

ILLINOIS

AUTOMOBILE DEALER NEWS

The Future of Your Business and Marketing

in 2011 and Beyond



New benefit for IADA dealer members. See back cover.

The Future of Your Business and Marketing

in 2011 and Beyond

BY JOHN GUBIOTTI, PRESIDENT, GROWTH MARKETING

Imagine the growth of your business being primarily driven by what your customers experience and share rather than by the size of a marketing budget.



As social networks and online communities continue to grow in popularity, size, and impact, they are fast becoming the new commerce. These non-traditional influencers are shaping the future of buying behavior as more and more consumers turn to trusted friends and networking contacts to validate their purchase decisions.

Consumers who favor social media enjoy participating in online conversation threads and public forums. They're attracted to businesses that demonstrate a "human side" and are not afraid to share open feedback from their customers. And social media minded

consumers gravitate toward local businesses that are actively involved in the community and let their Facebook and Twitter followers know about the good things they're doing and the difference it's making.

To provide you with a sense of just how fast social media is growing, more than 700,000 new users come to Facebook alone each day. That translates to 21 million new users every month, and at that rate the estimated number of total users Facebook will amass by 2011 will be well over 650 million. In fact, only the countries of China and India have bigger populations than Facebook.

The future of marketing as a social network driven phenomenon is here to stay. It's an exciting time and perhaps a bit scary for those businesses that don't have a clear understanding and plan in place for competing and succeeding in the new commerce.

In 2011 and beyond, more and more businesses will be jumping on the social media bandwagon and weaning themselves off using traditional marketing channels. This trend will gain momentum as consumers find they're better informed after tapping into their social networks rather than relying on what companies convey in advertising campaigns. "Tell a friend about us" will take on an all new meaning in the coming years as friends tell friends who will tell friends about their experiences and preferences and businesses will either thrive or struggle based on their ability to keep the social media conscious customer satisfied.

In order to grow and thrive in the coming decade, brands must excel at the fundamentals of good business and embrace social networking as the preferred marketing channel. Great products backed by exceptional customer service will be the norm for those businesses that top consumers' raves and faves list. Yes, it's a return to business basics and a departure from perception is reality. Consumers will base their brand loyalty on what they actually experience and learn from those in their

social network, and businesses will find it increasingly difficult to persuade buyers based solely on their marketing messaging.

The future of marketing as a social network driven phenomenon is here to stay. It's an exciting time and perhaps a bit scary for those businesses that don't have a clear understanding and plan in place for competing and succeeding in the new commerce. You'd be well served to find a knowledgeable and trusted business coach that can provide the necessary insights and guidance in 2011 and beyond. ■



For more insight into business growth and marketing, visit <http://www.growthmarketing.com>. John Gubiotti is President and Lead Consultant for Growth Marketing - specializing in business growth and marketing consulting for small businesses. Learn more about how Growth Marketing can grow your business by contacting us at <http://www.growthmarketing.com/contact.html>.

The Most Likely Recommended DMS Delivers -

Not Simply Software as a Service, But Software With The Service!

When asked in the recent NADA 2009 Bi-Annual Survey of Dealership Satisfaction with Dealer System Providers' Products and Services

Our Users Ranked US #1-

- Speed in Getting Changes and Modifications Made
- Maintenance of Your Daily Business with Minimal Interruptions
- Problem and Concerns being Fixed Correctly the First Time You Call
- Prompt Follow-up to Handle the Needs of You and Your Staff

Automotive Parts Service • 888-888-1180 • 630-397-5500 • www.autosoft-asi.com



autosoft
international