



INTERVIEW



# Current



ONCE DISMISSED AS JUST A PASSING FAD, social media use for business is rapidly increasing. According to *SocialMediaToday*, the average person now spends 116 minutes on social media every day. *The Parking Professional* recently sat down with social media marketing speaker and trainer Ted Janusz to determine trends in social media and how parking organizations should now be using social media to promote themselves.

The biggest  
2018 social  
media trends  
and how  
parking  
professionals  
can make the  
most of them.

**The Parking Professional: What are the biggest mistakes businesses are making when using social media?**

**Ted Janusz:** First of all, being afraid of the tools. To be effective with social media, be more concerned about your messages than the technology. Let's relate this to something with which you are familiar: Once you figured out how to use your smartphone, email, or texting, what quickly became more important to you than the tool was who you were communicating with and what you were communicating.

I can understand intimidation. Many articles I read about social media marketing are filled with self-important geek speak, which can bewilder even highly intelligent businesspeople! But social media just comes down to human communication. Talk with your followers or connections as you would face-to-face with a friend; the technology is just the messenger.

Remember when teenagers would talk on the phone each day for hours? Well, they are still talking with each other, but instead of talking on the phone, they're using social media to do it. Teenagers now spend on average more than nine hours a day on social media. These members of Generation Z—your next generation of consumers—will expect you as a businessperson to communicate with them in the same way.

A second mistake is to believe that there is a cookie-cutter approach to social media marketing success. You may think that someone somewhere must possess a magical formula that will make your posts go viral. But there is no such secret sauce!

# SOCIAL



The good news is that success in social media requires little more than your time and effort. Unlike with other media, you need not invest thousands of dollars into a marketing campaign. Instead, use helpful tools, which are free, such as Facebook Page Insights, Instagram Insights, or Twitter Analytics to find out what is working for you on social media. Then, do more of it. Use these tools to find out what is not working and simply do less of those things.

A third mistake is to believe social media is simply the 21st century version of old-fashioned interruption marketing, but now it's free! The people who believe this don't understand that social media is meant to be a method of two-way communications, which leads to engagement. "Get us a Facebook page," they will say. "Get us 1,000 fans, schedule posts using a site like Buffer or Hootsuite, then pump out those posts on a regular basis, to have our fans read all about us."

I am honored to facilitate social media marketing workshops all over the country and to learn from my audiences. One attendee in Phoenix told me that instead what is working for her is the 10-4-1 posting principle. Out of every 15 posts she makes on social media:

- 10 posts will relate to something that is happening in the community.
- 4 posts will be what she calls "business light." In other words, they focus on how her business is involved in the community. For example, a post might show her CEO working, but on the roof of a house to support Habitat for Humanity.
- 1 post will be the "hard sell" (information specifically about the business, products, or services).

She told me her followers will interact with the 10 posts about the community and the four business-light posts. Hardly anyone will like or comment on the hard-sell post. But she knows they will have seen it.

Why? Because they engaged with the other 14 posts!



A fourth and final mistake is to believe that more fans (on Facebook), followers (on Twitter), or connections (on LinkedIn) are necessarily better. With social media, it's quality that counts, not just quantity. It is far better that you have 100 followers who are actively engaged with you rather than 1,000 who aren't.

### ***There are now more than 70 million Facebook business pages. But why are so very few of them successful?***

First, people have profiles on Facebook; businesses should have pages. Few pages work because creating one was usually a reactive rather than a proactive decision.

I was talking with a member of a chamber of commerce who desired a Facebook page. When I asked why, he replied, "Because the other chamber has one!"

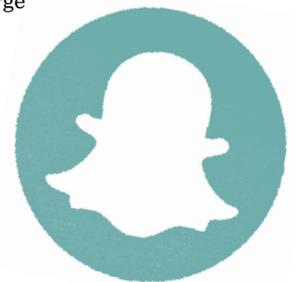
The first step in creating a successful business page is to determine what you want to achieve for your parking organization with that page. For example, Freed Maxick CPAs, an accounting firm in Buffalo, N.Y., decided that they wanted to accomplish the following with their Facebook page:

- Humanize their employees. (Show that accountants are people too!).
- Showcase community involvement.
- Position the company as a thought leader in the community.

As a result, their strategy drives every post on their Facebook page.

### ***What are the biggest trends right now in social media marketing?***

First and foremost, influencer marketing, which means getting the endorsement of celebrities, thought leaders, and others who have large followings. Along with a steady rise in social media use, we are seeing a rapid decline in television viewing (especially among younger consumers). So marketers are using influencers (both paid and unpaid) to get their messages out.



According to Captiv8, influencer marketing is big business. For influencers with 3 million to 7 million followers (think Kim Kardashian), they can charge:

- \$187,000 for a post on YouTube.
- \$75,000 for a post on Instagram or Snapchat.
- \$30,000 for a post on Twitter.

These high-dollar figures should not be a concern for parking professionals, but they do prove two things: 1) social media is a legitimate marketing venue, and 2) parking professionals should also be using local



*If a picture is worth a thousand words, a video may be worth a million.*

influencers in their communities (who hopefully can speak on their behalf on social media for free, or at least a lot less).

Nearly 95 percent of marketers who use an influencer marketing strategy believe it is effective. But when it comes to influencer marketing, *New York Times* best-selling author Jay Baer says, “True influence drives action, not awareness.”

