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Growing Your MSP-IT Business Using Social Media

Using Social Media for lead generation

As a MSP you face many challenges such as limited capital, minimal support staff and having too much to do in what seems like very little time. So, how do you grow your MSP business without heavy investment in marketing and advertising? Answer, through social media. Social media can help you generate leads and increase the exposure of your MSP business.

Here's all you need to know as a MSP, IT service provider to begin increasing revenues using social media.



Tremendous exposure

Social media can give you tremendous exposure. As a MSP IT service provider you rely largely on network marketing to get leads, which, in turn depends on your interaction with people and social media offers virtually unlimited opportunities to interact with people... hundreds of them!

Zero-cost

While other marketing media is expensive, social media marketing is relatively free, or requires negligible monetary investment. It's a great, low-cost way to get your message across.

Improved web presence

Being on popular social media platforms strengthens your web presence. The more people talk about you on Facebook or Twitter, the greater the chances are your business is found on relevant web searches.



Direct contact with prospects

Social Media platforms put you in touch with your customers directly. You get one-on-one contact, which helps you understand them better and learn what they really want.

Viral Medium

Social Media offers you the opportunity to go viral with your marketing. Think about this. You put up a video about your business on YouTube. 10 people like it, and 5 of them share it with their friends, who in-turn share it with 20 more people. This is known as "viral marketing", and it can be a very effective method to increase your lead generation.

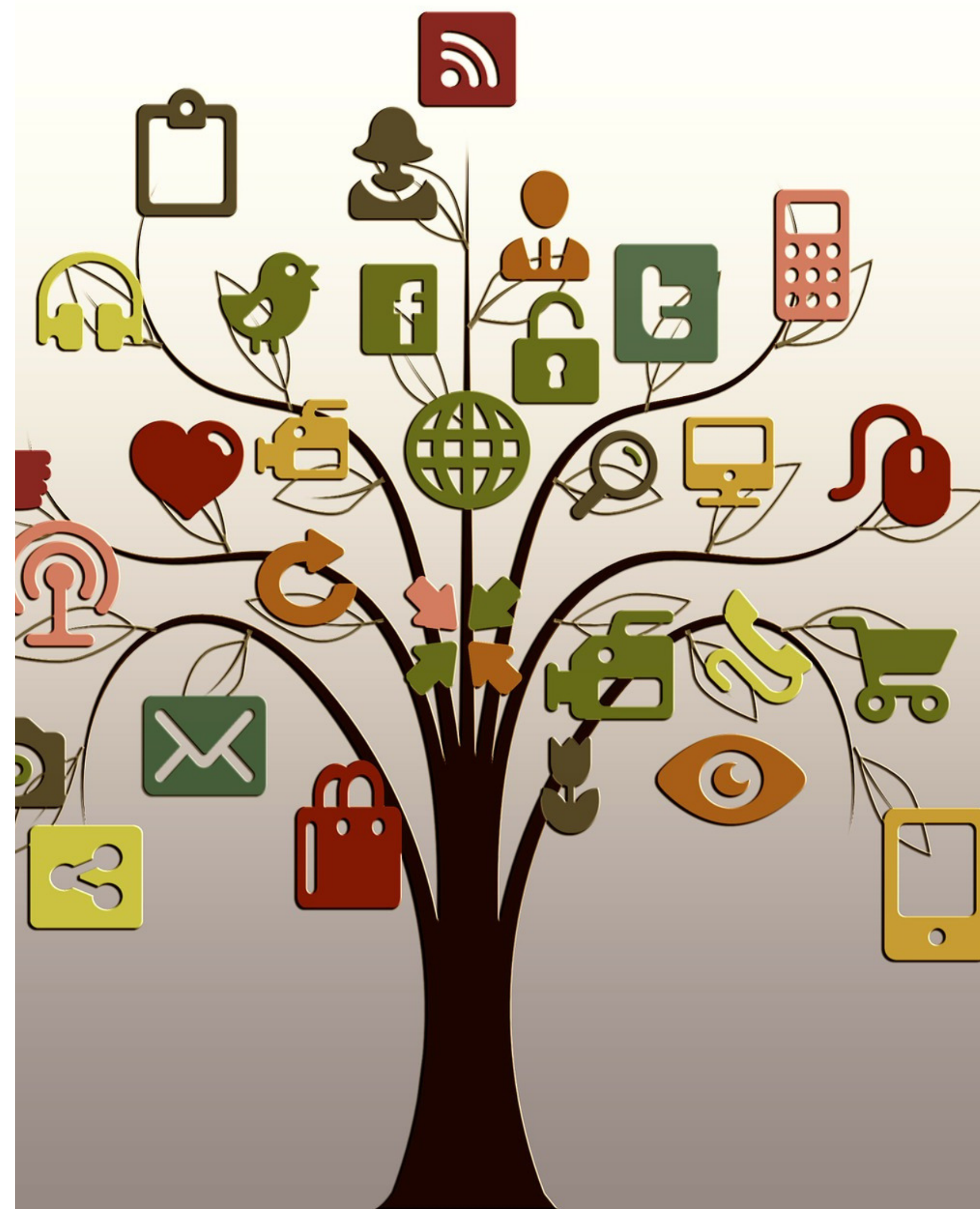
Up next, we tell you what an ideal social media marketing plan looks like.



