to get traffic back to your site, then add a hyperlink in the video description.</p>	<p>The video network is very good for building links back to your site because videos rank high. It's also a tried-and-true way for your brand to gain exposure.</p>		
 <p>SLIDESHARE</p>	<p>An awesome communication method for companies, slide decks are uploaded and easily shared with users. You can embed a deck on your site and promote it on SlideShare's site.</p>	<p>SlideShare is a fantastic place to further promote your brand. Tip: Upload a deck here before you present or share it, and then put the SlideShare URL in your deck, encouraging your followers to share it. This can help your deck reach the front page of Slide- Share and gain broader exposure.</p>	<p>Think of this site as a YouTube or something similar in terms of how it would drive traffic to your site. Traffic typically stays on SlideShare, though slides are allowed to be embedded within a Web site to increase views and shares.</p>	<p>All links are nofollow, providing little SEO benefit. SlideShare accounts rank well for individual and/or brand names.</p>		



QUORA

Quora is an exceptional way to communicate with high-level customers: Those who want or share info will be found here, as will those who want to share their expertise.

The site is a little more of an individual branding tool than one for corporate. So for individuals to brand themselves as experts, Quora gets an A, but as a corporate tool, not so much.

Most traffic will remain on the Quora site. Links can, and usually are, prevalent in the answers and can lead to traffic if it's a popular discussion.

All links are nofollow, providing little to no SEO benefit. However, questions and answers can provide useful insight on new content ideas, which can be used for promotion via various other social networks for your site.



DELICIOUS

The site is intended for people to bookmark content. With the recent addition of stacks, users can follow brands or subjects they like and can now interact with each other.

There's not enough ongoing brand recognition to make Delicious worth your while, unless you want to be known for providing reference content for later retrieval.

It's not as big as it used to be, but informative, massive reference pieces bookmarked for later use can net you a few thousand recurring monthly visitors.

Pretty much everything about the site helps: When your page is bookmarked, it's a direct link back to your site. However, bookmarking has stagnated with the browser buttons going on ice and submissions working only through bookmarklets. Stacks might increase link and social activity, but it is minimal.



DIGG

Communication is not the site's primary strength, though occasionally an objective third-party write-up can serve as a PR effort. The recent addition of Newswire allows users to follow the brands/stories they read the most.

Opportunities are still big, especially for promoting objective press/blog coverage of your brand. It also shows users/readers that you're active in the social space.

Traffic to Digg (and, subsequently, your site) has continued to decline, even with changes to structure and algorithm. Traffic will still come in a large flux, but not as much as it used to.

Due to decreased activity on Digg, referral traffic from the site has also gone down. An active Digg account can still show in Google's SERPs for a brand name.



FLICKR

Spending too much time here is unnecessary, though properly tagged photosets of company events can help customers put a face on the team behind your brand.

Participation in industry-related groups might get your photos and, thus, your brand, viewed by people with similar interests, but the numbers will be small.

Even if you get tens of thousands of visits to a photo hyperlinked with your URL, clickthrough rates are among the lowest around.

Flickr is heavily indexed by the search engines. With the right optimization, images can rank well in Google Images. This can go a long way for local and small businesses. However, links are nofollow, providing little, if any, link juice.



LINKEDIN

Though no LinkedIn's primary focus, customer engagement opportunities are possible by answering industry-related questions. Doing so can help you establish yourself as an expert in the field.

The platform is effective for personal branding and demonstrating your organization's professional prowess. Encouraging employees to maintain complete profiles to strengthen your team's reputation is advisable.

LinkedIn is unlikely to drive any significant traffic to your site. Still, you never know who those few visits might be from perhaps a potential client or customer.

Expect a very high page rank almost guaranteed on the first page of search results especially for individual employees' names. Business pages can also rank well.



REDDIT

The community is fickle, and anything perceived as spam will be destroyed. However, when you look deep into the site's categorized "subreddits" to unearth small niche communities, you could get surprisingly valuable feedback.

You won't find much branding opportunity here because most stories are from major news sites, while the remainder are images uploaded to Imgur. Many of the stories that reach the front page are images or memes. Subreddits offer a better chance to promote your story to fewer, more interested viewers.

If Reddit loves you, then traffic is superb. Tens of thousands of old Digg users are finding refuge here, and the site is seeing phenomenal amounts of activity. But be careful: Push too hard for votes from your friends and risk being banned, yet don't push at all and you'll wind up with nothing. Karma is a big deal here, so those seeking it as a primary objective will get shunned.

Make the front page and many reputable sites will pick up your story, generating valuable backlinks and extending trust to your site. The downside is Reddit users are notorious for loading your images to Imgur and then resubmitting, leaving you left unattributed.



STUMBLEUPON

Paid StumbleUpon traffic can be a very targeted method of communicating, but whether you're reaching your existing customers is purely random and costly to determine.

A paid campaign can be good for brand awareness, especially following efforts to get free, organic traffic to your home page. Targeting is very accurate, but keep in mind you're paying 5 cents per visit (\$50 CPM).

StumbleUpon enables a diverse range of people to discover your content and share links via the su.pr link shortener on Twitter. Tagging helps, but you don't want the same people repeatedly giving you a thumbs-up.

When your story makes it to the top page of its tag, there's reason to celebrate. The site's large user base enables many people to find and link to your stories. For vanity name searches, profile pages rank well, too.



PINTEREST

Pinterest is not a platform used for directly engaging in conversation with new or existing customers.

The site can be very good for brand exposure. Users can follow your account and share your pins with their followers. This site is an absolute-must for brands involved in food, fashion, and art; if your company can share itself through visual methods, then you need to be on this site. Contests also have started catching on, encouraging visitors to pin their favorite products from their Web sites.

With proper technique, Pinterest traffic can generate immense amounts of traffic to your site. Adding "Pin It" buttons to your pages is key in getting people to share it with their friends and followers.

Pinterest recently nofollowed its links, so any link value has significantly decreased. As of publication, the links added in the description box are still followed, but they will likely PINTEREST follow the nofollow suit.



INSTAGRAM

No communication exists within the site itself.

This serves as an excellent way to show images of product and/or services. The API allows images to be displayed on Web site. It's also great for a promotional campaign or contest.

Nonexistent.

None. Most sharing of images will be to the Instagram site rather than your own.