**Simplifying Social Media for Solopreneurs**

Let's get started. When you get the slide deck you will have my contact information. Simplifying social media is understanding why we should do this in the first place. The only real reason is to drive traffic back to your website. It helps generate leads for your business. Everything that you do, you can focus on how you'll get it back to your website So your followers can consume your content subscribe to an email list, that is the purpose of social media.

It works like this, when you start posting in social media, the hope is that the content your posting will be shared. In doing so, the followers are expanding your reach so more people get to see what the content is. If nothing is being shared, you need to look at what you are putting out there and you can make changes.

Once you get things shared then the plan is for the people that are seeing that to become subscribers. Once they become subscribers then you can start to drive the traffic back to your website so there's followers continue to consume your content and clicking on the content drive them back to your website, once they get there, the best thing that can happen is for them to subscribe to your email list. You need to make that really easy for them to do so and normally you need to have some kind of chart because everybody wants the email addresses today.

Give them something that makes a compelling for them to give you their email address. Having the address allows you to do a consistent ongoing marketing plan so you can turn those subscribers into customer conversions.

When you think about everything you will do in social media, it comes down to getting people to follow you, drive those people to your website, getting them up into your email list and converting them into customers.

Before you go setting up an account on every platform, you need to think about who the audience is and where they are at online. I want you to be aware of how to use this content when you get the slide show.

If we look here, the percentage of online adults, Facebook is the chosen choice. They are also on YouTube there's a correlation that they are on Facebook and YouTube and if you look at the breakdown of income, you can see based on who the customer is, this decides what platform they are on so you know where you should be spending your time.

Also you can break it down by college level, education level, and income. That is important so what is important is for you to understand who the target market is and not to just say, women that are 50, 60 years old, you need to understand who the target market is and it cannot be everybody.

You will get the slides so you can have the data to refer back to. Once you look at the data and you determine where you need to be, you still need to do some investigating on the platform, spend time to make certain that not only are the audiences they are but they are engaged on a platform.

Now that you know where they are, how will you use social media?

I want to focus on the success cycle and how you define that. Part of this is social listening, that means that you're listening to the conversations that are being had around your industry and around your own brand. There are easy ways to do this. You can set up streams for having those things monitored on a consistent basis and as your business grows, social listening becomes a great way to manage customer service. >> Social listening helps with customer service and with monitoring what is being said around your industry.

We have social influencing, that is establishing authority in the industry, the area you're focused on, that comes down to creating excellent content as well as sharing other content from other sources that shows that you know the industry, you know your stuff.

We have social networking, this is about engaging with others, some in your industry, authorities that have large followings, engaging with them that can help to broaden your reach because they already have the people that you want to be engaged with. Engaging with them can be helpful.

It comes back around to the final step is the social selling, generating leads and sales from existing customers and from prospects.

How does that translate?

If you take the information and you look at the goals around those things, social listening, you manage reputation, increase retention, you can reduce refunds if you sell product, identify gaps in your products and content, and I can be really crucial to helping your prospects move down the buyer's journey, so you make certain your answering all the questions that they have along the way.

Social influencing is about increasing engagement, increasing your website traffic, increase your awareness and grow your retargeting lists.

Social networking, getting media mentions and develop strategic partnerships, a strong influence that mentioned your brand or shares your content consistently can go a long way to giving you the broad awareness that you want to have for your business.

Social selling is generating the leads, that means growing the email list, making the initial customer acquisition, and cross-selling and up selling so you can increase your buyer frequency.

How do you get started?

If you're not on social media yet, be smart about how you set up your accounts. I have had more than one client has come to me to manage their media and their account was set up by a previous employee. The owners does not have access to those accounts. They may have a safe book -- a Facebook page but they cannot access that. Be smart about things, set up an account using generic email accounts, so you can have some to have access to the account and to the email account but they don't have to have personal access.

Be careful about how much information you put out there because you want to protector privacy. -- You want to protect your privacy.

Think before you post. If you are on social media for your business, it's a lot different than what you might do with just friends and family. Any potential prospect can see what you are doing online and you want to make certain that what you're putting out there is positive and reinforces your brand.

