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# ***EXTREME DIGITAL MARKETING!***

## **Social Media...**

### **The Impact On You And Your Business!**

## **By Lon Safko**



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# About The Author

## LON SAFKO

Lon Safko is a remarkably creative person. He is the creator of the “*First Computer To Save A Human Life*”. That computer, along with 18 inventions and more than 30,000 of Lon’s papers, are in the Smithsonian in Washington, D.C. He has created numerous hardware and software solutions for the physically challenged, developed the first CAD software for civil engineers, designed the archetypes for the Apple Newton & Microsoft’s Bob Operating Systems. He is also responsible for those handy little Tool-Tips help-balloon pop-ups!

Lon been recognized for his creativity with such prestigious awards as; The Westinghouse’s *Entrepreneur of the Year*, Arizona Innovation Network’s *Innovator of the Year*, The Arizona Software Association’s *Entrepreneur of the Year*, twice nominated for the Ernst & Young / Inc. Magazine *Entrepreneur of the Year*, and The Public Relations Society of America’s, *Edward Bernays, Mark of Excellence Award*, and nomination as a Fellow of the nation’s Computer History Museum. Lon has also been featured in Entrepreneur Magazine, PC Novice, and Popular Science Magazines just to name a few. Lon was recently selected by the Smithsonian to represent “*The American Inventor*” at their annual conference.

He is the founder of nine successful companies, including Paper Models, Inc., which uses downloadable three-dimensional models in business advertising, promotions, and education, which is being considered as an acquisition.

Lon is an author of remarkable breadth, writing five innovative books. His books have shown corporations how to train managers to think creatively, detailed the secrets of launching a successful on-line business, offered advice to new home owners on reducing building costs, and related amazing stories about the serendipity of life. His latest book with John Wiley & Sons “The Social Media Bible,” unlocks the mysteries of the hottest new Internet wave, Social Media, such as Facebook and YouTube. This book is transforming corporate and non-profit marketing strategies and how they use these new media to reach their desired audiences with power messages and efficiency.

Lon is a professional speaker, wowing audiences in a hundred cities nationwide with his insights into innovation, creativity, and how to a successful entrepreneur / intrapreneur in this global digital age. Said one executive of First American Title Insurance, “This is the best seminar I’ve been to in 25 years.” Teledyne said Lon’s seminars are “Informative and entertaining, packed with useful information.” And the U.S. Postal Service called Lon’s seminar “inspiring and motivational.”

Lon also privately coaches Fortune 500 companies on harnessing Innovative Thinking to create higher productivity and profits. These on-site visits and personalized presentations help corporate, government, and non-profit executives improve their operations and performance by capturing the innovative potential now wasted or overlooked. As Lon says, “When you start to see your world in a different perspective, you see new ways to do everything!” Lon Safko sees the world in a new way every day.

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# An Introduction

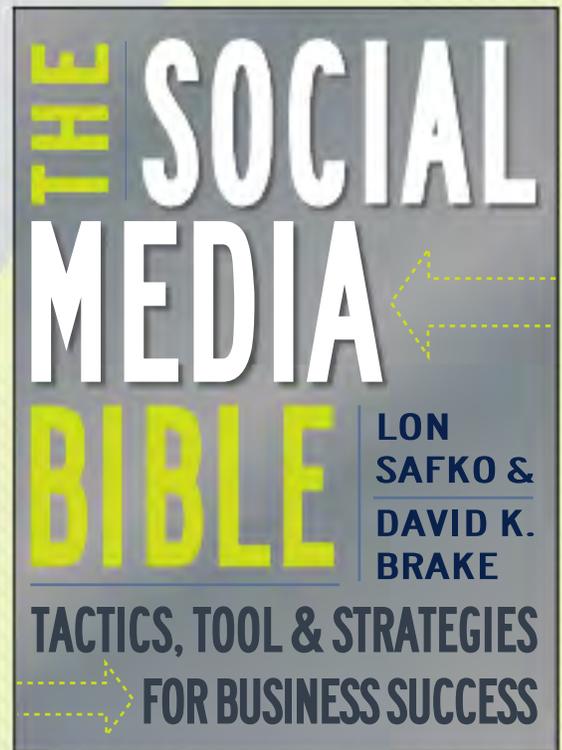
Let's talk about social media. Really, what the purpose is is to let you know that I'm a businessperson much like everybody in the audience. And I've had to figure this stuff out, I mean from marketing right through social media, throughout my career over the last 25 years.

I've formed ten companies and I am running three companies...I'm the CEO of three companies. Luckily they're Internet companies which makes it a lot easier because I don't have employees and the Internet is easier to manage. But I had a responsibility to my partners and shareholders of these companies a couple of years ago to try to always stay on the very cutting edge of marketing. So what I needed to do when I first heard about social media is investigate it and see if it had any...if it warranted my understanding of it in application for my companies. And that's really what drove me.

And then, of course, when I started getting into it and understood the value and the way that social media marketing is going to change (and is already changing) the way we market and the way we do public relations...so as soon as I found out about social media I realized the importance of how I was going to change the way I was going to market my business and do communications and do sales. And that's why I got involved in it.

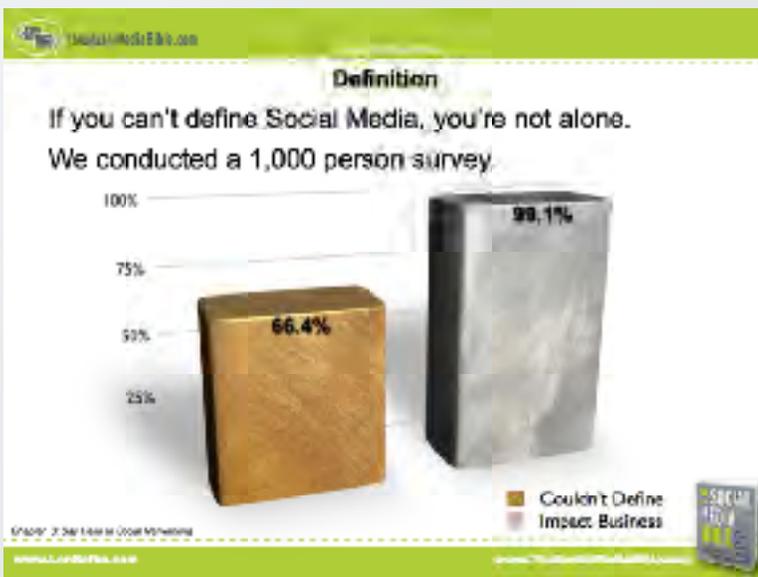
And I was so excited; I wrote the book on it. And that's my enthusiasm and I just wanted to share that with you because it's important. It's going to stay here.

