

# Chapter 3: Managing Your Cybersocial Campaign

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## *In This Chapter*

- ✓ Scheduling social media activities
- ✓ Building a team
- ✓ Writing a social media policy
- ✓ Keeping it legal
- ✓ Protecting your brand reputation

**A**fter you have a social media marketing plan, one major task you face is managing the effort. If you're the only one doing the work, the simplest — and likely the hardest — task is making time for it. Though social media need not carry a lot of up-front development costs, it carries a significant cost in labor.

In this chapter, we discuss how to set up a schedule to keep your social media from draining all your available time. If you have employees, both you and your company may benefit by delegating some of the social media tasking to them, and supplementing your in-house staff with limited time from outside professionals.



For small businesses, it's always your money or your life. If you can't afford to hire help to work on social media, you carve it out of the time you've allocated to other marketing activities — unless, of course, you want to stretch your workday from 10 to 12 hours to 12 to 14 hours.

Finally, this chapter carries a word of precaution. Make sure that everyone posting to a social media outlet knows your policy about what is and isn't acceptable, and how to protect the company's reputation and confidential material. As you launch your marketing boat onto the churning waters of social media, you should ensure that everyone is wearing a legal life preserver.

## *Managing Your Social Media Schedule*

As you know from the rest of your business experience, if something isn't important enough to schedule, it never gets done. Social media, like the rest of your marketing efforts, can easily be swallowed up by day-to-day demands. You must set aside time for it and assign tasks to specific people.



Allocate a minimum of two hours per week if you're going to participate in social media, rather than set up pages and abandon them. Otherwise, you simply don't see a return from your initial investment in setup. If you don't have much time, stick with the marketing you're already doing.

## ***Bounding the time commitment***

Social media can become addictive. If you truly like what you're doing, the time problem might reverse. Rather than spend too little time, you spend too much. You might find it difficult to avoid the temptation of continually reading what others have to say about your business or spending all your time tweeting, streaming, and posting.

Just as you stick to your initial dollar budget, keep to your initial time budget, at least for the first month until you see what works. After you determine which techniques have the greatest promise, you can rearrange your own efforts, and your team's.

As you can see from the sidebar about artist Natasha Wescoat, "Social media as an art form," one way to reduce the time you spend on social media is to turn social media into part of your art, or a product in and of itself. Of course, that strategy may not work for everyone's business.



Social media marketing is only part of your online marketing effort, and online marketing is only part of your overall marketing.

## ***Selecting "activity" days***

One way to control the time you spend on social media is to select specific days and times for it. Many businesspeople set aside regularly recurring blocks of time, such as on a quiet Friday afternoon, for marketing-related tasks, whether they're conducting competitor research, writing press releases or newsletters for release the following week, obtaining inbound links, or handling their social marketing tasks.

Other people prefer to allocate their time early in the morning, at lunchtime, or just before leaving work each evening. The time slot you choose usually doesn't matter, unless you're offering a time-dependent service, such as accepting to-go orders for breakfast burritos via Twitter.



Whatever the case, allot time for every task on your social media activity calendar, followed by the initials of the person responsible for executing the task.

## ***Allowing for ramp-up time***

Even if you're the only person involved, allow time for learning before your official social media launch date. Everyone needs time to observe, master new tools, practice posting and responding, experiment, and decide what works before you can roll out your plan.



Bring your new social media venues online one at a time. This strategy not only helps you evaluate which social media venue works but also reduces stress on you and your staff.

### ***Developing your social date book***

There are as many ways to schedule social media activities as there are companies. Whatever you decide, don't leave your schedule to chance.

Larger companies may use elaborate project management software, either proprietary solutions or open source programs such as Endeavour Software Project Management (<http://endeavour-mgmt.sourceforge.net>), GanttProject ([www.ganttproject.biz](http://www.ganttproject.biz)), or OpenProj ([www.serena.com/products/openproj](http://www.serena.com/products/openproj)). Alternatively, you can schedule tasks using spreadsheet software.

However, the simplest solution may be the best: Calendaring software, much of which is free, may be all you need. Paid options may merge schedules for more people and allow customized report formats. Several options are listed in Table 3-1. Look for a solution that lets you

- ◆ Choose a display by day, week, or month or longer
- ◆ Lists events or tasks in chronological format
- ◆ Select different timeframes easily
- ◆ Easily schedule repeat activities without requiring duplicate data entry

**Table 3-1**                                 **Calendaring Software**

<i>Name</i>	<i>URL</i>	<i>Free or Paid</i>
Calendar & Time Management Software Reviews	<a href="http://download.cnet.com/windows/calendar-and-time-management-software">http://download.cnet.com/windows/calendar-and-time-management-software</a>	Free, shareware, and paid
Connect Daily	<a href="http://www.mhsoftware.com/connect/daily.htm">www.mhsoftware.com/connect/daily.htm</a>	Paid, free trial
EventsLink Network	<a href="http://www.eventslink.net">www.eventslink.net</a>	Paid, free trial
Google Calendar	<a href="http://www.google.com/intl/en/googlecalendar/about.html">www.google.com/intl/en/googlecalendar/about.html</a>	Free

*(continued)*

**Table 3-1 (continued)**

Name	URL	Free or Paid
Trumba	www.trumba.com/connect/default.aspx	Paid, free trial
Yahoo! Calendar	http://calendar.yahoo.com	Free