Your ideal Social Media game plan

A typical social media game plan for your business should consist of these four steps:

- Building your network
- Add links everywhere
- Staying connected
- Listening



Did you know?

92% of marketers say that social media is important to their business.



Source: Social Media Examiner, 2015

Step 1: Build your network

The first step is to search for and add those people to your network whom you think fall into your target audience segment. When placing a request to add people to your network, it is always better to accompany such requests with a personalized message. You can also look for and join groups that pertain to your line of business. For example, as an IT-Managed Services Provider, you can join local business groups, Chambers of Commerce, etc.

Do remember to ADD VALUE. Answer questions that you are equipped to answer, actively participate in discussions, be subtle and don't aggressively "push" your products. For example, in a LinkedIn group consisting of local business owners, you can post a message about the latest virus threats.





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Don't forget: For your social media marketing efforts to be successful, they need to be consistent. Make sure you post at least once a week to your social accounts.

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Step 2: Tell everyone about your social media existence

The next step is to announce your Social Media presence. You can do this by adding links to your social media pages on your website, email signature line and newsletter, if you have one. You are out there with your business announce it.



Step 3: Stay Connected

The third step is to stay connected with your followers and group members. A social media marketing initiative is easy to start, but requires effort to maintain. And like many networking efforts, results are usually not immediate. Acquire permission from group members and others on your network to send emails. You can then email relevant content to people on your network. .

Step 4: Listen

Find out where your name's coming up online and in what context it has been used. A Google alert is the simplest way to do this, though there are many free tools available online to monitor your web presence. Also stay in-control of your social media pages. Read what others are putting up on your page and respond promptly.



Social Media Checklist



Yes



No

Add value to your contacts

Always add value to your social media contacts. Provide them useful information, tips and other interesting facts that they can use. For example, easy troubleshooting tips, day zero alerts, etc.

Be consistent in your online participation

Social media is not a one-time effort. It is about building a relationship, and relationships take time. Be consistent in your social media communication. Share an interesting post at least once a week, but don't forget rule#1—add value. Your posts shouldn't sound like pointless ramblings or advertisements of your service.



Pay attention to what's being discussed

If you have joined a forum or a group, actively participate in relevant discussions. Use your specific, professional knowledge to help others. Contribute to add depth and dimension to a discussion.

Conversation is the key

As mentioned before, social media marketing thrives on relationships. To build a strong relationship with your prospects, you need to engage in a conversation with them. Maintain a 2-way communication between you and your audience. Take genuine interest in what they say and follow up on comments or observations that are made.



Did you know?

80% of B2B decision makers visit vendor-independent communities, vendor-sponsored forums, and LinkedIn at least monthly for business purposes.

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Source:Marketing Think

Understand the subject you are talking about

Position yourself as an expert on Social Media platforms. But, be sure that you know what you're talking about. Research if you aren't sure of something. Mistakes on social media spread quickly and damage the reputation of your business.