Social media content, it is a rule of thirds, one third of the time the content should promote your business and convert your audience, it might be content from -- it may be shared, maybe a white paper, or low cost entry points to get customers involved. A third of the time you should be sharing content from other sources, from other thought leaders in the industry. Make certain that it is content that you believe the audience would be interested in and they would find it engaging and one third of the time it should be your original brand content, blog posts from your website, facts about your industry, and drive it back to our frequently asked questions page on your website. It needs to be original content and helps establish you as an influencer in that space.

The number one thing is pick one platform, get really good at it and move on. There's nothing worse for your business than to set up an account that is not active. Then it looks like -- you don't care or you're not paying attention or you are out of business so make certain that whatever account you set up that you will be active.

Here is the kind of thing you need to get started. A local file, a good photograph of yourself, on twitter, people respond better to individuals than they do with logos so depending on what the business is, if you're selling widgets and your face is not the face of the brand, then use your logo. Otherwise consider using your photograph of yourself.

You need background images, timeline images, for every platform and they are all different, you want those same styles of templates so you can use that in your email blast and on the of the downloadable documents, and even your blog template. Your brand should have a visual consistency across all of those platforms. They know who you are.

Here is a link that is available which is a media image size guide. They changed them periodically. This link is updated consistently see you can always go there to find the correct size for any of these images that you need.

There are two different tools that you can use to create those, one is canvas, the other is get stencil.com. Both of those are inexpensive and easy to use.

Define your goals. Set the goals in advance, take the next 90, 120 days to work on reaching those goals and evaluate, do a quick audit of what you have accomplished, and then tweak things, and then go back again and do it again. It takes some time to get the results. What do you want to do? Move people into taking action? You want to increase your email and blog subscribers. You want more lights and fans and followers. Improve your search engine ranking which can be done by using social media, it is one of the criteria that Google would use to see if you're being mentioned and engaging. It is one of those things that you certainly want to consider.

Do you want to increase your blog post comments? The day -- today that is difficult to do. Do you want to reduce your website bounce rate? That means that they land on your website, and they leave from the same page that they entered. You don't want that to happen. You want that to be less than 50% of the time. Sometimes it is a blog post that you have shared, they read it and then they leave. They don't necessarily click around. That is not a bad thing if you see at the time on site, that they are spending a couple of minutes on the site so blog posted is done well with bullet points to make things easy for people to read, two or three minutes is about the time they would spend and then leave. If they are staying there for 30 seconds and then they leave then you have a problem. You need to work on identifying what you can do better to reduce those bounce rates.

If you have events that you do on a regular basis, workshops, social media can be a great way to increase your registration. It can be helpful to turn fans into brand advocates, if you're engaging in social media and you notice maybe two or three individuals that are more engaged with their brand than other people are, if you really spend the time connecting with them, you can turn them into advocates, they will cheer on everything that you do and then in doing so they will expand your reach so you will get more and more people that will see what you are doing.

That is something to consider. Increase your website traffic, you want to do that and increase your sales. However if you're brand-new to social media and you're just getting started, you have to build the following and that has to be probably, the number one goal in the beginning, build a following and increase the awareness that is being seen on the social media platform. Make certain that people are following you and they see who you are.

There are certain activities you can do to help with this. If you look at your social goals and align that with your business goals, brand awareness, you need more people to be aware that your brain exist and you want to expand that, social media needs to be reached. You need more followers.

If the business goals are to be seen as a thought leader, to create that influence, the social goals need to be consumption. More and more people have to be consuming your content and seeing you as that thought leader.

If you're trying to increase your business through word-of-mouth, the social goals need to be sharing and liking, people have to be like you what you're putting out and sharing it with their friends so you get that word-of-mouth affect.

If the business goal is to lead, then the social goals need to take action, you have to click through to your website and put their email address in there. Then you can market to them because email still is the most effective way for conversion. If it is sales, then the social goal is conversion. They take the action as far as creating the lead and then you use the email marketing to create the sales through conversion.

Let's look at how we might sell a pet photographer, what we can recommend they do in social media.

The platform that we would suggest would be Facebook, Instagram, Pinterest, twitter. Facebook is the largest platform and they should be there just because everybody that might do a search would probably look for them on Facebook.

 Then Instagram, they are a photographer and Instagram is all about images, and so is Pinterest. Twitter has become more visual as well. Twitter is also between all four of these, Pinterest and twitter will drive more traffic to your website. Especially if what you're doing is very visual.

