

Advisers and social media: How you can build a presence

By Ben Nice | 8/02/2012 6:00:00 AM | 0 comments

Think of social media like a busy street with potential clients walking up and down looking in the shop windows. Now think of your business. Is it on the street or down a side alley where no one can see it?



With each day that goes by it becomes more important for advisers to build a strong online presence.

According to a report by Spectrem Group in May 2010:

- **69%** of LinkedIn users are likely to consult their LinkedIn networks on investment issues;
- **63%** of Twitter users pay attention to investment tweets;
- **46%** of YouTube users and 41% of Facebook users would seek investment information from these forums prior to investing.

A more recent survey by SocialWare reported 60% of US financial advisers are currently engaging in social media activities, and of those 60% reported that for them it has been a source of business value. For nearly 47% of them, it generated more than 1 referral, while 10% received more than 20 referrals .

"The core value of any media involvement is location. Advisers need to have a presence where their audiences are – on the busiest avenues of communications where clients and prospects go to have conversations that matter to the adviser," said Pannunzio.

Pannunzio said it was important to prioritize efforts and take a 'building blocks' approach to establish an online presence. Here are four simple steps to social media success:

1/ **Twitter** is a good starting point, and then advisers could gradually move to other social media mediums. Because of its 140 characters limit, Twitter is easier than managing a blog

2/ **LinkedIn** has the highest use among US advisers, as their preferred medium to network with other professionals and affinity groups. Using words that promote Search Engine Optimization is also important; an attention grabbing headline and, finally, advisers should join/start and actively interact with select groups. Focus on getting "quality" connections, not quantity!

3/ With 600+ million users, 50 to 64 its fastest growing age group and 150+ million mobile users, **Facebook** is a favourite among advisers. Aside from the ability to connect and reconnect with people, Facebook allows advisers to create a business page that will give them an opportunity to maximize their online presence, build brand awareness and reputation in a more informal context than LinkedIn.

Establishing a presence on Facebook means that advisers have to find time to interact on a regular basis with contacts, providing engaging insights and relevant content.

4 **YouTube** is the second largest search engine after Google. It is a powerful platform to build brand recognition, educate and convey thought leadership. Most importantly, it has brought to advisers a revolutionary and effective means to increase client communication.

"YouTube videos(*) enable advisers to deliver timely information in an innovative and engaging new way freeing precious time that can be utilized to focus on business growing activities. Think about the time saved by producing a short video to offer insights/comments on breaking news and distributing it to clients, in lieu of making 50 or 100 phone or face-to face conversations," he said.