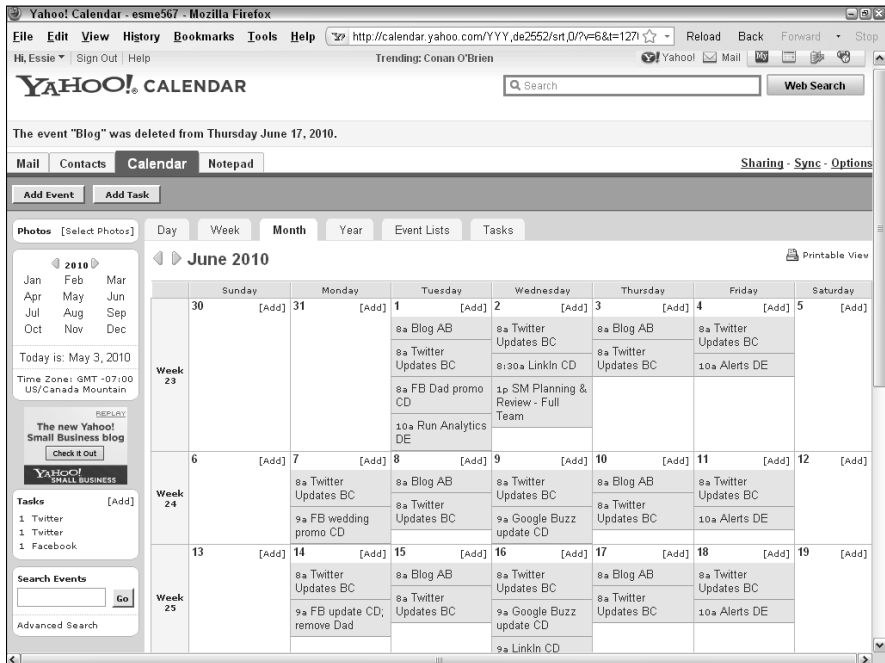


If several people are involved in a substantial social media effort, select calendaring software that lets you synchronize individual calendars, such as Google, Yahoo!, Mozilla Sunbird, and others. Figure 3-1 shows a sample of a simple social marketing calendar using Yahoo! The calendar shows the initials of the person responsible. Clicking an event or a task reveals item details, including the time allotted to the task, the sharing level, and whether a reminder is sent and to whom. Figure 3-2 offers an example of an event detail listing in Mozilla Sunbird.



Throughout this book, we refer to this calendar as your *Social Media Activity Calendar*, and we add frequent recommendations of tasks to include on your schedule.

**Figure 3-1:**  
Using  
Yahoo!  
Calendar,  
you can  
easily  
schedule  
your social  
media  
activities.



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The screenshot shows a 'New Event: New Event' dialog box with the following fields and options:

- Title:** Facebook Promo Ad by BC
- Location:** Wall
- Category:** (empty dropdown)
- Calendar:** (empty dropdown)
- All day Event
- Start:** 06/11/2010 8:00 AM
- End:** 06/11/2010 8:30 AM
- Repeat:** (empty dropdown)
- Reminder:** (empty dropdown)
- Description:** Father's Day Promo runs through 6/15
- Attachments:** (empty text area)
- Private Event
- Priority:** (three small square icons)

**Figure 3-2:**  
On the Sunbird event detail screen, you configure each social media task as needed.



Set your calendar to private, but give access to everyone who needs to be aware of your social media schedule. Depending on the design of your social media program, some outside subcontractors may need access to your calendar to schedule their own production deadlines.

## *Creating a social media dashboard*

Your social media marketing efforts may ultimately involve many tasks: Post to multiple venues; use tools to distribute content to multiple locations; monitor visibility for your company on social media outlets; and measure results by using several different analytical tools. Rather than jump back and forth among all these different sources, a graphical dashboard or control panel can be a convenient timesaver.

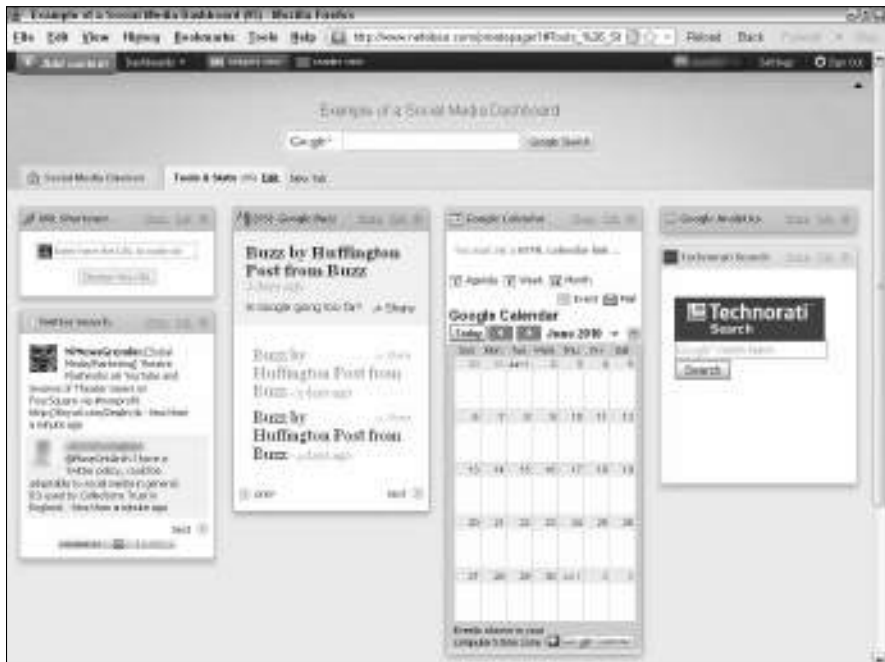
Like the dashboard of a car, a social media dashboard puts the various required functions at your fingertips, in (you hope) an easy-to-understand and easy-to-use visual layout. When you use this approach, the customized dashboard provides easy access in one location to all your social media accounts, tools, and metrics. Figures 3-3 and 3-4 show several tabs of a customized Netvibes dashboard — one for social media postings and another for tools.