What we would ask them, they need to share with in social media, share images of their work, the images of the pets that they are photographing. They should probably educate their audience always great photography is, it gives them something else to share and it helps their audience, I might take great photographs of my own dogs and if they educate me on what makes a good photograph then I would the very happy with them. They might want to do a video, a behind the scene video so while they are doing the photography they would have a somebody -- they would have somebody photographing them. People find that interesting. They like to be -- people want to see what is going on behind the scenes. They should spotlight one pet each week and maybe do some kind of giveaway each month with letting people vote for which one of those spotlights, which one of those pets got the most votes for the month. >> Original post to each platform, immediately, as soon as they have an image and they want to post that to all the platforms at the same time, they want to do that right away. Then they repost to twitter several times during the first week. Twitter moves so quickly that they will not see the same thing because it goes back to the stream. You want to repost on Facebook every 45 days, content that does not become dated and promotes on Pinterest to increase the reach.

Let's talk about a few strategies for each one of the platforms.

 Joining groups that had your target audience, make sure you're sharing your blog content within those groups and participate in discussions. Add your blog post as articles on LinkedIn with a call to action driving them back to your website and make sure the company profile is posted consistently and if you are the owner make sure you request recommendations because people on LinkedIn see you as an individual.

 Facebook strategies, pay per click ads, they can target your audience by what they like, age, relationship status. You can build a following. Facebook want you to pay for that. You can do a Facebook only contest to increase your email subscribers, you can create a Facebook group and this is using a group and using video on Facebook that can be powerful so your group can be about your subject matter and you can talk to them live as often as you want and when you do that, Facebook -- if you post this to your business page, Facebook will expand your reach because they want people to use more visit -- more video.

 Increase engagement.

Twitter strategies, hashtags are the symbol and a term that people follow in social media. If I was looking for a good content around social media I would go to twitter and I would search for social media and it will show me all the content that has been shared. That can help you to reach your target audience, you can use your hashtag in your post so when somebody is doing a search, you show up in those streams. Hashtags can be very helpful on twitter and on Instagram.

Put your message in front of like-minded people, one of the things that you can do is let say you do business to business sales to your part of the local chamber, on twitter you would like the chambers twitter account and if you look at the chambers followers, you can follow them. You can follow anybody that is following the chamber that will be a target for one of your prospect.

 Popularity, if you look at the twitter homepage on the left-hand side there is a section that says trends. This is what a lot of people are sharing on that particular day. If you can join the conversation, that can be a great way to expand your reach because that means a lot of people are looking at this and following.

 YouTube strategies, to be the most effective platform within a small business, it is the least used. Consistency is number one. Be posting videos consistently. An easy way to do this is to make a list of frequently asked questions and create videos that answer those questions. One or two minute videos, you can simply answer a question that is around your area of expertise. If you post one of those videos weekly, you will find that you can build a following and you can increase your search engine ranking with Google. Google loves video and if you do -- if you have a description of the video itself, it will increase how you rank on the search engine.

People go to YouTube to find how to videos, if you have a business that provides that how to thing, then creating how-to videos can be excellent, one of the ways to get exposure is to follow others and comment on their videos. That will expose you to their followers. YouTube has added call cards, you can add a link directly into the video. It makes it mobile friendly.

 There is periscope and Facebook, periscope is a live video that is part of twitter and Facebook now has its own live video. If you have three cameras you can broadcast all three of them at the same time.

 Pinterest strategies, this is a great way to tell your story. If you make certain that you create boards that help to tell your story of your brand, and you have other boards that would encourage engagement and they are topics that the audience would be attracted to, that will help you to get exposure. Make sure that every product or page that you are sharing has a great image. You should probably use text overlays on Pinterest. It makes you really quick for people to see what things are about and they are apt to pay attention. What you don't want to do is use hashtags on Pinterest. They do not perform well. Pinterest is digging for keywords. You want to have great keywords. Encourage engagement in activity by following others to post their pins to your profile.

It is helpful to resize your images so they are sized properly, both of the graphic programs I mentioned earlier will do that easily so it takes a second more but it will make your pins more effective.

If you sell a product that is great photography, then you definitely want to make certain you are on Pinterest. If you make purses, you need to be on Pinterest. Any kind of jewelry, you should be on Pinterest.

