

B2B vs. B2C who wins the social media challenge?



Marketing is the big game! It is where your offense wins customers and your defense is great product and customer service. Social media is the play-off on the way to the championship!

There are 4 billion daily searches and 1 billion unique users on YouTube alone. In some cases these numbers may exceed the number of searches performed on the top search engines which include Google, Bing, Yahoo, Ask, AOL, Blekko, Lycos and Dogpile. If your business depends only on search engine results to drive customers to your site, you are missing some valuable offensive plays. Can you afford not to be where your customers are looking?

The teams for this game are:

Business to Business (B2B) - transactions between businesses such as a service or a wholesale item.

Business to Consumer (B2C) - the customer consumes the product that they purchase.

In this analysis, let's see who scores the win under each offense (social media platform).

My coaching philosophy is to stake your claim on each major platform. You may not use all of them right away, but if you own it, no one else can grab your space. Determine what your main purpose(s) is: brand awareness, thought leadership, sales/lead generation or customer support/advocacy. Once that is established, set goals with engagement being one of the key goals. There are in excess of 200 social media tools available, but I am addressing the top 10 most recognized.



Blog - short for weblog. When attached to your website, it is a good location to place educational articles about your product and the various uses it may have. If you cannot incorporate a blog on your website, place links in the articles to drive readers back to your website.

B2B - this is a must have for B2B. You can provide current information on products, how-to tips, client testimonials, and best practices. **Winner**

B2C - a blog can be a good way to share photos, success stories, interesting product uses, results of contests, product use suggestions, and stories about projects from start to finish.



LinkedIn - the number one professional social media platform. Two new members join every second. Approximately 30% of the 364 million members are in the United States. Every person in the business world should consider creating a personal profile that becomes their on-line resume.

B2B - every business must have a company profile, & if applicable, showcase pages. All members of your team should link to the company profile and share company updates. Users familiar with the advanced search function will find you and your employees by using keywords. Provide a list of the best key words to all of your employees to use in their personal profiles. **Winner**

B2C - a company profile allows you to share information as you would on other social platforms. Shows employees. Opportunity to share open positions.



Facebook - is much more casual, but the sheer number of people on Facebook – 1.44 billion - makes this a must have for everyone.

B2B - share industry related information, product updates and announcements, pictures of products with links back to your website. B2B is a bit more limiting on Facebook, but can be beneficial for brand awareness and customer service functions.

B2C - this is a great space for B2C business. Offers, specials, ads, check-ins, quizzes, contests. There are so many opportunities to promote awareness and drive business in your door. Just be sure that anything you offer through contests and promotions is done by the rules so you don't suffer any consequences. **Winner**



Twitter - promoting your brand 140 characters at a time. 236 million monthly active users – 500M registered users. The use of hashtags - # and tagging - @ were proliferated in this platform and copied by most others.

B2B - this is a great tool for customer service and lead generation if the search function is used. Use TweetChats to engage in-depth conversations with followers. Live tweet during an event to share quotes for followers who cannot attend convention sessions or webinars in person. **Tie**

B2C - again customer service is a main function of this tool for B2C as well. Offer specials that drive followers to a landing page on your website. Alert fans to Twitter only specials. Food trucks use Twitter to advertise their location of the day. **Tie**



YouTube - a picture is worth a 1000 words, but video can go viral. Remember the 4 billion searches a day? Your product or service can be one of those results.

B2B - The opportunity here is for product training, how-to, and corporate identity. Since YouTube is known as the second largest search tool, AND, Google owns it, can you afford not to at least have a channel for your company on this platform? **Winner**

B2C - This is a great way to show people how to use your product, answer questions through demonstration, and "get found" like Justin Bieber!



Google+ - people who create an account to use Gmail, YouTube and other Google services can set up with public Google+ pages that can be viewed by anyone online. G+ is a stream of posts similar to Facebook with images and video. Google is the 800 pound gorilla in the search world and it cannot hurt to optimize as many of the Google products as possible. 402 million active users.

B2B - verify your "official" page, share photos with links back to your website, add recommended links back to your webpage articles or blog posts, and use analytics to look at traffic and leads. Hangouts is an option to do long distance training or brainstorming from your desk. **Tie**

B2C - for the consumer business, this is not quite as robust as Facebook yet. Promoted posts, offers and other features are not yet available, but for the local business it is essential to connect your website and verify your address. For both B2B and B2C your G+ page appears in the right hand column of the Google search results for your company name. **Tie**



Image sites - like Instagram (300m), Flickr (92m), Google Photos. People are very visual. A picture draws a reader in, and image sites allow you to have images, photo albums and backlinks to your website. According to MediaPost, 70% of all interactions on social media sites now involve pictures.

B2B - posting images of products, company events, links to images in white papers or blog articles, and announcing new products are all options for a B2B environment.

B2C - image sites are much more suited to consumer oriented activities. Product pictures, images of people using or enjoying your product, and community events. **Winner**



Pinterest - could possibly fall under the image sites, but it is a bit more. You can "pin" many things including video and presentations. 21% of Pinterest users purchased a product after seeing a picture on Pinterest (73M).

B2B - Consultants would benefit from this platform more than manufacturing, but in the world of infographics, anyone can create informational images and pin to boards related to your products. You can drive consumers back to your website through the images you pin.

B2C - very useful for business with products to sell because the option to include a price allows you to potentially sell through the site. This is a great platform for crafters, builders, wedding industry, food establishments and clothing outlets. **Edge**



Location sites - this includes platforms like Yelp (142m), Foursquare (55m), Bing Local, Yahoo Local, and Google Maps.

B2B - claim your real estate, add links, set a promotion, use the images allowed, and optimize any profile components.

B2C - reward people for check-ins, reviews, provide coupons, and post images. A relatively new Google Maps feature provides a 360 degree view of the inside view of your store or restaurant. **Edge**



E-news - you might say this isn't social media, but it is a way to combine information from a variety of sites into one spot and can serve as a "best of" everything that you are sharing in other places.

B2B - share offers, news, product information, links to blog articles, places you are exhibiting or speaking, and offered workshops. It can also be a good way to promote partnership efforts. **Tie**

B2C - share offers, upcoming new features, community news, helpful tips related to your industry. Warning: be careful that you aren't "oversharing" so that people unsubscribe. **Tie**

At the end of this analysis, it appears to be a tie with a slight advantage to B2C on the social media front, but every business can benefit from using at least some of the platforms to increase marketing exposure for your company.