**Figure 3-3:** This mock-up of a social media dashboard from Netvibes gathers various social media services on the first tab for a user who manages multiple accounts.



Courtesy Netvibes

**Figure 3-4:** The second tab of this mock-up for a Netvibes dashboard gathers tools for distributing, monitoring, searching, and analyzing.



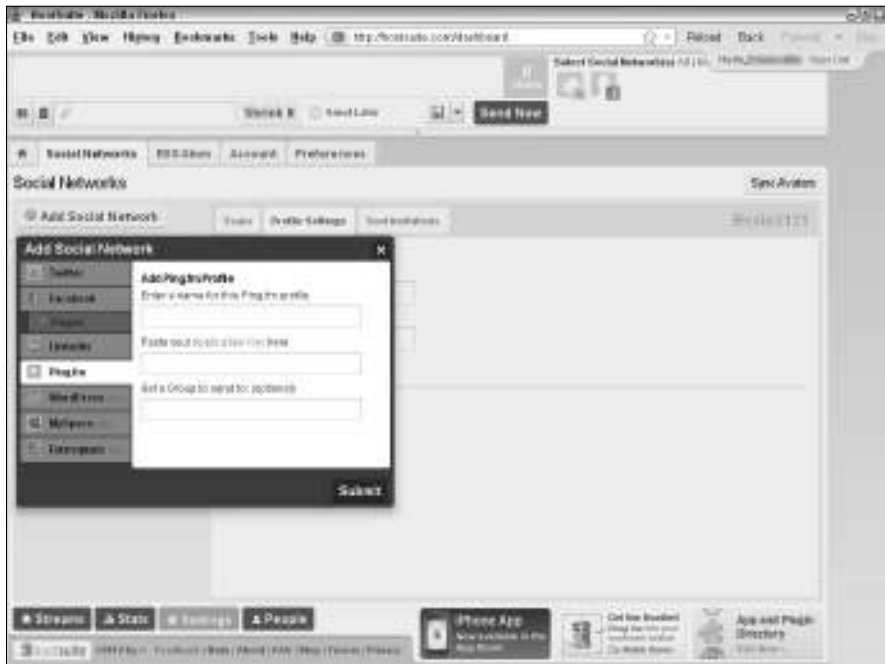
Courtesy Netvibes

The items on your primary dashboard may link to other, application-specific dashboards, especially for analytical tools and high-end enterprise solutions; those application dashboards are designed primarily to compare the results of multiple social media campaigns.

Table 3-2 provides a list of dashboard resources, some of which are generic (such as iGoogle and MyYahoo!) and others of which, such as Netvibes and HootSuite (see Figure 3-5), are specific to social media.

<b>Table 3-2 Social Media Dashboard Resources</b>		
<i>Name</i>	<i>URL</i>	<i>Description</i>
Goojet	<a href="http://www.goojet.com">www.goojet.com</a>	Free mobile short-message dashboard client
HootSuite	<a href="http://www.hootsuite.com">www.hootsuite.com</a>	Free short-message dashboard that focuses on Twitter
iGoogle	<a href="http://www.google.com/ig">www.google.com/ig</a>	Free, customizable Google home page
MarketingProfs	<a href="http://www.marketingprofs.com/articles/2010/3454/how-to-create-your-marketing-dashboard-in-five-easy-steps">www.marketingprofs.com/articles/2010/3454/how-to-create-your-marketing-dashboard-in-five-easy-steps</a>	Instructions for customizing a dashboard (sign up for the free trial to view)
MyYahoo!	<a href="http://my.yahoo.com">http://my.yahoo.com</a>	Free, customizable Yahoo! home page
Netvibes	<a href="http://netvibes.com">http://netvibes.com</a>	Free, customizable dashboard for social media
Pageflakes	<a href="http://www.pageflakes.com/Default.aspx">www.pageflakes.com/Default.aspx</a>	Free, customizable dashboard
Search Engine Land	<a href="http://searchengineland.com/b2b-social-media-dashboard-a-powerful-tool-to-uncover-key-customer-insights-17839">http://searchengineland.com/b2b-social-media-dashboard-a-powerful-tool-to-uncover-key-customer-insights-17839</a>	Tips on how to use a social media dashboard for B2B
uberVU	<a href="http://www.ubervu.com">www.ubervu.com</a>	Paid social media dashboard client
Unilyzer	<a href="http://unilyzer.com">http://unilyzer.com</a>	Paid social media dashboard client

**Figure 3-5:** The social media dashboard from HootSuite lets you easily add social network services to your list of monitored sites.



Courtesy HootSuite. The HootSuite wordmark is <sup>TM</sup> of HootSuite Media, Inc.

Before you try to build a dashboard, list all the social media sources, services, and reports you want to display, along with their associated URLs, usernames, and passwords. It will help if you indicate whether services are interconnected (for example, note if you're using a syndication service to update multiple social media at once) and how often statistical reports should be updated for each service (hourly, daily, weekly, or monthly).

The more complex the social media campaign, the more functionality the dashboard needs. For example, Natasha Wescoat's home page ([www.natashawescoat.com](http://www.natashawescoat.com)), shown in Figure 3-6, indicates that her dashboard might include controls and analytics for a Facebook fan page, her blog, and other components of the social Web. Read more in the nearby sidebar about Ms. Wescoat's social presence.

