CHAPTER 1

What Is Social Media?

Social media is the media we use to be social. That's it.

That really is the short answer. The story is in the tactics of each of the hundreds of technologies, all of the tools that are available for you to connect with your customers and prospects, and the strategies necessary to use these tactics and tools effectively.

Ask Your Audience

When I began writing this book I wanted to hear what my audience wanted in a book. I have written six previous books and I knew there was a standard formula for writing a typical business book: 250 pages, 23 chapters, 3,000 words per chapter. But I wasn't sure if this book should follow that formula. Did the audience for a bible on social media want a typical business book? So, I asked them.

I knew that if I asked my audience and delivered what they wanted, it would be a success. Go figure, ask your customers what they want in a product. Then, you told me some interesting facts. First, you didn't want another typical business book on social media. You asked for three books in one: Tactics, in which everything is explained; Tools, with which they can find a comprehensive list of all the companies providing social media services; and Strategy, with which you can apply all that you have learned from Part I and Part II.

This approach of listening to my customers obviously worked. *The Social Media Bible,* First Edition, sold out in the first four days across the country, has been among the top 20 best-selling books in America, and has hit the number two best-selling book spot in its category on Amazon.

theSocialMediaBible.com

The second fact I learned was from the first two questions on the survey, "Can you define social media?" and "Do you believe that social media would have a significant impact on you and your business?"

What I learned by asking my audience these two questions was that 66.4 percent said that they couldn't define social media and the remaining third lied. If it takes me nearly 50 chapters and more than 800 pages to define social media, they didn't know, not even the social media "experts" and "gurus."

The second really interesting fact I learned was that 99.1 percent, nearly everyone, said they knew social media was going to have a significant impact on them personally and their businesses.

These two statistics told me and the publisher that two-thirds of everyone interviewed didn't know what social media was, but that it was coming for them.

So What Is It?

The first part of the terminology, *social,* refers to the instinctual needs we humans have to connect with other humans. We have been doing that in one form or another since our species began. We have a need to be around and included in groups of similar like-minded people with whom we can feel at home and comfortable sharing our thoughts, ideas, and experiences.

The second part of that term refers to the *media* we use with which we make those connections with other humans. Whether they are drums, bells, the written word, the telegraph, the telephone, radio, television, e-mail, web sites, photographs, audio, video, mobile phones, or text messaging, media are the technologies we use to make those connections.

The application of the terminology *social media* in this book is about how we can use all of these technologies effectively to reach out and connect with other humans, create a relationship, build trust, and be there when the people in those relationships are ready to purchase our product offering.

What social media is not is a box of silver bullets given to us by aliens that will instantly solve all of our marketing woes and create instant wealth for all involved. Too many people are viewing social media as a foreign and strange set of technologies that they may or may not want to use to market themselves, their companies, their products, and their services.

In my keynotes, two questions always asked are, "Should I be doing social media marketing?" My answer is "Remove the term *social media* and ask it again. Should I be doing marketing?" See how ridiculous that sounds. The second question is, "How much should I spend on social media

marketing?" I reply with "Remove the term *social media* again. How much should I spend on marketing?" And, of course, the answer to both is "Yes, and as much as you can!"

Social media is only a new set of tools, new technology that allows us to more efficiently connect and build relationships with our customers and prospects. It's doing what the telephone, direct mail, print advertising, radio, television, and billboards did for us up until now. But social media is exponentially more effective.

Why Social Media?

The reason social media is so much more effective than the conventional marketing that we've done for the last 6,000 years is that it's two-way communication, not pontification. Since we've been selling goats in the desert, we would stand on a rock and shout out the features and benefits of owning a goat. And, if we chose our words correctly and hit enough of the audience's psychological hot buttons, our prospect would become a cus-tomer. Nothing has changed in 6,000 years. Until now.

There is what I call "A Fundamental Shift in Power." It's a shift from pontification to two-way communication and it's a shift about which we no longer control our corporate message. No longer does the consumer trust corporate messages. They don't trust and don't want to hear our commercials any longer. They want their information from people they know, have a relationship with, and share a bond with through trust. They want to be educated by, hear their news from, and get their product reviews by people they know and trust. They want to share their experiences, both good and bad, with people who trust them.

With this Fundamental Shift comes a new way to communicate. The new way to sell is not to sell at all. In fact, if you use social media to sell, you will get "flamed." Social media marketing is all about listening first, under-standing the conversation, and then speak last.