Now the definition of social media...when I first decided to do the book I was like, "Oh my gosh, what if I just use social media to design the book on social media?" What if I actually when out to 1,000 people and asked them what they want to see in a business book? And the first thing that I did was we ran this poll and I said, "How many people, first of all, can define social media. And then how many people think it's going to have a significant impact on them and their business over the oncoming years?"



Now this was a fairly sophisticated group; combined annual income of over \$120,000. Everyone of them had some kind of a degree; a lot of PhD's, business people, CEO's in particular; and a lot of academia because I wanted that group because they're the ones that are responsible for the strategic planning of their companies.

And here's what we found; two interesting statistics. The first one: 66.4% of the people we



surveyed said that they could not define what social media is. Now if you are sitting in the audience and you cannot define what social media is, don't feel bad. Two-thirds of the people that we polled said that they couldn't. And I think that the remaining third was just lying about it. (Laughter)

Trust me, after writing an 844-page book, I'm still struggling with defining what social media is and how to use it. The other thing that was interesting is that

99.1% said they knew it was going to have an effect on them. So let's put it in different terms. Everybody...almost 100% of the people knew it was coming after them, but 2/3's didn't know what it was.

So, you know what? If there were any two statistics that sold the book, that's what sold the book. People want to know what it is. Or a marketing company, "Let's brainstorm and guess what our customer's want to hear."

Rather than doing that, why don't we just (I know this is going to be crazy, so just hear me out) ask the customers, "What made them buy? Why did they participate? Why did they get engaged in your brand?"

If you understand that better, they trust you. You can communicate in a way that they want to be communicated to. User-generated content...



# So What IS Social Media?

I've formed ten companies in my career and I am currently the CEO of three companies. Luckily they're Internet companies, which make them a lot easier to manage because I don't have employees and mostly utilize virtual-electronic-retailing. I have an ongoing responsibility to my partners and shareholders to always stay on the very cutting edge of marketing and sales and grow these companies. A couple of years ago I first heard about social media. I asked around to all of my "techie" friends in the industry and was told, "Social media, ah, just another buzzword, a fad. There's no substance".

I had a feeling that it was more than just a fad and I began studying it to see if it had any relevancy and if it warranted my understanding of its application to my companies. I quickly realized that I was on to something. I began to understand the value of each tool and the way that social media marketing was going to change (and has already changed) the way we market and communicate with our customers. I realized that I was going to have to change the way I marketed my business. I understood there was a lot of power in this new media and I wanted it to be part of my skill set. I knew that Social Media was here to stay.

I became so excited about the vastness and versatility of this new medium, I began preaching and spreading the word to everyone I knew. That's when I realized I had to write The Social Media Bible; an 844-page, three-part book on Tactics, Tools, and Strategies.

When I first decided to write the book I thought to myself, "What if I used social media to

design the book on social media?" We went out to 1,000 people and asked them what they wanted to see in a social media business book? I engaged my customers, utilized "wisdom of the crowds", or "crowd sourcing". We ran a poll and first asked, "Can you define social media? And, secondly "Do you think social media is going to have a significant impact on you and your business?"



This was a fairly sophisticated group; combined annual income of over

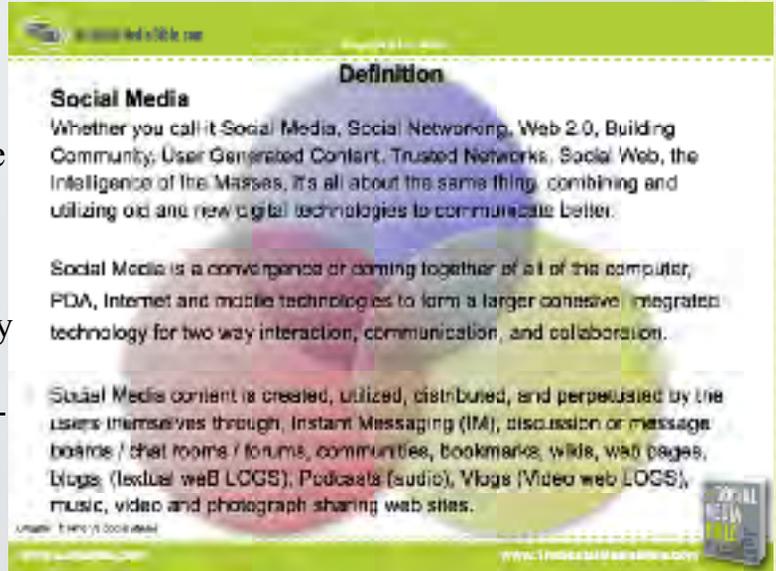


\$120,000. Everyone of them had some kind of a degree; at least a Bachelor's, many with Masters, and a lot of PhD's. There were business people, CEO's in particular; and academia. I wanted these groups because they're the ones that are responsible for the strategic thinking and planning.

We found two interesting statistics; first: 66.4% of the people surveyed said that they could not define social media. If you are reading this and thinking to yourself, I cannot define what social media is, don't feel bad. Two-thirds of the people we polled said that they couldn't define it. And I

think that the remaining third was just lying about it.

Even after writing an 844-page book on social media I'm still struggling with defining what it is and how to utilize it. The other interesting statistic was that 99.1% said they knew it was going to have a significant effect on them and their businesses. Let's summarize these two



statistics in different terms. Everybody...almost 100% of the people knew it was coming after them, but 2/3's or more didn't know what it was. If there were any two statistics that could sell a book, these were those. People wanted to know what social media was.

What is the definition? Whether you call it social media, social networking, Web 2.0, user-generated content, trusted networks... It's being "social", communicating using technology as a media. Most of this terminology has come from people





who have written books and tried to wrap their brains around the concept of social media. They all coin their own phrases. But really, it all really means the same thing.



Social Media falls into three categories. The first one is digital convergence. For the first time in history everything works together. I've been in the computer industry since 1975 and a common joke was that computer industry had so many standards. Isn't that an oxymoron? You're not supposed to have a lot of standards; you're supposed to have one.

Well, that's what we had up until recently. Now, you when send a jpeg, you can see it in your PDA, you can open it in your Blackberry, you can view it in your laptop,

and it goes through your email. If you're going to run an mp3, you can hear it on your iPod, play it from your laptop, and listen to it on your cell phone. All the digital media now is working on all of our technologies. That was the first breakthrough; digital convergence. The cell phone is the single most important piece of technology that's driving this convergence. More on this in another blog.

The second category is social networks. It could be MySpace, FaceBook, LinkedIn... it can even be virtual environments such as Second Life or games like World Of Warcraft or Halo3.

In Social networks the keyword is "social". It just means people you hang around with. Because you are here right now reading this blog, you and I have this in common. We're both networking, communicating and we're both part of this social network. It's just that easy.

Now we have places on the Internet where we can go and join other like-minded people who have similar interests.