One final note on influencer marketing: The Federal Trade Commission says, “If there’s a connection between an endorser and the marketer that consumers would not expect and it would affect how consumers evaluate the endorsement, that connection should be disclosed.”

The second big trend is the use of video on social media. Blogger Nick Le asks, “Are you sick of getting the notification from your phone that your classmate in second grade has gone live on either Instagram or Facebook? Well, hopefully you aren’t because social media is moving to more real-time content and you’re about to see a lot more of those notifications.”

Videos on social media generate 1,200 percent more shares than text and images combined. You may notice when you access your Facebook app on your phone, there’s a place for you to create your story, and space for the video stories of your friends is now reserved at the top of the screen.

*New York Times* best-selling author John Medina says, “We are incredible at remembering pictures. Hear a piece of information and three days later you will remember 10 percent of it. Add a picture and you’ll remember 65 percent. Reading is so inefficient for us. Our brain sees words as lots of tiny pictures. We have to identify certain features in the letters to be able to read them. That takes time.”

As a result, your post will always do better if it is accompanied by an image. I tell my social media marketing audiences, “If a picture is worth a thousand words, a video may be worth a million.”

After seeing the recent demise of social media video-sharing sites like Blab, Meerkat, and Periscope, I am a bit of a contrarian when it comes to video on the web. As Blab co-founder Shaan Puri says, “Most live streams aren’t interesting enough to justify stopping what [users] are doing to watch [a] broadcast.” In fact, only 10 percent of Blab’s users came back to the app on regular basis.

***So how can you make a video interesting?***

Very simply, ask yourself and answer these two questions:

- How does this video relate to my viewer?
- Why should they care?

***If you do create video, how long should it be and what should it be about?***

According to TubeMogul, the percent of your audience you will typically lose with a video is:

- After 19 seconds—10.39 percent.
- After 30 seconds—33.84 percent.
- At the one-minute mark—53.56 percent.
- By the two-minute mark—76.29 percent.

So keep your videos short.

Marketing guru Dan Kennedy says that the No. 1 mistake most of his small-business clients make is that they don’t get and use testimonials. So a video with a satisfied customer (remember the power of influencer marketing!), or a video showing one or



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more members of your staff as people and not just employees, tends to be well-received.

You could spend thousands of dollars to produce a video. Or you could use an inexpensive service like Animoto that can help you turn your still photographs, video clips, and music into video slideshows.

***In addition to creating videos, the real challenge for many social media marketers can be to find quality content on a consistent basis. Where can we get a continuous supply of content?***

The key to social media marketing success (which is simple, not easy) is to determine what kind of content your followers want and to consistently give it to them.

One method is to use a site called BuzzSumo. Ben Perry, a web and mobile optimization expert in Boston, says, "I've used BuzzSumo for almost a year as a way to find good content to post on social channels and also to find good ideas for articles to write. It's really so useful that it's like cheating when used to repost articles on social. It tells you exactly what is trending today so you can be on point with your posts and get better engagement. The app is super simple to use and fairly flexible. It's also priced decently for what you get."

Should you decide to write an article with the content to show you are a thought leader on your topic (content marketing is yet another viable—and free—marketing strategy you can employ), simply visit the homepage of your LinkedIn account. Click the button that says "Write an article." At the top of the resulting template, you can fill in an image. (You can get dramatic, royalty-free photographs on a site like Pixabay.) Enter a title, then either type or cut and paste from a Microsoft Word document the body of your article.

When you are done, simply click the "publish" button. Poof! Your article (which will appear without embedded ads) will then show up in the news feed of your connections on LinkedIn. But don't stop there! Include a link to your article on your website and your Facebook and Twitter accounts as well. A final step: Also enter a link to your article on Google+.

Why should you do this? Google+ never became the Facebook killer many thought it would be, but it is, of course, owned by Google. By also letting Google know

about your article, it may get more favorable placement when somebody searches for the content you just wrote about. Using these steps, my most popular article, "What Really Happens When You Boost a Facebook Post," has been viewed so far more than 2,000 times. Getting that exposure didn't cost me a single cent.

There is an even easier (and free) way to get content: Cyndy Feasel's husband, Grant, played for eight years in the National Football League and died at the age of 52, primarily from complications from chronic traumatic encephalopathy. As a result, Cyndy had a mission: She desired to raise awareness of concussions, subconcussive hits, and brain injuries in contact sports, especially among youth. So Cyndy set up a Facebook page: facebook.com/CyndyFeasel.

Cyndy was able to go from zero fans (people who like this) to more than 2,000 within the span of one year because she does four things extremely well with her Facebook page:

- Spreads out three to four posts per day. She is sure to post every day because out of sight becomes out of mind.
- Encourages and responds to all comments.
- Stays in her lane. Cyndy does not veer from her mission by discussing, say, a favorite recipe or the politics of the day.
- Mixes in personal posts as they relate to her mission. Because most of her posts are not about herself, when she does mention family, these posts tend to get the highest amount of engagement.

To help Cyndy get a steady stream of content, she has set up Google Alerts around her topic areas. Once a day (usually around 8 a.m.) she receives an email with links to articles that have been published on the web in the last 24 hours that relate to her topics. Using her Facebook page, she will then share that information with her fans, who will then comment and share with their networks. This has allowed Cyndy in the last year to reach more people around the world and affect their lives more than she ever thought possible. P



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