Social media marketing is like going to a networking event, a party, a trade show, sporting event, church, or anywhere that large groups of people gather. When you enter you will see small groups of three to five people huddled together. Let's now suppose we use our conventional marketing approach.

You walk up to the group, interrupt everyone, announce your name, and start telling everyone what you do for a living, what you sell, and that they should buy from you! It's the radio car commercials that yell at you from their echo chamber "Sunday! Sunday! Sunday!"; you've heard them. What will happen?

You probably will make everyone angry at you, everyone would walk away, and you might get slapped in the lips. Because that type of behavior in a social situation is completely inappropriate. Let's rewind and try the new marketing approach.

You enter the room, choose a group, walk up to that group and say nothing. You listen first. You understand what is already being said and when you have something of value to contribute to that conversation, you wait for a break, and politely share your ideas. The reaction to this approach is significantly better. At that moment you now become part of that group, that network, and you instantly have credibility and trust.

Then as the conversation continues, eventually someone will ask you, "So, what do you do?" Bingo! Now you can share what you do, a little about your product or service, and pause. Someone in that group will more than likely ask another question about your company or its offering, and if someone in that group is in the buying part of the *sales funnel,* he will ask for your card and you have made your sale. If he isn't in the *buy* part of the funnel, he will remember you when he is. Isn't this why you go to networking events? Marketing using social media is exactly the same. More on the sales funnel later.

Whether it's a social network like Facebook or LinkedIn, Twitter or blogging, it's about participating in that conversation and being there with a relationship when your prospect is ready to buy.

As you can see, social media is completely different from standing on a rock and shouting your message, but it really is a more natural and more comfortable way to sell. By building relationships through social media, you build a more lasting trusted relationship that will result in more sales, fewer returns, and greater word of mouth.

Remember the statistics from my Customer Concentric 101 presentation? Studies have shown that: An angry customer will tell up to 20 other people about a bad experience. A satisfied customer shares good experiences with 9 to 12 people. It costs five times as much to get a new customer as it does to keep an existing one. And customers will spend up to 10 percent more for the same product if they have an existing relationship.

Word of Mouth at the Speed of Light

The statistic that "An angry customer will tell up to 20 other people about a bad experience . . . ," that's face to face. With the use of social media like blogs, Twitter, and Facebook, those 20 people can quickly become 20,000 or even 200,000!

Here's an example about Dave Carroll, a country and western singer and songwriter who had an unpleasant experience with United Airlines and used a video on YouTube to "tell a few people." At the time this chapter was written, Carroll's telling of his story to "a few people" through social media had grown to 8,380,000!

On March 31, 2008, Dave Carroll and his band, Sons of Maxwell, were flying on United Airlines from Nova Scotia to Nebraska when just after landing in Chicago O'Hare, a passenger sitting behind Carroll noticed the baggage handlers throwing his guitar around the tarmac. Carroll immediately notified three flight attendants, but "was met with indifference." When Carroll arrived in Omaha, he found his $3,500 710 Taylor acoustic guitar smashed.

Over the next several months, Carroll called United representatives in Chicago and India (go figure), who told Carroll that United wasn't responsible and would do nothing to help Carroll. Carroll spent $1,200 to repair his guitar, bringing it only "to a state that it plays well but has lost much of what made it special."

The last straw for Carroll was when a United representative, Ms. Irlweg, sent Carroll an e-mail denying Carroll his claim because he didn't file it in the right place or at the right time. United even refused to compensate Carroll by giving him $1,200 in travel vouchers.

Carroll told Ms. Irlweg that he would create a music video with his band and take it to the people using social media. Carroll then created a 4-minute–37-second complaint video called "United Breaks Guitars." Irlweg was unimpressed. The video was posted on YouTube on July 6, 2009, and within 24 hours received more than 500 comments and 24,000 views. To date, Carroll's first of three videos has been viewed by more than 8,380,000 people, while his three videos have had more than 9,500,000 viewers!

Here's Dave Carroll's web site where you can view all three videos and hear the story in his own words, www.davecarrollmusic.com.

That's what I call "Word of Mouth at the Speed of Light!"

Not all social media is used for complaints. Here's a personal story I have about airline customer service I experienced myself.

I was traveling with my public relations assistant while traveling back to New York last year on a press tour before this book was released. We had different flight times for the same day.