# Which Social Media Tools Should You Use?

During research for writing the The Social Media Bible, I investigated more than 200 social media companies and technologies. This is why most everyone is so overwhelmed by social



media. There's just too much of it. I suppose that's why the most common question I get asked is; "Where do you start?" There's good news, you only need to know about three to get started and be successful. That's all. So get out there, pick a couple, and try them. See, which ones will work for you and just narrow it down. Then when you get good with that, then just simply expand to the next, and to the next. But the key is not to get overwhelmed, because it's really a wide landscape.

I want to give you a couple of take-a ways, some digital technology that you may or may not be aware of, that I use on a daily basis. Remember, social media is about socializing using media.

The first one is AOL-AIM... America-On-Line Instant Messaging. You could also use Skype-Oprah does! One of my companies tising, and my two partners are based out of San Diego while I am in Phoenix. Every morning when I turn on my desktop it automatically logs into my AOL-AIM account. When my partner gets online it simply says he's there. I can instantly type something... and he gets the message, he communicates back with me... and we have real-time text communication going back and forth, all day, as long as we want. And I can do this with 20 people, we can conference, and it's absolutely free. Amazing! I don't have to pick up the phone; I don't have to make long-distance calls.



Maybe texting is a little cumbersome for you. If so, you just simply click a button and you can talk to your computer, assuming you have a built-in microphone. It's just that easy, and in





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my case, instantly I am actually talking with my partners in San Diego, real time. It's as if I'm on the telephone, all day. I have an open long-distance line; it's called VOIP, voice-over-Internet-protocol (you don't have to know that, just that it works). I'm just talking as if I'm in the same room. Kind of makes my wife nervous from time to time, when I'm all alone in my office and I'm talking to myself. But it's really an effective way to communicate.

Now if you want, you can click the button again and if you have a built-in video camera you can now see the other person. We just did a conference call with somebody in Edinburgh, Scotland, exactly the same way. Absolutely free! Why would you make a long-distance phone call for the rest of your life when you can automatically text, speak or video, 100% free!

How often have you read a marketing blog where somebody kept telling you that, "Everything that we are going to share with you is 100% free?"

That's what's so amazing about Social Media! Real time, live video conferencing just with the click of a button, anytime you want, absolutely free!

Another piece of technology I count on is Google Alerts! Go to Google and type "Google Alerts" or got to <http://www.google.com/alerts>. google alerts You do need to have a free Gmail account first. If you don't have a Gmail account, please when you are finished reading this have someone counsel you on why Gmail is a good idea. It's also free! But with a Google Alerts you can set up an alert by typing in any text you want, and anytime, anyplace in the world that the text is mentioned, you get an instant email notification.

Add your name, add your company name, add your products, add your services. Anytime anybody in the world creates a blog or a Webpage, you instantly get notified with an active link. People are going to talk about you and it's not just your schizophrenia talking here. People are going to say things about you. They are going to say good things; they might say something that's not so pleasant. Don't you want to know what that is? Don't you want to participate and be aware of those conversations that are taking place with and without you?

You can, just by setting free Google Alerts. I have one for "Lon Safko", one for "The Social Media Bible", another for "Innovative Thinking". I have an Alert for all of my buzzwords. Anytime somebody writes about it, I go right to the blog, I introduce myself, I comment, and I begin to build a relationship because we have something in common, trusted networks! Networks build trust. Trust builds business.



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# The Twitter About Twitter

Twitter is one application of a broader category called microblogging. You've seen it in the View, you've watched it creep into night time dramas, you've heard it in the news, you've seen Larry King take on Ashton Kutcher with their one million follower challenge. Ashton Kutcher got over one million followers and beat Larry King / CNN. Ashton with 1,230,000+ and CNN had 980,000+ where the match actually bought malaria nets for children in Africa. Isn't this a great application of social media; helping kids!



Then of course, that led to the Ding-Dong Ditch where Ashton Kutcher “punked” Ted Turner the owner of CNN. If you're not familiar with the Ding-Dong Ditch; you ring someone's doorbell, then when answered, you begin throwing Ding-Dongs, literally. CNN lost, so they bombed his house with Ding-Dongs. I guess that even Demi was Ding Donging with the rest of them.

Back to discussing Twitter. Twitter is text messaging on steroids. Recently, I was in Atlanta presenting to a group of Jerry McGuire's clients (Leigh Steinberg), and there were more Super Bowl rings in the room than I had ever seen. I made the same statement and this crowd went dead. Steroids...not a good thing; the moral is, know your audience.

On Twitter, you voluntarily select to receive text messages people that you respect so you follow them and people who respect you receive your text messages or follow you. Anytime you get an inspiration or something intelligent to say, send out a Tweet. When others have something intelligent to share (and sometimes not so intelligent) they Twitter it and you get it. This way you're instantly informed. That's all there is to it.

At my most recent conference, we had a Twitter Roll on a separate screen at the front stage. It was a laptop connected to the Internet that simply received any text messages sent via Twitter that mentioned the conference. That way anytime someone in the audience had something to say about what was being presented or have any questions, I could address them immediately.



A phenomenon I recognized for the first time, we had as many questions from the conference audience on the screen as we had from people from around the world, not at the conference. I'd answer their questions and people would Tweet my answers back out to the Twittersphere.

Everyone keeps asking me about Twitter metrics; how can you make money using Twitter. Whether it's Twitter or any other social network, it takes time to build your trusted network, but when you do, they're there for you. Here's one case study that is easy to see the ROI. If you haven't already seen Gary Vaynerchuk, you have to go and look at some of his videos. <http://tv.winelibrary.com/> Gary has produced nearly 700 videos about wine. He's a Jersey boy. He took over his Dad's wine distributorship, which had annual revenues at about \$5M. He started using Twitter and creating short, self produced videos about wine and within 36 months built his company to \$50M. And recently he signed a \$1M contract to write a series of ten books on social media marketing. That's the power of this genre. Click here to listen to my conversation with Gary V: <http://www.thesocialmediabible.com/2009/02/27/gary-vaynerchuk/>

In December Gary wanted to understand the value of his twitter relationships. He wanted to specifically compare conventional marketing that we are all comfortable with, with this new, Tweet stuff. He started by creating three different codes that when entered on his wine web site would give the customer free shipping on their next wine order. This discount would range from \$9 on one bottle of wine to \$49 on a case of wine. He then created a direct mail piece, which offered one of the codes. He did a billboard on one of the local highways with it's own code; and then he sent out a text message (a Tweet) with the third code. Here are the results.

The direct mail piece cost him \$15,000 to produce and mail. We've all been there; \$15,000 is a reasonable cost for a decent direct mail campaign. This conventional marketing technique acquired Gary 200 new customers. He got 200 new customers for \$15,000 using direct mail. The ROI or Cost Of Customer Acquisition was \$15,000 divided by 200 or \$75 per new customer. His billboard cost him \$7,500 and he generated 300 new customers. His ROI or CCA here was \$7,500 divided by 300 customers or \$25 per new customer.