 Google strategies, Google is changing. You want to put the plus one button on your own website. You can create circles the same way within Facebook, you have specific people and groups, Google started that Facebook picked up on that, you can create collections, an area that you put content in that is valuable to your audience, I might have a collection all about business startups and would have things saved in that collection. The number one thing I want you to remember about Google plus is you can put a post on your map, that will give you more exposure.

Instagram strategies, follow those that follow others in your industry. You want to use hashtags, that is how anything gets found on Instagram. Up to 30 hashtags would be appropriate. That makes word searchable, and it can help you to get in front of more people. If you use -- the Explorer tab, you can see what hashtags are popular. Sometimes it is not that you want to have a hashtag that is use the most, that becomes harder to be seen. It makes more sense to look at the ones that get traffic but you have a chance to actually rank.

Let's talk about how you save some time. Post every day. It is not something you cannot take time off with, people forget about you and they walk away. Your email cannot be once a month. The email needs to be a minimum of weekly and your posts need to be a minimum of daily. Some platforms even more so but if you use a service like buffer it allows you to schedule your updates in advance. We schedule throughout the entire month, so we can spend our time engaging with the followers and answering questions.

Being as organized as possible to make the process easier. Spending a couple of hours one day a month scheduling everything out can make your life easier.

You can use the mobile apps for any of these platforms. You can do some of that quick engagement and following while you are waiting in line somewhere. Whatever it is. It only takes a few minutes. You can quickly jump on Instagram and follow 10, 15 people. Same thing with twitter. You can get involved with Facebook, and do some engagement.

These are the image programs that I have mentioned, CANVA or get stencil, they can create branded images. We like to have our clients logos on every image we share so if we are creating the image, people recognize the brand. It helps with awareness. Both programs are easy to use, and inexpensive. >>

 You have to be consistent. If you start something and you work at it for 60 days and you say, that doesn't work and you try the next shiny object, you will lose all your momentum. You have to be consistent and patient. This is not a quick saying. -- This is not a quick saying. This will take some time. It might take six months before you start to see sales trickling in. >>

 Thank you. Now we will have the Q&A portion.

Please continue to submit your questions.

If we do not have an opportunity to get your question today, please connect with the SCORE mentor after the webinar. Will send out the presentation slide deck containing the contact information and you can also reach out in that way as well.

Can you elaborate on what it means to grow retargeting lists?

 Retargeting lists is done on Facebook but can be done with other tools as well. I would start with Facebook. Facebook will give you a pixel. You install that on your website. Then you can create every targeted list within Facebook, let's say you have been running an ad and driving traffic to Facebook, then you are ready to get in front of those people. You can run an ad on Facebook that targets the people that had visited that specific page. So your ad can be specific. You may have -- at one point I was looking for chairs at here one. The chair kept popping up on Facebook over and over. It is like the way we use to use direct mail postcards to get people to take action.

Should you have separate social media accounts such as personal versus business?

Yes. Yes and no. On Facebook and LinkedIn, you have to have the personal account before you can create a business account. They don't have to be -- on Facebook nobody sees your personal account if you have a business page. They are kept separate. It's just for the management purposes.

Facebook now has business manager, you can set up a manager account and create the business page but they will still ask you for your personal Facebook login. On LinkedIn, the company page will show that you are connected to that company. You still have to have a personal account to create the business account. Twitter, if you will participate personally then I suggest you have both. On Instagram you should have both in the same with Pinterest. If you will be active as an individual on those platforms, keep your business account separate.

How would you advise delegating or outsourcing the social media tasks to an outside company?

It would start with understanding the strategy that they want to implement. They should help you develop a strategy. That is based on the target audience and tell you what the strategy is. Then you should receive a report that shows you growth, engagement, those kind of things so you have the data you need to analyze things.

Review that with them at least every 90 days. Make certain you are staying on track and you're getting feedback. >> Can you address how to deal with negative followers? Do you ever block accounts? >> My twitter account is my personal account. On twitter people connect more with people than they do with the company.

 I have blocked people and if there is something that is consistently negative, I would definitely block them and unfollow them. There are just some people out there that don't know how to be positive and you do not have to engage with them.

What is the difference between using a hashtag versus assemble?

The symbol is how you tag an individual or company it's how you tag another social media account. If I want to make sure Alexis has seen one of my post I would add her and she would be notified that I had included her on the post. If I am trying to be found by a keyword, then you use the hashtag with the keyword following it.