My flight was on time and uneventful, while hers was late leaving the gate. The gate attendant for Continental Airlines announced that her flight was running 15 minutes late, but they would board the aircraft as soon as it was serviced. She immediately took out her cell phone and Twittered a tweet "Continental Airlines, 15 minutes late. What else is new?"

They serviced the aircraft and began boarding. As she entered the aircraft, a flight attendant stepped up to her and asked, "Are you Ms. Vega?" When she replied yes, the attendant handed her a glass of Champagne and apologized for any inconvenience. OMG! That's customer service.

This never became a music video, but I have told more than 10,000 people, and I am sure that they have told their networks, who told their networks, and on and on. Just by mounting Twitter and listening to their customers, Continental received positive press that was exponentially the cost of the one glass of Champagne.

These are examples of two-way communications, listening to your customers, the power of peer-to-peer, Word of Mouth at the Speed of Light, and the Fundamental Shift in Power.

Other Customers

The most obvious use for social media is for marketing, sales, public relations, and communications. Remember, social media is about communicating with your customers. Social media is a set of highly effective tools for customer service, business-to-business (B2B), and internal communications.

Marketing and sales is in part responsible for prospects converting to customers, but in many cases it's what happens after the sales that encourages existing customers to purchase again and, as you read earlier, encourage prospects to become customers. An angry customer will tell up to 20 other people about a bad experience. A satisfied customer shares good experiences with 9 to 12 people. If you are in customer service, social media is a must. It's the perfect tool for staying connected with your customers after the sale.

B2B

If you are a company that sells B2B (business-to-business), then social media has to be an integral part of your strategy. I have been in marketing for nearly three decades and while many insist that B2B is significantly different from B2C (business-to-consumer), I disagree. There are some subtle differences, but in B2B, the second B is still a C. The reseller is still a consumer or customer.

I agree that there is some information that should be between you and your reseller such as pricing, training, and customer support, but the majority of your conversation would benefit your end user. Set up a password-protected web site and direct SMS text messaging for that content and freely distribute the rest.

Internal Customers

Don't forget about your internal customers, your employees. They want to feel like they are connected and part of the organization. Social media is an amazing set of tools that allow you to communicate directly to and with your employee base. Use Yammer as an internal, behind-the-firewall Twitter for text messages only your employees can read. Use Jott for team collaboration. Use video sharing for messages from the corner office, the "C" suite. Use photo sharing for all of your employees to exchange photos, ideas, memories, and a sense of team. Use audio podcasts in human resources to give employees updates on benefits, retirement, and their 401(k).

15 Social Media Categories

Another innate human characteristic is to put items in categories; the more items there are, the more there is a need to organize them. You can see my attempt to categorize the entire world of social media in Table 1.1. This was not an easy feat, but I think you will agree it works.

Table 1.1   The 15 Social Media Categories

Category Title	Tactics Chapters	Tools Chapters
Social Networking	Chapter 2	Chapter 23
Publish	Chapters 3–8	Chapter 24
Photo Sharing	Chapter 9	Chapter 25
Audio	Chapters 10–11	Chapter 26
Video	Chapters 12–13	Chapter 27
Microblogging	Chapter 14	Chapter 28
Livecasting	Chapter 15	Chapter 29
Virtual Worlds	Chapter 16	Chapter 30
Gaming	Chapter 17	Chapter 31
Productivity Applications	All Chapters	Chapter 32
Aggregators	Chapter 18	Chapter 33
RSS	Chapter 18	Chapter 34
Search	Chapter 19	Chapter 35
Mobile	Chapter 21	Chapter 36
Interpersonal	Chapter 22	Chapter 37

Category Descriptions and Their Tools

As you can see from the preceding table, these categories translate nicely across both Parts I and II. For example, in Part I, Tactics, Chapter 2, I discuss social networking in great detail, while in Part II, Tools, in Chapter 23, I present all of the major players in social networking.

Category 1: Social Networking

Social networking is as old as humans have been around. Just as in nearly every other species, humans have an instinctual need to be with, communicate with, and share thoughts, ideas, and feelings about their daily lives. Only the tools with which we communicate have changed over the millennia.

This category discusses the many platforms we use today in social media to connect, share, educate, interact, and build trust.