His one free text message, a Tweet using Twitter, brought in 1,800 new customers. This marketing was 100% free. What was the ROI here; \$0 divided by 1,800 customers or infinity. That's the power of Twitter. That's the power of social networks. That's why this stuff is so important. People follow you, people trust you. They'll listen to you when you communicate.



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# Social Networks Are More Than Networking

Social networks, there's a lot of them out there and you're being invited to participate in new ones every day. There's MySpace, FaceBook, LinkedIn. There's eCademy, Plaxo, Ning, Bebo, Friendster. Jaiku, Orkut, Tumblr, and moore than I can mention here. The question is, which



ones do you use? Which ones are the most important? It depends on who your demographic is and what's in you strategic social media plan. Start with MySpace, FaceBook, and LinkedIn.

Let's look at some of the numbers for the more popular social network sites. Facebook has more than 150 million members with more than 80 billion page views each month. Facebook is represented in 170 countries & territories, every continent, even Antarctica, and is available in 35 different languages. More than 1 in 5 peo-

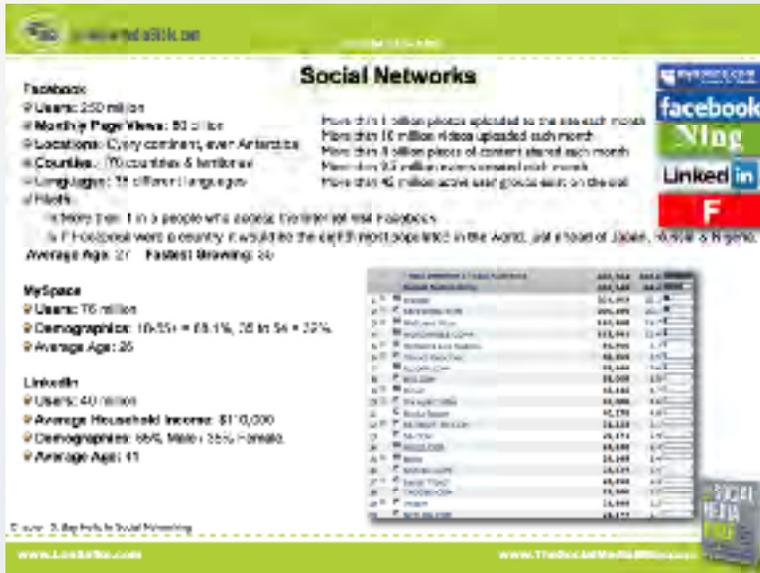
ple who access the Internet visit Facebook. If Facebook were it's own country, it would be the eighth most populated country in the world, just ahead of Japan, Russia, & Nigeria. Just put that in perspective for a second. And, it's not just kids, the average age in Facebook is 27 years old and that number is rising. Now, why is all that so important? As a marketing person, as a sales person, as a person who's responsible for the growth of his companies--if there's some place where I can have access to 150 million people and I may have something in common with them, I want to be there.

MySpace, on the other hand, has more than 76 million users in the U.S. and 120 million people worldwide with an average age of 26 years old. 88.1% of its members are between 18 and 55 years old and the 35 to 54 year old demographic is at 32%. It's no longer just teenagers using MySpace. I had a conversation with Angela Courtin, the Senior Vice President of Marketing Entertainment & Content For MySpace and she explained that MySpace is different things to different people. Angela clarified the misconception about MySpace being just for teenagers. Angela told me that 85% of MySpace users are over the age of 18 and that 40% of all moms online, are on MySpace. Angela explained how MySpace and Disney teamed up to launch High School Musical 3, engaged more than 4,000 schools and had an opening day box office of



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over \$40 million. She also shared how small businesses are benefiting from MySpace MyAds and where one small business increased its revenues by 200%! Click here to listen to that audio interview: <http://www.thesocialmediabile.com/2009/02/27/angela-courtin/>



And finally, LinkedIn is used as a professional directory and has more than 27 million users with an average household income over \$110,000. The gender distribution weighs heavily toward males at 65% and 35% Female with an average age of 41 years old. When I spoke with Krista Canfield, Public Relations Manager for LinkedIn she told me about the many ways people are connecting with other professionals using LinkedIn. She explained about the not so obvious applications of LinkedIn and how a company was actually

acquired by the Weather Channel. Click here to listen to this audio interview: <http://www.thesocialmediabile.com/2009/03/03/krista-canfield/>

When you think of participating in any social network, you have to look at it as if you are at a party or networking event, an event or party with 150 million people attending. Now, is MySpace the right place for your business? Probably not. Certainly Facebook. I do like FastPitch, which is like a professional directory for your company. And absolutely LinkedIn! You have to be in LinkedIn. LinkedIn is a professional contact list. More than once, I relied on LinkedIn to make contacts during the research for writing The Social Media Bible. LinkedIn succeeded where all other marketing attempts failed.

You might be thinking, “I don’t want to fill out all of those profiles on all of those sites. While it’s true that filling out all of those profiles in all of those networking sites can be tedious, having your profiles completed is important. You can use OpenSocial to make it easier. I interviewed Kevin Marks, Technology Advocate, Google - OpenSocial who headed up this incredible multi-corporation, multi-language automated system for propagating information into your new profiles. Kevin explained how OpenSocial is changing the way “trusted networks”, work. OpenSocial created a standard on how personal profiles, data bases, and trusted networks share information while protecting 350 million users from repetition and password fraud. Click here to listen to that audio interview: <http://www.thesocialmediabile.com/2009/03/03/kevin-marks/>

Have we completely figured out how to best utilize social networks to increase our company’s bottom line? Not yet, but we are discovering new ways every day. One thing for sure, if you want to win, you have to be in the game.



# Virtual World Real Presence

Linden Labs is the creator of Second Life the most popular virtual world on the Internet. Are you a “Lifers” are you “On The Grid”? Second Life is like a video game except you don’t kill anyone. It’s not the first person shooter that your teenagers are blasting brains out of. Second Life is fun and it can be a serious business tool. The 18 to 25 demographic is 25% and the 40 to 50 year old is the largest demographic coming in at 19%. What’s the 35 years old and older business age demographic? 52%!

When your little cartoon critter is walking around, you actually meet other little cartoon critters. Those are called avatars. But the cool thing is they are not generated by a lifeless computer. Those are real people in different parts of the world. And you can walk up to them and “text-talk” with them. Or you can turn on your microphone / speakers and actually speak with them. How cool is it to just walk up



to somebody and start a conversation... and they’re from Brazil? Or they’re from Germany. Or they’re from anywhere in the world, even Antarctica.