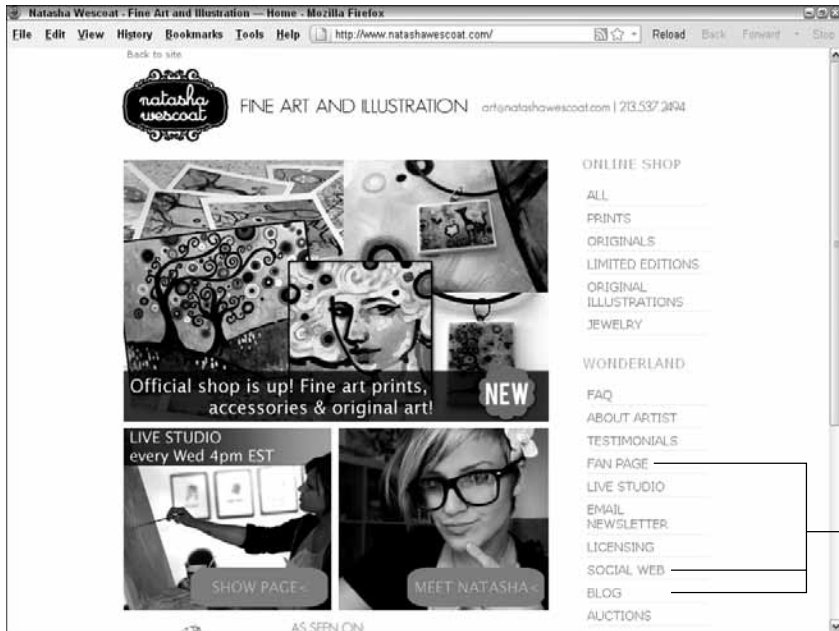


Dashboards sound simple to use, but they can be a bit of a challenge to set up. In some cases, your programmer needs to create or customize *widgets* (mini applications). Plan to create and test several versions of the dashboard until everyone is satisfied with the results.

Consider implementing password access for approved users to various functions within the dashboard. Some users might be constrained to viewing reports whereas others might be allowed to change the dashboard configuration.



**Figure 3-6:** The number of social media options, shown here in the lower right navigation area, affects the complexity of a dashboard.



Social media

Courtesy Natasha Wescoat

## Social media as an art form

Artist Natasha Wescoat is a one-woman band, selling her exuberant art (refer to Figure 3-6) online directly to consumers in the United States, United Kingdom, and Australia. Wescoat learned how to use the social media tools herself. “I’m naturally inclined towards technology and studied graphic design in school, so I did all of my design and site work, as well as putting up my own profiles and Web sites.”

For Wescoat, social media was a match between technology and personality. “I’ve always loved using the Internet, so it was natural to incorporate it. I started in 2004 with blogging on LiveJournal. I felt that it could possibly be good to fill in my new collectors on what I was doing and what I was interested

in, as well as what I was offering.” Over the next three years, she added video blogging and Facebook, MySpace, and Twitter accounts. In each case, she was an early adopter, experimenting with the capability of each medium and its potential profitability. “I never had a master plan. I just did what I wanted to do,” says Wescoat, in true artistic form.

As she explains, “The centerpiece of my Web presence is definitely my blog (see the nearby figure). I keep it going and update it a lot, so I have people going there first to find out anything. I’m on these sites all the time, and it can be exhausting. I spend probably 30 hours per week on my social networks, answering e-mails [reviewing] comments, commenting back, sharing content and new work, adding

(continued)

(continued)

people, posting on walls, reading, and exploring their content.”

Wescoat spends five hours or more creating each video. “I try not to spend a lot of money on anything I use, because I don’t have the money to. A lot of what is available to use online is free.” She does now use sites such as HootSuite or TweetDeck to post her content to multiple social networks, “so it’s not such a hassle any more to update.”

In any case, Wescoat has made a serious time commitment to social media. “Sometimes I use press releases, but my marketing is strictly social media. I haven’t found the need for traditional marketing for anything, and that’s the great thing about it all.” Wescoat also incorporates Follow and Share icons on her site and places links in posts and throughout her social networks to other sites in her suite of outlets.

Wescoat is unconventional in her approach, treating social media almost as an artistic medium. “I don’t even think about it as marketing. I think about it as sharing and offering. I love to talk to others and connect with people [with whom] I could possibly have a personal or business relationship. The relationships really matter. People who use social media or live on these things can tell when someone is not honest or is just out there to sell something. You have to really enjoy the Web, and really enjoy the tools and the people that use them.”

“I’m not trying to target a specific market. I try to focus on the audience that is drawn to me. Every artist [who] uses social media has a different audience, and [he or she] will use different tools or not use the Internet at all. It really depends greatly on your product and you. Newsletters however, are still very important and really matter in my marketing scheme, because the majority, if not all, of my true collectors are not even interested in social media sites or use them.”

As for assessing effectiveness, “I try to manage it by instinct,” Wescoat adds, “I know by the results of my efforts. I have enjoyed, however, sites such as Social Mention, Alexa, and Google Analytics for traffic, keywords, backlinks, references, and rates of visits.”

“Social media isn’t the end-all to success,” reminds Wescoat. “It’s the icing on the cake. It’s the communicator. It goes great in combination with other efforts. I see those who do traditional marketing as well, and they are much more successful than I. When using social media, learn to enjoy the tools and get to know people. It takes a *long* time to build a reputation and trust with others. If you want to sell, you have to put that on the shelf and build the relationships first.”

#### Natasha Wescoat’s URLs

[www.natashawescoat.com](http://www.natashawescoat.com)

[www.natashawescoat.com/blog](http://www.natashawescoat.com/blog)

[www.natashasartcandy.com](http://www.natashasartcandy.com)

<http://artcandy.tv>

[www.twitter.com/natasha](http://www.twitter.com/natasha)

[www.facebook.com/natashawescoat](http://www.facebook.com/natashawescoat)

[www.vimeo.com/natashawescoat](http://www.vimeo.com/natashawescoat)

[www.youtube.com/user/postmodernartist](http://www.youtube.com/user/postmodernartist)

[www.linkedin.com/in/natashawescoat](http://www.linkedin.com/in/natashawescoat)

[www.flickr.com/photos/natashawescoat](http://www.flickr.com/photos/natashawescoat)

[www.myspace.com/natashawescoatart](http://www.myspace.com/natashawescoatart)



## *Building Your Social Media Marketing Dream Team*

Just for the moment, assume that you have employees who can — and are willing to — share the burden of social media. If you live a rich fantasy life, assume that you might even hire someone to take the lead.