Category 2: Publish

The ability to accurately publish or record our conversations to pass on to future generations is a relatively new concept. For thousands of years, stories containing myths, legends, laws, and mores of a group or society has been passed down through oral reiteration, or storytelling. There have been clay tablets, papyrus, hieroglyphs, handwriting, the printing press, movable type, lithography, computers, desktop publishing, print-on-demand, forums, e-mail, web pages, blogs and comments, text messaging, photo and video sharing, voicemail, and Twitter; what's next?

Category 3: Photo Sharing

Napoleon Bonaparte is sometimes credited with having expressed the idea that "A picture is worth a thousand words," and if that's true, then Flickr's photographs are worth, well $4,000,000,000 \times 1,000$ . . . way too many zeros for me! Flickr now houses more than four billion photographs, and that doesn't count Picasa, SmugMug, PhotoSwarm, or the many other photo sharing sites.

Ever since there were photographs, people were sharing them with each other. Sharing photos are a way of capturing moments in time, which captures the emotions that we can share with others. Simply by looking at a photograph we get a rush of emotions, memories, and a recollection of that very moment that we can share.

Category 4: Audio

Audio is a very powerful medium. It's easier to digest than text and evoke mental images that video doesn't allow. Do you listen to the radio? Have you ever heard a book on CD? Have you ever heard Edgar Allan Poe's work read aloud?

Audio allows us to sit back and allow the author or orator to slowly spoon-feed us content with inflection, dramatic pauses, and human nuances of him being right there in the room speaking to us. While we listen to the cadence of the words being formed into sentences and thoughts, we can imagine the associated images and watch them play out in our minds to form the story the author is trying to portray.

Category 5: Video

If a picture is worth 1,000 words, then at 25 frames (pictures) per second, video adds up to 1.5 million words per minute! That's why everyone loves video!

Video is the preferred choice of medium for relaying information overall. After a hard day at work, do you pick up a book, turn on the radio, or settle down in front of the television for a good movie or uplifting sitcom? Most likely we turn to the television to coast through some nightly brain candy.

People love video because it's the next best thing to being in the same room with someone who is sharing his or her knowledge and experiences. You can hear the words, imagine the images she is conveying, and also watch and become involved in the video that is taking place at that moment. We can see what the author is explaining, and become emotionally involved in the scene. We can hear the actors' inflections while experiencing their facial expressions and body language. It is estimated that 55 percent of all communication comes from body language, while 38 percent from voice, and only 7 percent from the words themselves.

Category 6: Microblogging

Microblogging is no more than text messaging on steroids. With the demise of Pownce, for the most part we're talking about Twitter for open text communication and Yammer for internal or behind-the-firewall communication. The reason for Twitter's success was best put by Samuel Clemens (Mark Twain), when he said in the late nineteenth century, "I apologize for the length of my correspondence. Given more time, it would have been shorter."

We love the 140-character bite-sized messages because we can read and comprehend them in about five seconds. In that short amount of time, we can fully understand what the writer is trying to convey. With text messaging, you don't have the opportunity to drone on and on as we do in our e-mail correspondence. With Twitter, we read it, comprehend it, and move on.

Category 7: Livecasting

Livecasting isn't for everyone, but those who livecast are passionate about it. My friend Jody Gnant livecasted her life for nine full months, 24/7. Chris Pirello has been uStream'n his livecast of himself for years. Both have built a tremendous following and skyrocketed their music and careers.

Livecasting is broadcasting video live. It could be 24 hours a day or just for a simple one-hour television show. Livecasting is the ultimate in reality television and it's available for free to everyone. So if you've always dreamed of creating and starring in your own television show, the companies in this chapter can help you realize your dream.

Category 8: Virtual Worlds

When organizations such as the American Cancer Society, CNN, Dell, Disney, Harvard, IBM, MTV, Reuters, Starwood Hotels, Sun Microsystems, Toyota, and Wells Fargo are all participating in virtual worlds, there must be something to it.

The American Cancer Society has actually raised $650,000 in real dollar donations during their time there. IBM holds their monthly engineers' meetings at their headquarters in Second Life where engineers from all over the world meet, talk, exchange ideas, and watch presentations.

I have some oceanfront land and a two-story Mediterranean mansion in Second Life in which the first floor is a virtual store where you can purchase three-dimensional Internet advertising (paper models). My three developers meet me there from time to time to discuss projects and design ideas. They are in the Ukraine and I have never met them face-to-face other than our time in Second Life.

Category 9: Gaming

Online gaming may seem like an odd category for *The Social Media Bible,* but it really isn't. Did you know that 17 million people are playing Halo 3 or an additional 17 million playing World of Warcraft? Any time you can measure a target audience in the millions, you need to be there.