Currently, there are sixteen million seven hundred eighty-five thousand members of Second Life. Any place that there’s sixteen million people, I want my business to be. Doesn’t that make sense? Isn’t that a marketing huge watering hole? Our SLURL (pronounced Slur-El for Second Life URL) is: <http://slurl.com/secondlife/Pinastri/215/8/21> How cool is that? You can go in there, you can walk around, you can watch videos, listen to music, and you can read part of The Social Media Bible (it’s in there). Or, if you want, you can just sit back, have a cup of coffee, and listen to the waves and seagulls because it’s beachfront property.

We actually have offices in Second Life. We own a Mediterranean mansion where the first floor is our Three-Dimensional-Internet-Advertising store, and on the second floor is our corporate headquarters for The Social Media Bible. We are about to have the very first virtual book signing in Second Life where you can come by, get a condensed version of The Social Media Bible and I will sign it for you. So absolutely powerful!



Now, have we as an industry figured how to monetize it? We're in the process. There's companies like Adidas, Ben & Jerry's, BMW, Calvin Klein, Circuit City, Coca-Cola, Crowne Plaza, Dell Computer, Domino's Pizza, who has a presence there, and that's only the first four letters of the alphabet. IBM has this incredible virtual facility where they bring people in from all over the world (not on airplanes, that's not green), but they bring them into Second Life. Engineers from Boca Raton, New Castle, NY, and Japan, can actually network and talk, introduce each other, and exchange ideas. Then all sit down in a virtual auditorium and see a PowerPoint presentation.

Nobody ever leaves his or her offices, as there's no downtime. It's all virtual in Second Life. If you've never been there, go do it. It's absolutely free, and it's cool!

When I am "In World" I often wear my CNN shirt and hat and when you see me, you can tell I'm pretty buff. Hey, that's my avatar and it's going to look the way I want it to look. You've got full control so if you want to turn back the clock a little bit, that's okay. The reason I can wear the CNN logo is when I was researching The Social Media Bible I interviewed nearly 50 of the top CEO's, Founders, and Senior Vice-Presidents, Microsoft, Google, Flickr, YouTube, Google, MySpace, even Biz Stone, the Founder of Twitter. So, if you want to know why Twitter is important he tells you why in his own words. Click here to listen to the interview I did with Biz Stone: <http://www.thesocialmediabible.com/the-experts/>

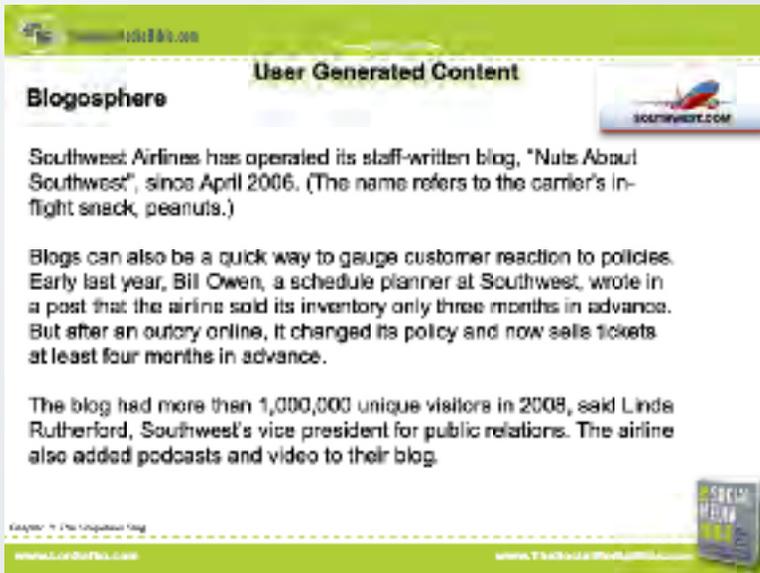
When I got to interview Mark Kingdon, who is the CEO of Linden Labs who created Second Life, I asked him if I could do a telephone interview with him (an audio podcast), he told me, "No." And that was the first person that refused, so I was kind of a little confused. Mark said that, "I won't do it over the phone, but if you meet me in Second Life, I'll be happy to do the interview."

We invited about 30 people; it was invitation-only, and at 11 o'clock Mark Kingdon's little cartoon character walked over to me while I was sitting, in The Social Media Bible Virtual Garden. He walked over, introduced himself as the CEO of Linden Labs and we had a one-hour interview including video, which you can view on YouTube; just go to YouTube, type in Lon Safko/Mark Kingdon. It's absolutely amazing! It was so amazing I didn't realize that one of the people in the audience was from CNN and later that night we were on the home page of CNN News, and we actually made the CNN Cable Channel. It's was the first CEO interview every to take place in a virtual world! <http://www.ireport.com/docs/DOC-108852>. To watch the video from the CNN web site, click "next" below the picture.

# Blogs Are Not Just Web Logs

A blog is the most important thing that you can create for yourself and for your company. It provides an environment that promotes two-way communication with your customers, your prospects, and establishes you as a thought-leader in your field. Blogging is free, it's easy, and it doesn't take much time.

The best way to explain why blogging is so important is to cite a few examples of companies



that have realized exceptional success using blogs. The first is this airline you might have heard of, the only one profitable, Southwest Airlines. The company created a blog a couple of years ago and what I really love about it is the name of their blog; "Nuts About Southwest." Get it? Nuts about Southwest.

Southwest Airlines has gotten more than one million visitors to its blog. One million visitors? Honestly, who cares what Southwest has to talk about? All I want

them to do is get me from city to city, get my bags there, give me some nuts, and leave me alone. But, you know what? One million people cared enough to go and see what they had to say about their airline and comment, participating in their company and their brand.

What would you me pay right now if I told you I had a secret to get one million people to your homepage? What would you pay me? Write the check. I just told you. And the implementation and tools are free. That's the wonderful thing about social media, the tools are all free. You just need to invest some time and some creativity.

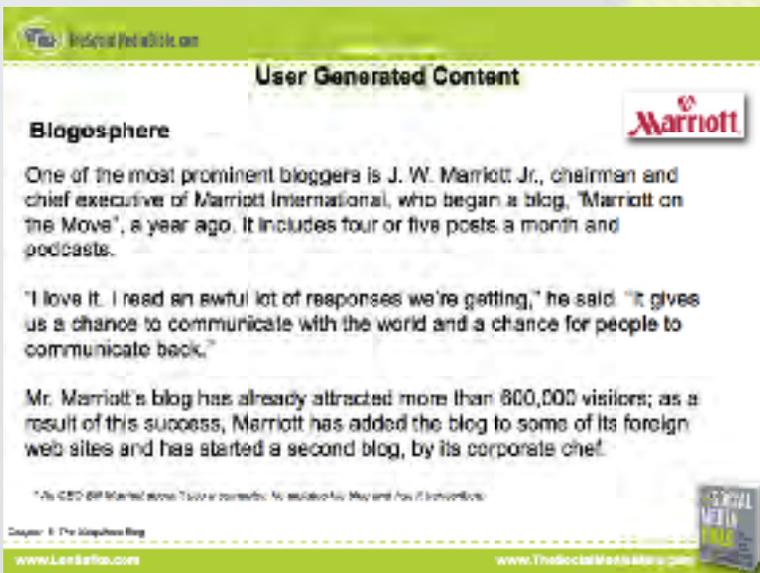
Here's another example of the power of blogs: A hotel chain by the name of Marriott. Ol' Bill, J. W. Marriott's Chairman; is still running the company. Excuse me for saying this, but he's one of the old dogs, like me, over 50. And Bill's a little bit uncomfortable with technology. As a matter of fact, Bill has never turned on a computer in his life. But that doesn't stop him from writing his blog each week. Bill does it by using a digital recorder. He dictates his blog and gives it to his admin to simply transcribe and post.



