

# THE CMO'S GUIDE TO:

# THE SOCIAL LANDSCAPE

2010 IS THE YEAR CMOS WILL HEAVILY INVEST IN SOCIAL MEDIA. HERE'S A GUIDE TO HELP YOU UNDERSTAND HOW BEST TO LEVERAGE MAJOR SOCIAL MEDIA SITES.

**GOOD!**

**OK.**

**BAD!**

## WEBSITE

## CUSTOMER COMMUNICATION

## BRAND EXPOSURE

## TRAFFIC TO YOUR SITE

## SEO



A microblogging site that enables users to send 'tweets', or messages of 140 characters or less

Use keyword search monitoring through a program such as Hootsuite, TwitJump or Radian 6 to track what people are saying about you and your competitors.

Offers unique opportunities for Web site integration and to engage with customers in a viral way, helping your company stand out from the masses.

Potential can be large, but promotion is an art form -- promote your brand too heavily and turn off followers, yet don't promote enough and receive little attention.

Value to your site's SEO is limited, but tweets will rank high in search results -- good for ranking your profile name and breaking news, though shortened URLs are of little benefit.



A social networking site where users can add friend, send messages and build their own profile

Great for engaging people who like your brand, want to share their opinions, and participate in giveaways and contests.

Facebook brand pages are great for brand exposure. Jump-start your brand exposure through the ad platform, or hire a Facebook consultant to help you grow your brand presence.

Traffic is decent and on the rise thanks to share buttons and counters, but don't expect massive numbers of unique visitors to go to your site.

Little to no value, aside from blogs picking up and featuring your posted links. Not worth the time expenditure.



An image and video hosting website where community members can share and comment on media

Unnecessary to spend too much time on this, though properly tagged photosets of company events can help customers put a face on the team behind your brand.

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

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

Heavily indexed in search engines, passing links and page ranks. Also helps images rank higher in Google Images and in building inbound links.



A social networking site for business professionals

Not the primary focus, but customer engagement opportunities are possible by answering industry-related questions, establishing yourself as an expert in the field.

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

Unlikely to drive any significant traffic to your site, though you never know who those few visits might be from -- perhaps a potential client or customer.

Very high page rank -- almost guaranteed on the first page of search results -- especially for your company name or individual employees' names, but that's about it.



A video sharing website where users can share and upload new videos

Whether you seek to entertain, inform, or both, video is a powerful channel for quickly engaging your customers, responding to complaints, and demonstrating your social-media savvy.

One of the most powerful branding tools on the Web when you build your channel, promote via high-traffic sites, and brand your videos.

Traffic goes to the videos. If the goal is to get traffic back to your site, then add a hyperlink in the video description, but don't expect traffic to correlate closely with video views.

Very good for building links back to your site because videos rank high. Also a tried-and-true way for your brand to gain exposure.



A social news site where users can discover and share content

Not the site's primary strength, though occasionally an objective third-party writeup as a PR effort, perhaps to counteract bad press or customer sentiment, can be promoted.

Opportunities are huge, especially for promoting objective press/blog coverage of your brand. Make sure content doesn't read like an ad, or your site might be banned for being overly commercial.

The grandfather of traffic spikes, so become active in the community or find someone who is. If your site is corporate, then consider launching an industry blog on a noncommercial Web domain to establish yourself as a thought leader.

Very good because even if your story doesn't become popular, then your page will still be indexed quickly. If your story does become popular, this is likely the best site in terms of getting linked to by bloggers.



A social news community where members discover and share webpages

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

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

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

Very good if your story makes it to the top page for its tag. StumbledUpon's large user base enables many people to find and link to your stories. For vanity name searches, profile pages rank well, too.



A social news site where community members can vote on stories

Editor-driven and moderated, so this shouldn't be your primary focus.

Noncommercial sites are heavily favored by moderators, so business sites should not waste time in this uphill battle.

Get in the moderators' good graces, and you have a chance to hit absolutely massive numbers -- but it's a long shot.

If you make the front page of Yahoo, then you will get a ton of backlinks, but chances are unlikely unless you are a large, established brand.



A social news community where users post links to the site's home page

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

Unless you're a bacon company, don't try to build your brand here. You'll end up banned from the site without even realizing what happened.

If Reddit loves you, then traffic is often right up there with Digg and StumbleUpon. Be careful: Push too hard for votes from your friends and risk being banned, but don't push at all and you'll wind up with nothing.

Make the front page and many reputable sites will pick up your story, generating valuable backlinks and extending trust to your site.



A social bookmarking site used for sharing and storing bookmarked pages

Site is intended for people to bookmark content. You can see what people tag with your brand name, but communication with them is nonexistent.

Not enough ongoing brand recognition to make it worth your while unless you want to be known for providing reference content for later retrieval.

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

Pretty much everything about the site helps: When your page is bookmarked, it's a direct link back to your site. When you're on the front page of the site, the big category tag pages are full of trust, which will pass directly to your URL.