Many Fortune 1000 companies have participated in gaming as a way to build brand recognition. Hewlett-Packard puts up billboards in auto racing games. An author friend of mine had a game developed for his web site for the release of his new book that cost only a couple of thousand dollars, but now has an 18 percent conversion rate on buying his book. And mobile phone game apps is one of the fastest-growing app categories for smart phones.

Category 10: Productivity Applications

The companies highlighted here offer the widest range of features of any category in *The Social Media Bible.* These are all part of the wide range of productivity tools. These tools include event management, VoIP telecom-munications, peer to peer downloads, alerts, word processing and spread-sheets in the cloud, and even online surveys.

Category 11: Aggregators

In this chapter of the book, I highlight Aggregators, web sites that allow you to choose what type of content you want to see, where you want it to come from, present it to you all in an organized page, and do it automatically all of the time. Aggregators allow you to see all of the new blogs, web pages, news, audio, photo, and video updates all in one convenient web page location. This is like having an automated worldwide web clipping service and news agency at your fingertips. And, it's free.

Category 12: RSS

RSS, or Really Simple Syndication, is the name of the technology and also the name of just one of the technology providers. An RSS feature on a blog or web site allows you to sign up and automatically get notified whenever there is an update to the site including a new blog or news. Rather than having to go from site to site every day checking to see if new content has been posted, RSS notifies you when it has. RSS automatically feeds you new content from only the sites you want it from, and only when that content is new.

Try RSS by clicking the RSS button on your favorite blog site or try the Google landing page that aggregates RSS feeds from blogs, web pages, airlines, weather, or any changing information of interest to you.

Category 13: Search

Internet search is one of the most important functions of the Internet. How else would you be able to find the one page you are looking for out of the one

trillion Google-indexed web pages? SEO, or Search Engine Optimization, is as important as ever. And, as the number of web and blog pages grows, search will become even more integral to your Internet experience and to your customers and prospects.

If you want your customers and prospects to be able to find you and your company, you have to make it easy for them. SEO, tags, fresh content, external reputable links (Link Love), and keyword density, all add to your company's web and blog pages' Google Juice.

Category 14: Mobile

Mobile marketing is the fastest-growing segment of technology-driven marketing. Kakul Srivastava, the general manager for Flickr, told me that there are three cell phones for every man, woman, and child on the planet. With that kind of technology penetration, you and your company needs to be participating.

Mobile phones are less expensive than laptops, desktops, and broadband, and are completely portable. Not many people in Third World countries can afford to have an Internet-connected PC, but they can all afford a mobile phone. It's through this technology that people from around the world are staying in touch with one another, accessing their e-mail, sending photos, audio, video, blogging, and surfing the Web.

Category 15: Interpersonal

This is another category of seemingly unrelated technology. The common thread, however, is that they are all tools that allow you to connect and communicate with your customers and prospects. Some companies provide the means to host a meeting for your employees or perform a webbing for 1,000 people. Some allow you to use the Internet like a free telephone service. Others allow you to convert your voice into text messages to be sent to your e-mail and other team members.

The ROI of Social Media

Pioneer's Holiday Promotion Achieves 60 Percent Click-Through Rate (CTR) Using Forums to Target Influential Automotive Enthusiasts

Background

Advertisers face the same dilemma every holiday season: How to be visible when consumers are inundated.

Strategy

Pioneer Electronics (USA) Inc. overcame that hurdle with room to spare. A holiday-themed rebate offer for Pioneer In-Dash Navigation models achieved a 60 percent click-through rate by using PostRelease to target automotive enthusiasts in online forums.

Implementation

PostRelease provides an automated way to insert sponsored posts into relevant forum discussion threads.

Pioneer Electronics turned to PostRelease to help promote its holiday rebate offers for its new flagship AVIC-Z110BT and AVIC-X910BT navigation systems. The two companies crafted a sponsored forum post that included product images, direct links to the product web pages, and the rebate page on Pioneer's web site.

The campaign ran as a sticky post—meaning the post remained in the lead position—in relevant audio-related discussion categories in 55 automotive-themed forums, from November 2 to November 9, 2009. The post was clearly marked as from PostRelease and Pioneer and, once unstuck, moved down the page as a regular forum post would. It remains part of the forum content for the life of the forum.