Six hundred thousand visitors last year: They tell him the good stuff that Marriott is doing, so they can keep doing it; and they tell him the bad stuff that they are doing so that they can fix it.

What is that worth to you and your company? To actually hear from your customers, in a non-confrontational cooperative environment, what they like and what they would like you to do different. And it's free. You have to communicate with, not to your customers. They're going to start a conversation with or without you. Why don't you control that conversation?

When I began researching blogs for The Social Media Bible, I heard a rumor that the search engines were giving blogs preferential treatment in their indexing. For the last several years I taught search engine optimization, and search engine marketing in more than 100 cities each year. I know that Google and Yahoo! take about 12 to 14 days from the time you create a new webpage until they index it. Twelve to fourteen days to index your page.



**User Generated Content**

**Blogosphere**

One of the most prominent bloggers is J. W. Marriott Jr., chairman and chief executive of Marriott International, who began a blog, "Marriott on the Move", a year ago. It includes four or five posts a month and podcasts.

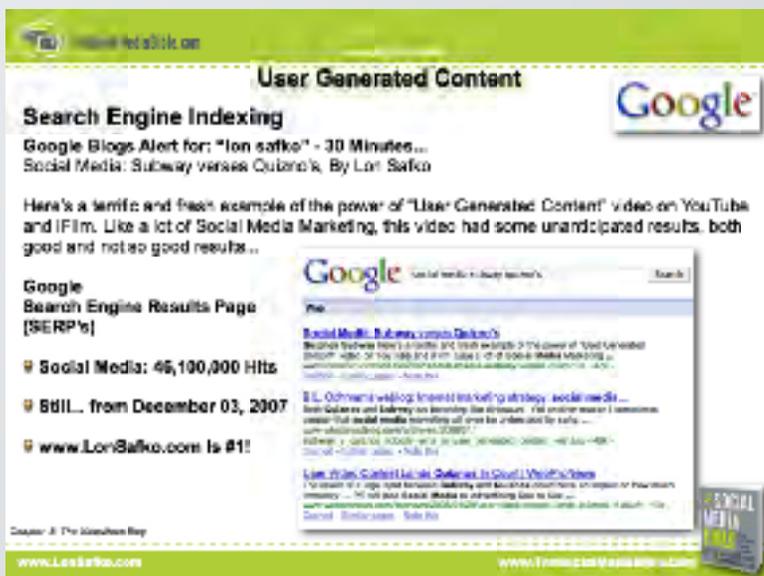
"I love it. I read an awful lot of responses we're getting," he said. "It gives us a chance to communicate with the world and a chance for people to communicate back."

Mr. Marriott's blog has already attracted more than 800,000 visitors; as a result of this success, Marriott has added the blog to some of its foreign web sites and has started a second blog, by its corporate chef.

The CEO of Marriott says: "I love a community. It's essential. We need it for it to work."

Source: *The Blogosphere Blog*

www.LonSafko.com www.TheSocialMediaBible.com



**User Generated Content**

**Search Engine Indexing**

Google Blogs Alert for: "lon safko" - 30 Minutes...  
Social Media: Subway verses Quizno's, By Lon Safko

Here's a terrific and fresh example of the power of "User Generated Content" video on YouTube and iFilm. Like a lot of Social Media Marketing, this video had some unanticipated results, both good and not so good results...

Google Search Engine Results Page (SERP's)

- Social Media: 46,100,000 Hits
- Still... from December 03, 2007
- www.LonSafko.com is #1!

Source: *The Blogosphere Blog*

www.LonSafko.com www.TheSocialMediaBible.com

To test out the preferential treatment of blogs, I created a test blog called, "Subway vs. Quiznos." This is about where Subway was suing Quizno's for defamation of sandwich. This is under the category of social media gone wild. I created this blog on December 3, 2007. I had already set up Google Alerts for "Subway." Thirty minutes from the time I hit "publish," my blog page was indexed by Google and I was sent an alert. Thirty minutes! Not 12 to 14 days. To view the original blog, click here:

<http://www.lonsafko.com/2008/02/02/social-media-subway-verses-quizno%E2%...>



If you type in “social media,” that term gets more than 46 million hits (last count), so that’s not what will take you to my page. And if you type in “Quiznos Subway,” Fortune 1000 companies, that’s not going to narrow it down either. Don’t use my name, that’s too easy. If you type in ”Social Media Quizno Subway”, I come up #1 in Google. Not just on the first page, but in the #1 position. And, I have been in the #1 position on Google for those four key words since December 2007. What would you pay me or your webmaster to get you the #1 position on Google and keep you there since December 2007? That’s the power of blogs.

Blog pages are created from HTML code, but the interface is incredibly easy to use. It’s as easy as creating a word document. A blog page template can look exactly the same as an HTML Web page, except it can actually have more features (widgets & plug-ins), than does standard HTML. My 101 page website was HTML that I first



built in 1994 and I continually added on to it. When I saw the power of the blog from an SEO perspective, the next morning I formatted my server. I actually erased 100% of my website and I recreated it, the entire website, using blog software (WordPress). Now anytime I add a page, anytime I make a change to a page, Google indexes me in 30 minutes with priority preference. Does that have any value to you?

To hear Matt Mullenweg, the founder of WordPress and I talk about the power of WordPress, click here: <http://www.thesocialmediabile.com/2009/02/27/matt-mullenweg/>

Now, I’m not recommending that you go out and erase your corporate Web pages, but I am certainly telling you to add a blog to your Web site and start blogging. Blogs are powerful.



# Bad Marketing Is Better

Now I'm not recommending that you go out and erase your corporate webpages, but I am certainly telling you to add a blog to it and eventually phase it out. You can quote me on this. In four or five years there will be no such thing as HTML anymore. This is going to be the programming language of the future because of the power; because of the preferential treatment.

Blogs are powerful.



Okay. I want to show you a couple of videos of some stuff that actually happens out there using social media. And this is something called Seismic, which is kind of like Twitter for text messaging, except this allows you to do the same thing with videos. Now, as a marketing person, and teaching marketing all the time, you know what I'm supposed to tell you. Your marketing materials have got to look perfect. You have to have the spell check; you

only have one shot at a first impression.