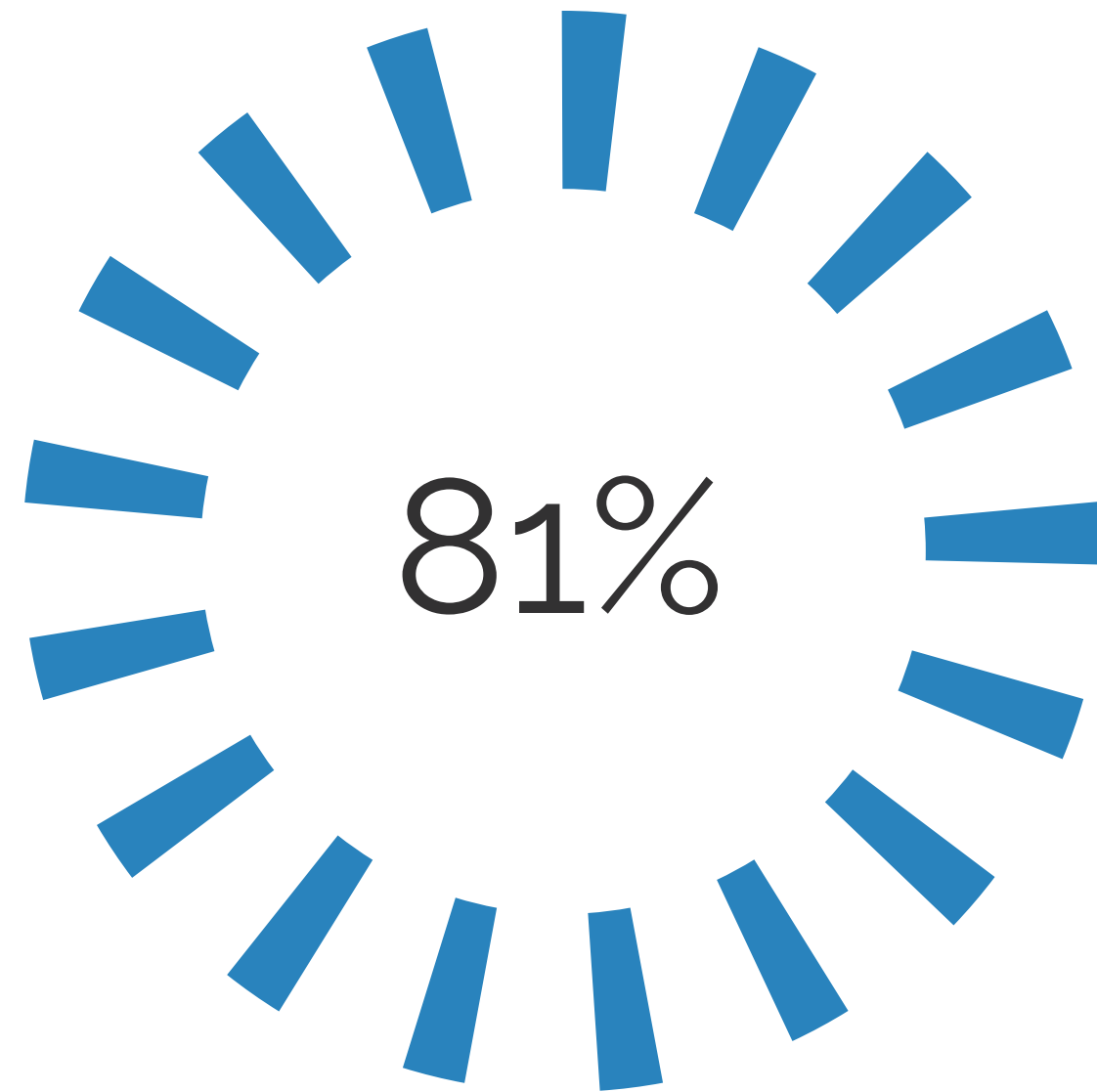
Portray your individuality

The biggest advantage you have as a MSP IT service provider is that you are a smaller organization and haven't lost that real-person touch. Let your social media audience know the person behind the business. Make sure your interactions include a personal side!



Did you know?

81% of B2B decision makers use online communities and blogs to help make purchasing decisions. 74% use LinkedIn, and 42% use Twitter.



Source: Marketing Think

Respond to your customer's grievances ASAP

Did you know that 88% of customers say unanswered complaints on social media sites deter them from doing repeat business? And, deleting customer complaints is even worse! So, make sure you resolve your customer's complaints on social media platforms immediately. Even if you can't resolve them, at least respond so that they know they're being heard. Acknowledge everything.