Opportunity

People on product-related online forums are ripe audiences for product-specific messages and offers. Consumers visit these types of forums expressly to discuss products, so they're open to relevant sponsored messages and they're more likely to respond.

Conclusion

The one-week campaign continues to drive traffic even after completion, because PostRelease posts remain archived and accessible for the life of the forum.

In fact, sponsored forum posts, clearly marked as advertisements, increase in ability to drive response over time—by an average of more than 100 percent one year after a paid campaign has ended, according to an analysis conducted by PostRelease. After 60 days, the total number of click-throughs increased by an average of 40 percent, and after 180 days, they increased by an average of 77 percent.

(*continued*)

The reason for this residual traffic: forum posts contain content that can be discovered in search engine results, driving traffic to the ad not only from the audience of the forum in which it appears, but also directly from organic search listings.

Consumers don't have to be browsing a particular forum to discover an advertiser's message there. If a post offers useful content, it's likely to show up when it is relevant to a consumer's search for information—boosting traffic to the ad and to the forum. The click-through rates increase over time because posts are discovered by people who are actively searching for that content, and therefore are highly motivated to click through.

See one of Pioneer's posts here: http://g35driver.com/forums/g35-37-sedan-v36-2007/313580-200-rebate-pioneer-navigation-holiday-rebate.html#post4671215.

The top five forums to generate the most clicks and reads for Pioneer's holiday campaign were ClubFrontier.com, Camaroz28.com, DuraMaxForum.com, Z06Vette.com, and 300CForums.com.

No other online medium gives advertisers as precise a target as forums do.

Justin Choi
www.PostRelease.com

Justin Choi is president of PostRelease (www.PostRelease.com) and author of the white paper "Online Forums: Social Marketing with Proven Results." He can be reached at justin@postrelease.com.

Expert Insight

Peter Booth Wiley, chairman of the board, John Wiley & Sons, Inc.
www.wiley.com

Not only is this book about social media, but the creation of the book is a form of social media. . . . This is a pioneering piece of work. It's been a little more than a year since we last spoke, and in that short period of time, things have changed radically. You could say we spoke pre-Kindle and now we are post-Kindle and post-iPad, and Wiley is doing things today that we were only talking about just a few years and months back. . . .

Peter Booth Wiley

. . . I am a member of the sixth generation of Wileys involved in the publishing business; our company is 203 years old. There is a seventh generation, including two of my sons, both of whom are working in social media at Wiley. I've been the chairman of the board since 2002. Prior to joining our board of directors in 1984, I was a magazine publisher and a newspaper reporter and columnist, a writer of articles for magazines, and the author of five books. I am currently working on the revision of my last title, a guide to the architecture and history of San Francisco. Once the print version is completed, my daughter and I—we're coauthors—will work on a web site through which people taking the walking tours in the book will be able to access additional information and visuals about the buildings they are looking at. In the spirit of social media, we are giving our readers the ability to comment on what they are reading and seeing, which we can later add to our content. . . .

. . . Back in the 1800s when our company was founded, social media was writing a letter, which was handed to somebody on a horse or stagecoach. It would take roughly four days for a letter to go from, say, Virginia to New York; and in the wet, muddy seasons, it probably went by ship. . . . Sending a letter and getting a response was a very tenuous interaction. Now we've got information and creative ideas flying through the air at the speed of electrons with the ability to interact immediately. . . .

. . . In the 1950s, we began experimenting with introducing computers into the business. Twenty-five years ago, we tried to understand and experiment with computers and networks really aggressively, and our ideas about what we should be doing as a business came from our authors, our customers, and our technical advisors. We listened very carefully to them about new ways of accessing and shaping information and what they thought was going to happen. . . .

. . . We also continue to create a culture internally at Wiley that permits our colleagues to build products and related capabilities, including what we now call social experiences, or social media. We're working on capabilities that help authors share the necessary content with our customers and capabilities that help our customers find exactly the information they need in the format they want. We are helping our intermediaries (brick-and-mortar stores, online print and e-book resellers, wholesalers, et cetera) deliver the content to our customers quickly in the appropriate format. We are also building capabilities that help us internally to work collectively and that help our authors and partners interact with us and with members of their communities. . . .

. . . We use social networks (electronically, before we used them in an interpersonal way) to understand who you are and what you are capable of. So in our initial conversation when you told me of your history in the world of technology, I was very impressed. And so Step One is: "Okay, I recognize that this guy is somebody who has been right on the cutting edge himself." Step Two

(*continued*)

(*continued*)

is to use our social network to evaluate your capabilities and your proficiency in whether you are going to be able to deliver a manuscript that we'll be able to sell. . . .