In a larger company, the nexus for control of social media varies: In some cases, it's the marketing department; in others, corporate communications, public relations, sales, or customer support takes the lead.

Some companies disperse responsibilities throughout the company and have tens to dozens of people blogging and tweeting.

If your plan requires multiple employees to leverage LinkedIn profiles for B2B reasons, as well as post on multiple blogs in their individual areas of expertise and tweet current events in their departments, your need for coordination will increase.

Be cautious about asking employees to coordinate links and comments with their personal social media accounts. This task should be voluntary.

Alternatively, on company time and on an account that “belongs” to your company (using a business e-mail address), ask employees to develop a hybrid personal-and-business account where their personalities can shine. Now, individual privacy and First Amendment rights are respected on their separate personal accounts, and you have no liability for the content they post there.



No matter who does the bulk of the work — your staff members or contractors or a combination — always monitor your program randomly but regularly. In addition to getting routine reports on the results, log in to your accounts for a few minutes at various times of the day and week to see what’s going on.

### *Seeking a skilled social director*

A good social media director should have an extroverted personality. This person should truly enjoy interacting with others and take intrinsic pleasure in conversation and communication. You might want to look, based on your chosen tactics, for someone who can

- ◆ Write quickly and well, with the right tone for your market
- ◆ Listen well, with an “ear” for your target audiences and their concerns
- ◆ Post without using defamatory language or making libelous statements about competitors
- ◆ Communicate knowledgeably about your company and products or services
- ◆ Recognize opportunities and develop creative responses or campaigns
- ◆ Work tactfully with others, alerting them when problems or complaints surface
- ◆ Articulate the goals of social media well enough to take a leadership role in encouraging others to explore its potential
- ◆ Analyze situations to draw conclusions from data
- ◆ Adapt to new social media and mobile technologies as they arise
- ◆ Learn quickly (because this field is extremely fluid)

This combination of skills, experience, and personality may be hard to find. Add to it the need to reach different submarkets for different reasons. Now you have several reasons to build a team with a leader, rather than rely on a single individual to handle all your social media needs.



You usually can’t just “add” social media to someone’s task list; be prepared to reassign some tasks to other people.

Depending on the size and nature of your social media effort, your dream team may also need someone with production skills for podcasting or video-casting, or at least for producing and directing the development of those components. Though this person may not need extensive graphical, photographic, presentation, or data crunching skills, having some skills in each of those areas is helpful.

Hiring twentysomethings (or younger) because they're "familiar" with social media may sound like a good idea, but people in this age group aren't as likely to be familiar with business protocol or sensitive to business relationships, as someone older and more experienced might be. You might need to allow extra time for training, review, and revision.

### *Looking inside*

Before implementing a social media plan, speak with your employees to invite their input, assess their level of interest in this effort, evaluate existing skill sets, and ascertain social media experience. Consider all these factors before you move forward; by rearranging task assignments or priorities, you may be able to select in-house personnel to handle this new project.



Leave time for communication, education, and training, not only at the beginning but also on an ongoing basis.

### *Hiring experts*

Think about using professionals for the tech-heavy pieces, such as podcasts, videocasts, or design, unless you're going for the just-us-folks tone. Professionals can get you started by establishing a model for your staff to follow, or you may want to hire them for long-term tasks such as writing or editing your blogs for consistency.

Many advertising agencies, PR firms, search engine optimizers, marketing companies, and copywriters now take on social media contracts. If you've already worked with someone you like, you can start there. If not, select social media professionals the same way you would select any other professional service provider:

- ◆ Ask your local business colleagues for referrals.
- ◆ Check sources such as LinkedIn and Plaxo. If appropriate, post your search criteria on your site, blog, social media outlets, and topic-related sites. In Book VI, Chapter 3, we show you how to post job opportunities on LinkedIn.
- ◆ Request several price quotes. If your job is large enough, write and distribute a formal Request for Proposal (RFP).
- ◆ Review previous work completed by the contractors.
- ◆ Check references.

## Creating a Social Media Marketing Policy

Even if you're the only person involved in social media marketing at the beginning, write up a few general guidelines for yourself that you can expand later. In Figure 3-7, the ITBusinessEdge site ([www.itbusinessedge.com](http://www.itbusinessedge.com)) shows a simple social media policy.



**Figure 3-7:**  
A simple social media policy may be enough to get you started.

Courtesy NarrowCast Group/IT Business

Most policies address the social media issue both in terms of what employees are allowed to do on behalf of the company and on what they aren't allowed to do. For example:

- ◆ Employees may not be allowed to use personal social accounts on company time.
- ◆ Some trained employees may be allowed to post customer support replies on behalf of the company, while others are responsible for new product information.

For additional information, see the resources listed in Table 3-3.