Syndicate your social media content

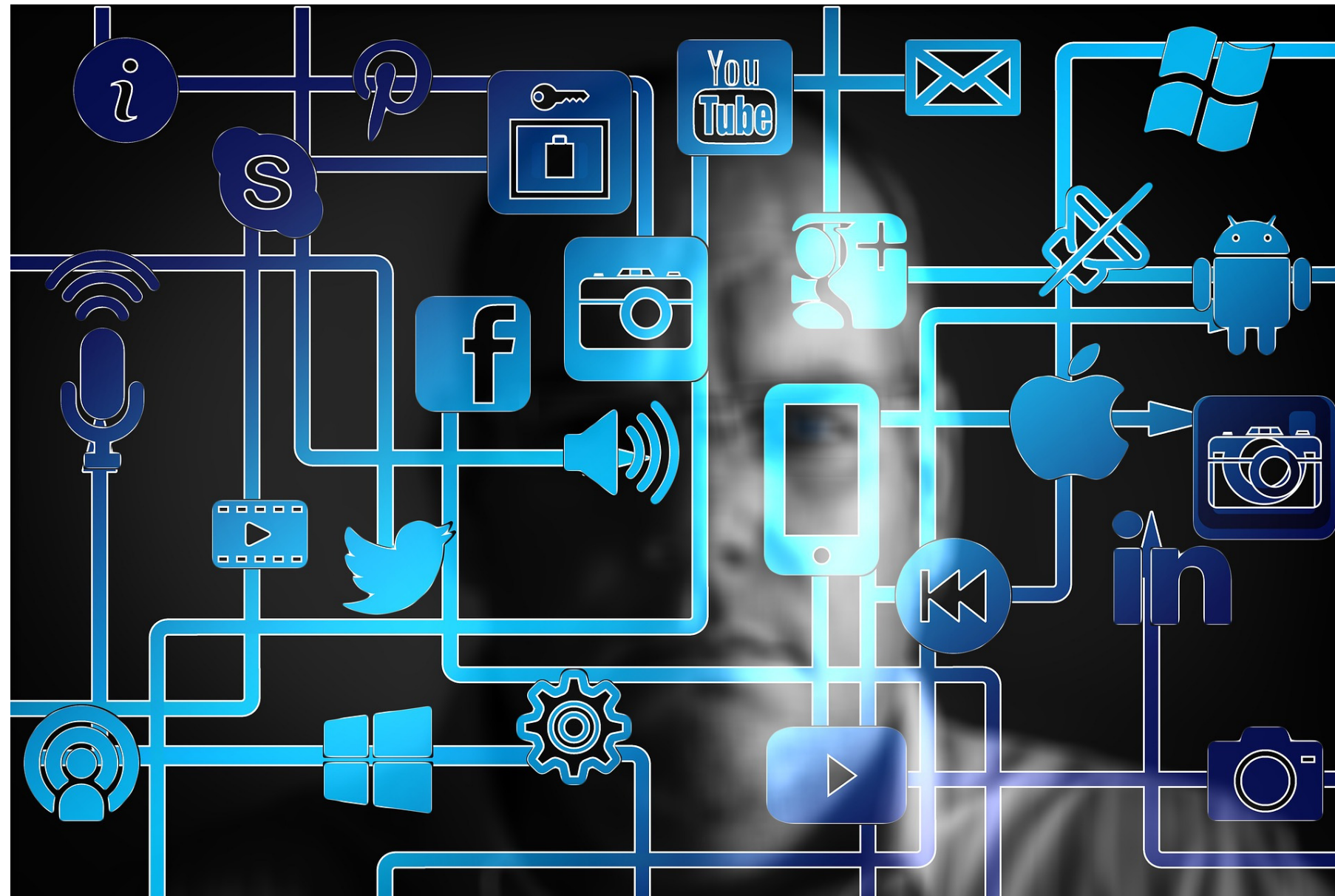
Content creation takes time. So why not make the most of the content you have? Post your content on all popular social media sites and don't hesitate to re-use them. Share the link to your latest blog post. Convert it into a video and add to YouTube and Facebook or turn it into a presentation and put it up on SlideShare. The aim is to get maximum exposure for your content.



Sorry

Did you know?

67% of consumers have used a company's social media channel for customer service.



Source: J.D. Power

DON'T overtly push your products/services

Social media is a platform to network, to build relationships, to create value. It's NOT an advertising venue. Your audience will avoid you if all you talk about is the stuff you sell

DON'T have grammar and spelling errors in your posts

You are out to create an impression. Don't spoil it with spelling and grammatical errors. Use spelling/grammar checking tools, but never rely solely on them. Proofread your posts before putting them up online. Have someone else proofread your work before it goes out.



DON'T let your profile get stale

Make sure your profile is frequently updated and that you offer something new. One mistake many MSP IT service providers make, is creating social media profiles and then forgetting about them. Your social media efforts have to be on-going to bear results.

DON'T get distracted

There's a lot of distraction available online—especially on social media channels that can make you lose track of your productive hours online. Focus on your social goals. Otherwise you'll find yourself investing too much time and energy into activities that offer no returns to your MSP IT business.





So, if you thought social media marketing was not for you, think again. Social Media offers a large bundle of benefits to MSP-IT service providers; and we just told you some reasons why you should consider using social media for your MSP-IT services marketing.



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