Okay, let's switch over now to social media. Your marketing materials have got to suck. (Laughter) I'm sorry...they suck. And you know what? The worse they are, actually the better. Now that doesn't mean that you go and you mess up your homepage and your brochures. They have got to be perfect. But when we're talking about social media, the worse the better. And the reason is that if you're going to produce, let's say, a television commercial. It's going to cost you anywhere from \$50-\$250,000 to create that commercial. Trust me, if you're spending \$250,000, or even \$50,000 to create a commercial, don't you have a hidden agenda? Aren't you trying to sell a message?

Well, of course you are. That's the purpose. Don't you think that you audience is wise to this, that there's an agenda attached with the production video; or anything that you're going to spend money on? You've got to get an ROI. But when your ROI...when you cost is zero with social media, you're real. You're transparent. Plus, this video that you're about to see actually was transmitted.



Robert Scoble is one of the most prolific bloggers in the world. Twenty-three thousand blogs every thirty days, he reads. Twenty-three thousand blogs! And he works for Fast Company. It's a magazine and a website. And he went to this party and he stuck his video camera in this guy's face. He was the Vice President of a company and he said, "Tell me what you do?"

And the guy was like, "Uh, umm, okay." And when you see the video you'll see how awful it is. But what I want to tell you is that that was transmitted around the world within seconds; and over 50,000 people viewed it in the first three minutes.

Here's the video... (we're here at the Fast Company party....."I manage all the content at.....and over the last year I have been working with.....)

Here's an interactive part of the ebook...

## **GO TO:**

**[http://www.LonSafko.com/vlog\\_and\\_video\\_downloads/Bad\\_Marketing.mov](http://www.LonSafko.com/vlog_and_video_downloads/Bad_Marketing.mov)**

Watch the video and return...

Okay, could that be any worse? You cannot see it, you cannot understand it. But you know why it was so effective? It's because I got to see it within three seconds of when it actually took place. There was no editing, there was no hidden agenda. I got to see it...instantly! I'll watch this...this is real...this is transparent. That's the difference between conventional marketing and social media.

***Real. Transparent. Authentic. Sincere.***



# Customer Collaboration

Here's another one. Cold Stone Creamery. Anybody into Cold Stone? Yeah! It's pretty awesome, huh? Okay, Lee Knowlton, Vice President...friend of mine. We were having coffee and I said, "So what did you do when you went to Cold Stone?" He said, "Well, the first thing I did was I looked at what we did last year. We took a satellite truck around the country (he didn't do it, his previous Vice President) and we interviewed people outside the Cold Stone Creameries, asking them what they thought about Cold Stone Creamery. Oh, it's really good.

It's sweet, it makes me fat, and I love it."



Okay. It cost him \$35,000 to do it. Completely ineffective. So what he decided to do is to Twitter and get people involved and say, "We're going to have a contest. If you participate and we pick the marriage of two flavors...you pick the two flavors that we have and we'll put the two of them together...and if we pick yours you're going to get free Sundae's, one a week, for a year."

So user-generated content...engaging your customers. So what happened? They actually created this little cartoon. Let me play part of the cartoon for you and you'll see what I'm talking about.

Here's the next interactive part of the ebook...

**GO TO:** [http://www.LonSafko.com/vlog\\_and\\_video\\_downloads/Cold\\_Stone.mov](http://www.LonSafko.com/vlog_and_video_downloads/Cold_Stone.mov)

(Barry White.....smooth sound, like ice cream)

Who is that supposed to be, singing? Barry White, isn't it? (Laughter) Okay, okay, we have a mixed audience. I've got to stop it there. (Laughter)

How cool is that? A Barry White kind of knock-off. But let me tell you something. They had 125,000 views in the first 30 days. They had 54,000 entrants. They picked not very exciting strawberry cheesecake, okay. But the point was they had T.V. interviews...they were actually on the Today Show for that. And they got 54,000 of their clients to engage in their product. And the entire campaign, including the voice-over and everything.... \$8,500....over the \$35,000 they spent the year before.



Will it blend? Tom Dixon is the President of a company called Blendtec. When you see the video you will see that Tom is not right in the head. There's a particular spot in the video that you'll recognize immediately. Tom is the President and what he did was he created a blender. But he wanted a good blender and it better be, because it's \$650 and it's a home blender, a residential blender.



Okay, so he is ready to release his product, he goes into engineering and he pulls one off the shelf and he wants to test it. Now, the number one cause of blender death in America is Margueritas. (Laughter) I'm not kidding you. People get drunk, they throw the carafe...no, actually the blender death is not people death, it's blender death because they are grinding ice. How many people here...come on...we're all friends now, we're all part of a social network...how many people burned out a

blender grinding ice for drinks? Yeah, see! That's what I'm talking about.

So this guy made this blender. So how's he going to test it? Well, he turns around, six o'clock at night...everybody went home...engineers are gone. So he's looking for something to test. How do you test the motor? So he steps out this door, he's actually in the parking lot and the yard-care guys have left a rake. So he brings the rake in and he turns this thing on, he puts it on puree, and jams this five-foot solid oak-handled rake into the blender. And he ground it down to the metal tines.

Now talk about the proverbial chips hitting the fan! (And I'm very careful...I practice that in my head before I say that) (Laughter)

They flew everywhere! So he's like, "Cool! It works! If it can grind a five foot oak handle, we're doing good."

So he goes home and the next morning engineering comes in and calls the police...thinks they're vandalized. So they find out, "No, that's just crazy Tom!" I guess he has a history of doing things that aren't right. And so everybody wants to see it actually in person. So he asks Tom, "Will you do it again?"



So they ask the Administrative Assistant to go down the hardware store and buy a rake; well, probably two rakes because they had to replace one they ate up the night before, on the yard-care guy. And there was an intern who was working in PR, for free. A young kid, had his digital video camera and says, “Would you mind if I videotape this, because this is funny stuff?” So he did. He videotaped it and he starts it up, puts it on puree...the chips are flying...everybody’s laughing. It’s hysterical. Okay, now here comes the punch line. The kid takes the video and puts it up on YouTube. Twenty-four hours...1,200,000 people watched their video, and within 24 hours they sold out of every single blender that they had. And what did that video cost? And here’s the funny part; what did they pay the kid who took it? He’s an intern, he didn’t get paid. But how cool is that? I’m going to show this.

Now he is not blending a rake. He had somebody go to the Apple store for the very, very first iPhone.

Here’s the another interactive part of the ebook...

**GO TO: [http://www.LonSafko.com/vlog\\_and\\_video\\_downloads/Will\\_It\\_Blend.mov](http://www.LonSafko.com/vlog_and_video_downloads/Will_It_Blend.mov)**

(Video....Will it blend? That is the question.....I love my new iPhone, it does everything, but will it blend? That is the question? Let’s find out. I think I’m going to push the smoothie button.....iSmoke.....don’t breathe this...now you fans on YouTube have asked me to blend an iPhone, so I did it. But I have another! Let’s put this on Ebay.)