**Table 3-3 Social Media Policy Resource Sites**

<i>Name</i>	<i>URL</i>	<i>Description</i>
Daniel Hoang	<a href="http://www.danielhoang.com/2009/02/21/social-media-policies-and-procedures">www.danielhoang.com/2009/02/21/social-media-policies-and-procedures</a>	Social media policy article
Digital Brand Expressions	<a href="http://www.digitalbrandexpressions.com/services/company-social-media-policy.asp">www.digitalbrandexpressions.com/services/company-social-media-policy.asp</a>	Free checklist
emTrain	<a href="http://www.emtrain.com/site/page.php?p=whitepapers">www.emtrain.com/site/page.php?p=whitepapers</a>	Free articles and guidelines
Inc.com	<a href="http://www.inc.com/articles/2010/01/need-a-social-media-policy.html">www.inc.com/articles/2010/01/need-a-social-media-policy.html</a>	Article titled “Do You Need a Social Media Policy?”
Mashable	<a href="http://mashable.com/2009/04/27/social-media-policy">http://mashable.com/2009/04/27/social-media-policy</a>	Article titled “Should Your Company Have a Social Media Policy?”
Mashable	<a href="http://mashable.com/2009/06/02/social-media-policy-musts">http://mashable.com/2009/06/02/social-media-policy-musts</a>	“10 Must-Haves for Your Social Media Policy”
Policy Tool for Social Media	<a href="http://socialmedia.policytool.net">http://socialmedia.policytool.net</a>	Free social media policy generator
Social Media Governance	<a href="http://socialmediagovernance.com/policies.php">http://socialmediagovernance.com/policies.php</a>	Free database of policies for review
Toolkit Café	<a href="http://toolkitcafe.com/social_media_policies.php">http://toolkitcafe.com/social_media_policies.php</a>	Policies toolkit (\$149)



To increase compliance, keep your policy short and easy to read. Try to focus on what people *can do* rather than on what they cannot do.

A typical policy addresses risk management, intellectual property protection, individual privacy protection, and the respect of your audience,

company, and fellow employees. Try to incorporate the following suggested concepts, adapted from Mashable (<http://mashable.com/2009/06/02/social-media-policy-musts>):

- ◆ Hold individuals responsible for what they write.
- ◆ Disclose who you are, including your company name and title.
- ◆ Recognize that clients, prospects, competitors, and potential future employees are part of your audience.
- ◆ Be respectful of everyone.
- ◆ Understand the tenor of each social media community and follow its precepts.
- ◆ Respect copyright and trademarks.
- ◆ Protect your company's confidential trade secret and proprietary information in addition to client data, especially trade secret information under nondisclosure agreements.
- ◆ Do *not* allow personal social media activity to interfere with work.



The complexity of your social media policy depends on the extent of your social media marketing effort and the number of people and departments involved. Generally, the larger the company, the longer the policy.

### *Staying on the Right Side of the Law*

Just about everything in social media pushes the limits of existing intellectual property law. So much information is now repeated online that ownership lines are becoming blurred, much to some people's dismay and damage.

When in doubt, don't copy. Instead, use citations, quote marks, and links to the original source. Always go back to the original to ensure that the information is accurate.



Watch blogs such as Mashable and TechCrunch for information about legal wrangling. New case law, regulations, and conflicts bubble up continually.

### *Obtaining permission to avoid infringement*

You can't (legally) use extended content from someone else's Web site, blog, or social media page on your own site, even if you can save it or download it. Nope, not even if you include a credit line saying where it came from. Not





even if you use only a portion of the content and link to the rest. Not text, not graphics, not compiled data, not photos. Nothing. Nada. Nil. Zilch.

Though small text extracts with attribution are permitted under fair use doctrine, the copyright concept is intended for individuals and educational institutions, not for profit-making companies. If you don't obtain permission, you and your company can be sued for copyright infringement. In the best-case scenario, you can be asked to cease and desist. In the worst case, your site can be shut down, and you might face other damages.

The way around this situation is simple: Send a permission request such as the one in the nearby sidebar "Sample copyright permission."

## Sample copyright permission

Dear \_\_\_\_\_:

Watermelon Mountain Web Marketing wants permission to use your (*information, article, screen shot, art, data, photograph*) on our (*Web site/blog/social media page*) at [*this URL: WatermelonWeb.com*] and in other media not yet specified. We have attached a copy of the information we want to use. If it meets with your approval, please sign the following release and indicate the credit line you want. You can return the signed form as an e-mail message, a PDF file, a digitally signed document, a fax, or a first class mail message. Thank you for your prompt response.

The undersigned authorizes Watermelon Mountain Web Marketing to use the attached material without limit for no charge.

Signature:

Printed name:

Title:

Company name:

Company address:

Telephone/fax/e-mail:

Company domain name:

Credit line:

Be especially careful with photographs, which are usually copyrighted. Here are a few places to find free or low-cost images legally:

- ◆ Select from the wealth of material offered under a Creative Commons license (<http://creativecommons.org>) or copyright-free images from the federal government.
- ◆ Flickr Commons ([www.flickr.com/commons](http://www.flickr.com/commons)) has thousands of free photographs.
- ◆ Search <http://images.google.com> and read the copyright information at the top of each image.
- ◆ Look for stock images from inexpensive sources such as iStockphoto ([www.istockphoto.com](http://www.istockphoto.com)), Stock Exchange (<http://www.sxc.hu>), or [freerangestock.com](http://freerangestock.com).



Trademarks and logos also usually require permission to use, though the logos (icons) that social media companies provide for Share This or Follow Us On functionality are fine to use without permission. If you find an image in the Press or Media section of a company's Web site, you can assume that you have permission to reproduce it without further permission. Generally, a disclaimer that "all other logos and trademarks are the property of their respective owners" will suffice.

If it's illegal offline, it's illegal online.

### ***Respecting privacy***

Providing a disclaimer about keeping user information private is even more critical now that people sign up willy-nilly online. Individual privacy, already under threat, has become quite slippery with the newly released plans for making a Facebook Connect sign-in available on all sorts of third-party sites. Facebook Connect may make sign-ins simpler for a user, but it gives Facebook access to user behavior on the Web while giving third parties access to users' Facebook profiles for demographic analysis.

Photographs of identifiable individuals, not taken in a public space, historically have required a waiver to use for commercial purposes. When individuals post their images on Facebook, LinkedIn, MySpace, or elsewhere, they may not intend to give permission for that image to appear elsewhere.