. . . We built responsible risk-taking into the organization quite a while ago. The progression to where we are today in terms of digital media has not been in a straight line, and we've made mistakes at times by being ahead of the curve. I think what we've learned is it's best to be on the leading edge, rather than the bleeding edge, because we've spent time on the bleeding edge. . . .

. . . With the rapid rise of new forms of social media, we're thinking more about how we market our products. Traditionally, we talked about our author's "platform." . . . What's Lon's platform? By which we mean: "Does he speak regularly at conferences? How big are they? Is he going to get on *Oprah*? Is he going to get on *Good Morning America*? Will his books be reviewed in the *New York Times Book Review?* Sadly, the print newspaper book review is fading fast. Television, yes, it works to a degree. I think it's very effective at times. . . .

. . . We've also had experiences with other authors going on high-profile television programs and not selling a lot of books. Now we're looking more at networks, at an author's social media network, trying to understand the way in which an author creates his or her own community digitally and how we can communicate with that community to share with people what the book's all about. . . .

Another interesting thing is the understanding that the way in which an author writes his book, the connections he builds aggregating content and editing it, is creating his platform. No longer is it "Here's a book, write a marketing plan." The authoring and marketing experiences are interacting.

Of course, as a commercial publisher we are interested in metrics. So we are interested in seeing the evolution of the effectiveness of marketing and the effectiveness of networks. And I think we are at an early stage with that, but I really look to the libraries and their interaction with publishers. They are able to measure usage. Say they license a hundred journals from us; they can look at which of those journals are being used. So the librarians are saying, "Okay, I've got these hundred journals and ninety-eight of them are used heavily. Let's review the two that are used less and decide whether to replace them with other journals or whether they should remain in the collection even though there is a low usage rate."

So, there are metrics being developed, and over time. . . .

. . . But let's go back to what we were talking about earlier, about the way you are creating this book, because this tells us a lot about where publishing is now and what its future could be like.

I wrote my last book in 2000. An editor asked me to write it. I sent the manuscript to the publisher. The publisher reviewed it and edited it and sent it to production. Production designed it and laid it out. It went to the printer, then to marketing and sales, to the wholesale and retail intermediaries. And then it ended up in the customer's lap.

That's a very traditional print-on-paper model. Right now we are moving to a continuous process of content development and delivery. We have a favorite graphic that we use at a lot of meetings. It's about Frommer's. We're one of the leading travel publishers, and we've created this circle called the Travel Cycle, which illustrates how we interact with our customers at different points in their travel experience. So the first part of the cycle is when, you, the traveler, *dream* about where you are going to go. You look at travel newsletters, magazines, online forums, blogs; so right now we're publishing travel newsletters, online forums, and blogs about travel.

And then you *plan* your trip; and we are publishing guidebooks and travel web sites with text, photos, video, podcasts, recommendations, interactive maps, and custom PDF guides.

And then you *go* on your trip; and when you're traveling, we continue to interact with you with audio walking tours, iPhone guides, and map and airport guide applications.

And then after you come *back* from your trip, you share with other travelers your experience via online trip journals and photo albums, and you post your reviews and ratings, all on Wiley travel sites. So there is a continuous process of interaction here, rather than the linear process I described earlier. And when you add to that what you are doing with *The Social Media Bible,* which is working with the community (your community) to develop content and review and refine the content, you have a completely different publishing model. . . .

WileyPLUS is our online teaching and learning environment that integrates the entire digital textbook with resources to fit every learning style. Instructors are able to choose and assign the material that fits their syllabus, and students who want more information have access to the full eBook and accompanying learning materials. . . . WileyPLUS provides students with immediate feedback and redirects them to specific areas for review if they don't understand what they are being taught.

 . . . Equally important, particularly right now during a recession when institutions of higher education are packed with new students, WileyPLUS gives instructors an option to select only the materials they need, while keeping costs down.

To listen to or read the entire Executive Conversation with Peter Booth Wiley, go to www .theSocialMediaBible.com.

Credits

The ROI of Social Media was provided by:

Justin Choi, www.PostRelease.com

Expert Insight was provided by:

Peter Booth Wiley, chairman of the board, John Wiley & Sons, Inc., www.wiley.com