What does it mean to have a YouTube channel?

It just means that all the videos are housed in one account. So you can go to somebody's channel and you can see all the videos that they have posted. You can also use -- creates a video lest so you might have videos that you recommend. I have created a list that had some videos that I thought would help people when something goes bad.

You can do things like that with a channel. It is different than just posting a video.

 People can follow your channel and they will be notified when you post a new video.

What was the card that you referred to for the YouTube videos?

Once you upload a video, if you go to the edit information, you will see an option for card. And the card allows you to upload an image, put in the URL that you want them to go to, and put a call to action as part of that image. On the mobile device, when that card displays on the video, in the upper right-hand corner, when somebody clicks on the card, it might say I have a client that has downloaded a plan. When it pops up it says downloaded the white paper. When they click on that it takes them to the form that they can put their name and email address on to get that document emailed to them. >> Post do not get as much exposure if you use an outside scheduling company. Is this true?

The only place that is true is on Facebook. Facebook does not expose your post too many of your followers anyway. You might get 10% of your followers that will see anything that you post on Facebook on a regular basis. You want to upload video or to use video live Facebook will then let your followers see the videos. Around 2020 video will be the only content that is shared in social media.

Is a correct that seals are not allowed on Pinterest? -- Is it correct that sales are not allowed on pictures? >>

 Pinterest has things that people can purchase from the pin on the page. They do not have to be driven to your website to make the purchase.

What analytics are available for each social media platform to show the effectiveness of the campaign?

Every platform has an analytics dashboard accept -- Facebook and LinkedIn, they have some kind of dashboard that you can look at. If you're using a service like a social platform, they have reporting available within them, so you can gather the data from everything onto one report and not have to log into each one of those platforms. >> Twitter has analytics in settings. >>

 There wasn't much mentioned about Snapchat.

 I think Snapchat is perfect if you have an audience that is very young. That is the platform that they hang out on. If that is your target audience, you should be there. It's about consistency and using the video to tell the story. That's not something that you can schedule around in advance. You have to be engaged and do it right from your phone.

How would you recommend narrowing down your target audience?

If you do a search for personas you will find many examples of how to identify that persona. It comes down to understanding who you want to sell to. It doesn't mean you will not do business with other people it just means your message will be targeted, targeted at the individuals that you want to be doing business with. For myself, we focus on Solopreneurs. However, we do business with micro business owners and nonprofits. But the messaging is specific to Solopreneurs. I had to understand who they are, what they breed, -- what they read, join some groups on LinkedIn or on Facebook that have the target audience in them. And ask questions. Do a survey of any past clients. You want to really get real feedback and not just guess because that's what we normally do. It doesn't mean that we are right. It is helpful to get feedback.

What would you say is the best way to get started with Instagram? >> If you know who the target audience is and you know what brand message you want to put out there, it should be easy to make that decision. If you are not sure, they go on to Instagram and search for other businesses like yours, and see what kind of content is out there that the audience is engaging with.

 My audience, if I put out inspirational quotes they will respond. That is probably true for a lot of audiences. If I was a chef and I was on Instagram then I will put a great picture of what have just created in the kitchen. People it will -- people will engage with that. You have to know who the audience is. >> How would you recommend using podcasts for marketing?

That is a great way to get awareness. I would start a podcast, they do not have to be a long process. You can do a 15 minute podcast, you can upload that to iTunes and you have the opportunity to be exposed. To get started, make sure you have at least six podcasts in your pipeline so you make sure you are being consistent with how often they are being posted. Once you have three or four, make sure you email every friend and family member you have and ask them to go to the podcasts and like them, and leave a review. If you can get 10 or 15 people to do that, you will show up in the notable section on iTunes which will give you more exposure.

Those all the questions that we have time for today. If we did not address your question, we encourage you to connect with the SCORE meds were -- mentor. If anyone attending today wants to become a mentor you can access further information on our website.

 A link to the recording of this session and the presentation slide deck will be sent in an email in a few hours. On behalf of SCORE, thank you for attending the webinar. Thank you to Donna Amos . Thank you.

Thank you. It was a pleasure.

We hope you will join us for the next webinar on Thursday. Have a happy holiday. Goodbye. >> [ Event concluded ]