Respect a person's space; do not post publicly viewable images of people's faces on any of your social media pages unless you have permission. For a simple photo waiver, see [www.nyip.com/ezine/techtips/model-release.html](http://www.nyip.com/ezine/techtips/model-release.html).

## Revealing product endorsement relationships

Taking aim at companies that were arranging paid recommendations from bloggers (think about the deejay payola scandal of the 1950s), the Federal Trade Commission (FTC) issued new regulations in October 2009 that gave the blogosphere conniptions. The new rule requires bloggers to disclose whether they've received any type of payment or free products in exchange for a positive review.

The rule doesn't appear to apply to individuals who post a review on public review sites such as Epinions.com or TripAdvisor or Yelp, but it applies if you review other companies' products on your blog or send products to other bloggers to request a review. (In 2010, Yelp ran into other legal problems for allegedly requiring companies to buy advertising to balance the appearance of positive and negative reviews on a results page — but that's a topic for another book.)

You can find out more about this requirement from the disclosure resources listed in Table 3-4. Many bloggers, offended by the rules, have found humorous or sarcastic ways to comply; others, such as the blogger shown in Figure 3-8, are more matter-of-fact about it.



**Figure 3-8:** The blogger sets out a clear acknowledgment policy on product endorsement.

Courtesy 15 Minute Beauty Fanatic

<b>Table 3-4 Legal Resource Sites</b>		
<i>Name</i>	<i>URL</i>	<i>Description</i>
American Bar Association	<a href="http://www.abanet.org/intelprop/home.html">www.abanet.org/intelprop/home.html</a>	Intellectual property resource lists
Cases Blog	<a href="http://casesblog.blogspot.com/2010/04/guidance-on-blogger-disclosure-and-ftc.html">http://casesblog.blogspot.com/2010/04/guidance-on-blogger-disclosure-and-ftc.html</a>	Blog disclosure summary
U.S. Copyright Office	<a href="http://www.copyright.gov">www.copyright.gov</a>	Copyright information and submission
Edelman Digital	<a href="http://edemandigital.com/2010/03/18/sxsw-essentials-practical-guidance-on-blogger-disclosure-and-ftc-guidelines">http://edemandigital.com/2010/03/18/sxsw-essentials-practical-guidance-on-blogger-disclosure-and-ftc-guidelines</a>	Blog disclosure article
Electronic Frontier Foundation	<a href="http://www.eff.org">www.eff.org</a>	Not-for-profit focused on free speech, privacy, and consumer rights
FindLaw	<a href="http://smallbusiness.findlaw.com/business-operations/small-business-internet/">http://smallbusiness.findlaw.com/business-operations/small-business-internet/</a>	Online legal issues
International Technology Law Association	<a href="http://www.itechlaw.org">www.itechlaw.org</a>	Online legal issues
Internet Legal Research Group	<a href="http://www.ilrg.com">www.ilrg.com</a>	Index of legal sites, free forms, and documents
Nolo	<a href="http://www.nolo.com/legal-encyclopedia/ecommerce-website-development">http://www.nolo.com/legal-encyclopedia/ecommerce-website-development</a>	Online legal issues
United States Patent and Trademark Office	<a href="http://www.uspto.gov">www.uspto.gov</a>	Patent and trademark information, databases, and submission
Word of Mouth Marketing Association	<a href="http://womma.org/ethics/disclosure">http://womma.org/ethics/disclosure</a>	Blog disclosure article



Regardless of what you think of the policy, reveal any payments or free promotional products you've received. You can, of course, be as clever, funny, cynical, or straightforward as you want.

## Protecting Your Brand

The three important aspects to protecting your brand online are copyright protection, trademark protection, and brand reputation.

### *Copyrighting your material*

*Copyright* protects creative work in any medium — text, photos, graphics, audio, video, multimedia, software — from being used by others without permission or payment. Your work becomes your intellectual property as soon as you've created it in a fixed form. The rules for copyright are simple: Protect your own work and don't use other people's work without permission.

Whenever you sign an agreement with a subcontractor, especially a photographer, to create original work for your Web site, social media pages, or other advertising venue, read the contract to determine who will own the copyright on the work they create. In most cases, you can stipulate that their efforts constitute a work-for-hire arrangement, so the copyright belongs to you. (Photographers may give you only a limited license to use their creative work in one application.)

Your employee agreement should clearly state that your company retains ownership of any intellectual property that employees create for you. This area gets interesting if employees post things about your company on their personal social media accounts. It's another reason, if you needed one, for creating a hybrid personal/business account.

Put a copyright notice on your Web site. The standard format includes the word *copyright* or *copr* or the symbol © followed by the year, name of copyright holder, and, usually, the term *All Rights Reserved*. The easiest way to do this is in the footer so that it appears on every page. Here's an example you can incorporate into your Web site or blog, or other uniquely created material:

© 2010 Watermelon Mountain Web Marketing All rights reserved.

This common law copyright notice informs other people that the material is copyrighted and gives you basic protections. For more protection, file officially at [www.copyright.gov](http://www.copyright.gov). Basic online submissions start at only \$35. Copyright is usually easy enough to file yourself, but call the copyright office or your attorney if you have questions.



You cannot copyright ideas or titles.

### ***Trademarking your brand names***

*Trademarks* (for goods) or *service marks* (for services) give you the exclusive right to use a particular name or logotype within specific commercial categories. You can trademark your own name, if you want, and you must acknowledge the trademarks and service marks of others. The first time you use a trademarked name (including your own) in text on your site, follow it with the superscript ® for a registered mark or ™ for a pending mark that hasn't yet been issued. Provide a notice of trademark ownership somewhere on your sites.



Trademark rights apply online. For instance, only the trademark owner has the legal right to register domain name with that trademark. The same constraint applies to celebrity names. If you think a competitor is infringing one of your trademarks, see your intellectual property (IP) or business attorney.