(Laughter) Isn’t this great. I mean, come on! It’s hysterical! How about the numbers? How about 3,500,000 views. If I told you that I could market your company and I could get someone to watch your TV commercial...ask to see it...and I can get 3,500,000 people to watch it, would you hire me? Especially when I tell you you can do it for free. We can help. I mean, it’s all about knowing how to do this. Isn’t that amazing? Go to Utube, type in “Will it blend”...allow yourself 45 minutes because I guarantee you will not get away from the computer.

He blends diamonds, hockey pucks, golf balls, glow sticks, Barbie dolls, pens, video cameras, cell phones...any my very favorite is his tilapia shake....where he takes a full can of Coke, in the can, and a fresh tilapia fish and blends it into a shake, and drinks it.

(Uggggghhhhh....laughter) I told you he ain’t right.

# Sandwich Wars

Subway vs. Quiznos, social media gone wild. Okay, here's the deal with this. Quiznos says what if we had this engaging kind of a thing. Get our customers engaged in the brand. And what they said was, "Everybody's got a video camera, grab your video camera, create a 60 second commercial. If we like it, up load it to Quiznos. If we like it we'll make it our annual commercial. It will be cool and you'll get national fame. We'll make it a commercial.



Okay, now if anybody's from Boston you know what a southie is, and if anybody's Italian you know what a garvone is, and if you don't it's the people from South Boston. You'll see these guys are a sandwich short of a picnic...not the sharpest tool in the shed...a couple of bricks short of a load. And what they did is instead of uploading it to Quiznos, they uploaded it to Subway. Subway saw it and they put it on YouTube...54,000 views in the first 24 hours.

And when you see this video, you're going to see why Subway sued Quiznos for defamation of sandwich Here's the one more interactive part of the ebook...

**GO TO:** [http://www.LonSafko.com/vlog\\_and\\_video\\_downloads/Sandwich\\_Wars.mov](http://www.LonSafko.com/vlog_and_video_downloads/Sandwich_Wars.mov)

Can anybody understand why Subway, maybe, was less than pleased with that commercial? So they sued. They sued Quiznos. Now here's the cool thing. As soon as they sued Quiznos, the noise, the social media became a buzz and people started talking about it. Everybody started talking about it and before you know it everybody was looking at the video. The next thing you know the New York Times ran a front-page story...and that's how I found out about it. And Subway actually did more to promote this thing than Quiznos did.

So Subway was smart enough to hire some social media people and they said, "Dudes (I think they were from L.A.) ease back, man. This is social media. They were just having fun. You didn't do it. And they dropped the lawsuit, and what happened was Subway got so much good press for dropping the lawsuit they actually picked up market share.

That's what social media is about. Being transparent. Don't fight it, just go with it. And they finally admitted, "Yeah, we know your sandwich is as good as ours." So even if things go terribly wrong, then you can still recover and actually gain market share, and I see that time and time again.

# Customer Co-Production

This post is about Customer Co-production and asking your customers to participate in your offering. Who better to ask than your customers to get involved in your brand and to tell you the best way to sell your product to them? Just ask them.



When we began the very first research for The Social Media Bible we asked 1,000 people to participate. The first discovery was that they didn't want just another business book. A typical business book is 250 pages, 60,000 words, 20 chapters, 3,000 words per chapter. It's a formula. I've written five of them.

What they said was, "First, we want a business book that shows the tactics of social media." What are blogs? What's a podcasts? What's a Vlog? What's all this stuff about microblogging and Twitter?

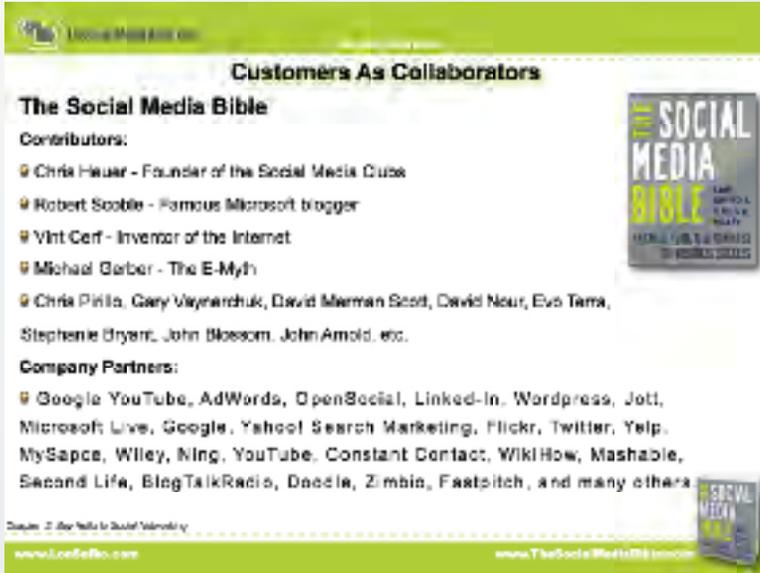
Second they wanted a guide. They told me, give us all the companies that actually offer all of these services; who are they, how did they start. Last, they wanted a third business book, which was a book on strategy. They said that "Now that I know the tactics and the tools, how do we apply them to their businesses? How do we develop a strategy?"

John Wiley & Sons is the publisher of The Social Media Bible. They began publishing when Thomas Jefferson was our President of the United States. They've been publishing for 202 years. During all of that time they have never published three books in one or have they published a book this large. The Social Media Bible is the largest book Wiley has ever published in 200 years, but in four days it sold out in six major metropolitan areas across the country and has been listed in the Top 100 Best Selling Books In America since it's come out.

Why, because, I asked my customers what they wanted. I got them involved and engaged. I can write a book anyway at all. My theory was just tell me what you want and if I give you what you want, and if I do that you're going to buy it. Isn't that what marketing is supposed to accomplish? Social media allows you to create a forum, an environment where you can bring the customers in as collaborators. Include your customers, and industry leaders as collaborators. In the book, I reached out to the top people in the social media industry throughout the world to talk about their personal experiences with social media. These include the biggest companies, the biggest individuals, and the most influential people on the planet.



Every one of them are people that are selling, using, and promoting social media.



Click here to hear more than 24 continuous hours of conversations with these industry giants.

<http://www.thesocialmediabible.com/the-experts/>

I simply went to them and asked them to participate in a book. Every one of these experts participated in three, four, five pages and even the editing of every chapter of the book. Get your customers involved that way. They are willing to do it; they are happy to do it. More than 300 people out of the 1,000 asked to partici-

pate as reviewers and collaborators. Ask your customers to participate in your brand, get them engaged, ask them to be collaborators in your offering.





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