Fees for online filing start at \$275 but depend on which form you must file. Filing a trademark is a bit more complicated than filing a copyright application. For directions, see the trademark section of the United States Patent and Trademark Office site ([www.uspto.gov/trademarks/index.jsp](http://www.uspto.gov/trademarks/index.jsp)). Check the trademark database (<http://tess2.uspto.gov>) for availability of the trademark within your class of goods or services, and then follow the prompts. Though you can legally submit a trademark application yourself, you might want to call an IP attorney for help.



Filing a patent is much more difficult, and much more expensive, than filing a trademark. Be sure to consult an IP attorney for patent filings.

### ***Protecting your brand reputation***

Start protecting your brand now by registering your name for social media accounts. To avoid “brandjacking,” try to choose the most popular, available “handle” that will work across multiple sites. Use your company or product name and keep it short.



Even if you don't plan to do anything else in social media for a year or more, register your name now on Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, and Google Buzz and on any other sites you might want in the future, such as Flickr, MySpace, or YouTube. You can do this on every site as you read this book or reserve them all now.

A number of companies now offer tools that claim to assess the “quality” of what people are saying about your company, products, or staff. In addition to counting how many times your name appears, they try to assess the “sentiment” of postings — whether statements are negative or positive. Some also offer an assessment of the degree of engagement — how enthusiastic or hostile a statement might be.

Some people then take this information, along with frequency of posting, and use their own, proprietary formulas to assign a quantitative value to your online reputation, as shown in the example in Figure 3-9.



**Figure 3-9:** BrandsEye offers an inexpensive “reputation” management tool that scales up for larger users.

Courtesy BrandsEye

Be cautious about assigning too much weight to these brand reputation tools, some of which are described in Table 3-5. They may produce widely varying results, and most rely on software that cannot understand complex sentences or shortened phrases with words omitted. If you think your dense sibling doesn't understand irony, don't try sarcasm with a computer!

<b>Table 3-5 Brand Sentiment Resources</b>		
<i>Name</i>	<i>URL</i>	<i>Description</i>
Alterian	<a href="http://www.alterian-social-media.com">www.alterian-social-media.com</a>	Social media sentiment tool; paid, free trial
Biz360	<a href="http://www.biz360.com/products/community_insights.aspx">www.biz360.com/products/community_insights.aspx</a>	Blog and message board sentiment analysis; paid
BlogPulse (from Nielsen)	<a href="http://www.blogpulse.com">www.blogpulse.com</a>	Automated trend discovery tool for blogs
BrandsEye	<a href="http://www.brandseye.com">www.brandseye.com</a>	Online reputation tool that starts at \$1 per month
Collective Intellect	<a href="http://www.collectiveintellect.com">www.collectiveintellect.com</a>	Consumer perception tool based on semantic analysis
Jodange	<a href="http://jodange.com/index.html">http://jodange.com/index.html</a>	Sentiment tool for social and traditional media
Naymz	<a href="http://www.naymz.com">www.naymz.com</a>	Personal reputation on social media
The Net-Savvy Executive	<a href="http://net-savvy.com/executive/tools/monitoring-social-media-before-you-have-a-bud.html">http://net-savvy.com/executive/tools/monitoring-social-media-before-you-have-a-bud.html</a>	List of sentiment tools
ReputationDefender	<a href="http://www.reputationdefender.com/my_reputation">www.reputationdefender.com/my_reputation</a>	Online personal reputation tool
Scout Labs	<a href="http://www.scoutlabs.com">www.scoutlabs.com</a>	Social media sentiment tool; paid, free trial



<i>Name</i>	<i>URL</i>	<i>Description</i>
SitePoint	<a href="http://www.sitepoint.com/blogs/2009/05/21/tools-manage-online-reputation">www.sitepoint.com/blogs/2009/05/21/tools-manage-online-reputation</a>	List of 16 free reputation tools
TopRank Online Marketing	<a href="http://www.toprankblog.com/2008/05/top-10-reasons-for-monitoring-brands-in-social-media">www.toprankblog.com/2008/05/top-10-reasons-for-monitoring-brands-in-social-media</a>	Article about monitoring your brand online to protect your corporate reputation
Trackur	<a href="http://www.trackur.com">www.trackur.com</a>	Reputation protection tool; free trial
Trendpedia	<a href="http://trendpedia.com">http://trendpedia.com</a>	Blog trend tool; free
Trendrr	<a href="http://www.trendrr.com">www.trendrr.com</a>	Qualitative, influence, sentiment, and other trends across multiple social media; paid
TweetFeel	<a href="http://www.tweetfeel.com">www.tweetfeel.com</a>	Twitter sentiment tool; free
Twitrratr	<a href="http://twitrratr.com">http://twitrratr.com</a>	Twitter sentiment tool; free
Twitter Sentiment	<a href="http://twitter-sentiment.appspot.com">http://twitter-sentiment.appspot.com</a>	Twitter sentiment tool; free
WE twendz pro	<a href="http://twendz.waggeneratedstrom.com">http://twendz.waggeneratedstrom.com</a>	Twitter sentiment tool; paid, free trial

Notwithstanding the warnings, experiment with one of the free or freemium sentiment-measuring tools in Table 3-5 to see what, if anything, people are saying. (*Freemium* tools offer a free version with limited features; more extensive feature sets carry a charge.) Those results, such as they are, will become one of many baselines for your social media effort. Unless you already have a significant Web presence, you may not find much.

Of course, many of these tools are designed for use by multinational corporations worried about their reputations after negative events, such as the Toyota auto recall or the British Petroleum oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico.

For you, the sentiment results might be good for a laugh or make excellent party chatter at your next tweet-up.