

How to Build Your Social Media Followers List

JULY 16-22 2018

Manufacturing Marketing

GROWING YOUR BUSINESS



MAXIMIZING SOCIAL MEDIA INVESTMENT

STOP ORGANIC
SOCIAL MEDIA?

SOCIAL MEDIA DOs
AND DON'Ts

SOCIAL MEDIA ROI
DONE RIGHT

Curious about how to maximize your social media efforts on only one platform, and how to properly measure ROI?

IN THIS WEEK'S ISSUE, we sat down with Jeff Green Senior Manager, Content + Social Media, for Rethink Robotics – a Boston-based company that makes collaborative robots that work side-by-side with people on the production floor.

Full disclosure: Rethink Robotics is a client, but because we've long admired the company's presence on Twitter, and their videos, we asked Jeff for an interview. We learned quite a bit talking to him – and we think you will, too.

In this issue, you'll also find social media Dos and Don'ts, the Question of the Week and a Quick Tip for building your social media followers list.

Thank you again for the continued feedback. We're really happy we've hit on something many of you are finding valuable.

— Dianna Huff, Editor and Rachel Cunliffe, Designer

PS: While we're both putting a lot of time into this endeavor, I want to give Rachel a shout-out. She's been doing a magnificent job with the magazine covers. Each time I see the new one, I think, "Wow!" Let her know if you agree.

Send us your thoughts on anything you read or your suggestions for future issues. Write to dianna@huffindustrialmarketing.com.

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COVER:

Social media is everywhere, but what strategies are working for manufacturers?

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IN BRIEF

- Radical advice from Avinash Kaushik: Stop all organic social media activity and instead solve for a profitable reality. [Read why](#)
- He has only a few states left, but you can follow Rodney Smith, Jr. on Twitter or Instagram as he makes a big difference in people's lives – one lawn at a time. Fantastic story. [Read it!](#)
- While 97% of clothing is made off-shore, thanks to the “grown and sewn in the US” movement, it's becoming easier to buy quality US-made clothing. [Learn more](#)
- June was the ninth consecutive month with robust hiring growth in the manufacturing sector, with an average 27,111 jobs added per month over that time frame, reports [NAM](#).



Social Media Marketing Logistics for Your Website Content

Jeff Green and his team work with lots of small manufacturers, so he completely understands, that when it comes to social media, you may not have huge resources or even a marketing department. He also understands you don't have lots of time.

In this interview, he gives advice for maximizing your effort with only one platform, plus explains how to properly measure ROI.

MM: Social media has changed considerably in the last few years. What is the most important thing small manufacturers should understand about it?

JEFF GREEN: What has changed dramatically is how important content has become. Social media is now one of the distribution vehicles for any content you create, whether it's an FAQ, video, or a buyer's guide.

As a manufacturer, you create content for your website. The challenge, however, is that people aren't always hanging out on your website waiting for this new content – you have to drive them there.

To get people back to the Rethink Robotics website, we focus on creating blog posts and videos that reside on our website, and then post this content, with links, on social

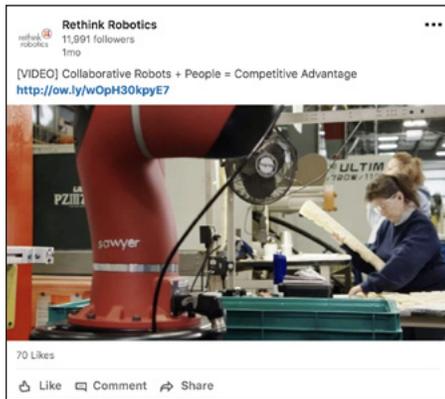


Figure 1: Example of a post on LinkedIn that links to a video on the Rethink website.

media.

Once we get people to the website, we then work to get them deeper into other areas of it. So it's a two-step process.

MM: Love the “distribution” analogy – it’s similar to logistics, except for marketing. How do you know what will resonate with your audience, and do you have some easy tips for smaller manufacturers about creating content?

JG: We create content we believe our audience will find valuable. Our videos show our cobots doing real jobs in factories (Figure 1). We write blog posts about manufacturing and automation trends, as well as the problems manufacturers are trying to solve.

We also curate a lot of content from within our industry, meaning, we share other people’s content.

For small manufacturers with limited time or staff resources, my advice is to put your energy into

creating original content – even if it’s one Twitter or LinkedIn post a day. You want to make sure it’s a message your audience will find of value and that it gets people back to your website.

Even with Rethink’s resources, we’re still only producing 4 – 6 content pieces a day for Twitter and LinkedIn, and that’s because creating original content takes time.

I also highly recommend creating at least one blog post per month (see Figure 2 as an example). Sure, it’s an investment in time, but the return can be quite high and there’s a lot of value in publishing fresh content to your website.

The key is to write using keywords or phrases for which your audience might be searching. That’s where SEO (search engine optimization) plays a part.

Search engines crawl your site; if your content is optimized,

you increase the likelihood of prospective customers coming across your content while doing searches.

[Note: Don’t want to blog? You can create FAQs, case studies, and tech tips instead. – MM.]

MM: This is great information, but the \$64,000 question: does social media deliver ROI?

JG: If you’re asking if posting on Twitter or LinkedIn leads to direct sales, the answer is no, not necessarily.

What social media gives you is a different way to touch prospective buyers. Social media is one touch point of many.

For example, if a plant manager is looking to buy a piece of equipment, he or she may see a mention in an article, a blog post or two, and then social media posts. The person could also see the brand name pop up while doing searches or see it in a magazine ad.

These are all different touch points along what’s called the “buyer’s journey.”

It can take weeks or months before a purchase is made, so the more touches the better to keep your brand, products, and services top of mind.

MM: How do you measure if your social media efforts are working?

JG: We put value in engagement: how many people clicked through to visit the website and the pages they visit.



Figure 2: Example of a tweet that links to a blog post on the Rethink website.

“If written in a certain way, you can guide a visitor along the path you think is most educational and valuable to them.”

We're less interested in certain engagement elements, such as likes and clicks on photos within the posts, although resharing is an important metric to me because it translates into an increase in reach – or raising awareness to others beyond our immediate following.

We also like to know time spent on page (available in Google Analytics). If users click over to a blog post and spend on average only 30 seconds, then they're not consuming the whole

piece of content. That tells us we need to develop more engaging content or material that's shorter.

Our goal is to get the reader to take the next step, which might be clicking on a link to a video showing a customer using the product, a downloadable guide, or to a contact form to learn more.

We find value in knowing the next page the user visits once they reach our blog. If written in a certain way, you can guide a visitor along the path you think is most educational and valuable to them.

MM: The standard advice has been to pick one social platform and do it well, especially if you have limited time or staff. Does this advice still hold true?

JG: It does. What's really

important, however, is choosing the platform where you'll find your audience. If your audience isn't on Instagram, Snapchat or Pinterest, then don't put your limited energy and resources into these platforms.

For Rethink Robotics, we find our audience, plant managers and others on the factory floor to senior level folks, on Twitter and LinkedIn. We focus our efforts on these platforms, but we also publish content to Instagram and Facebook, where we've had success as well. 

Based in Boston, MA, Rethink Robotics manufactures safe and easy-to-use collaborative robots that automate dull, dirty, and dangerous production jobs. Visit the company's website: www.rethinkrobotics.com.

Social Media Dos and Don'ts

- **DO** respond to people when they mention, share your posts, or reply to you. This is how you build relationships.
- **DO** post your content multiple times – with different wording.
- **DO** create a simple strategy on the types of content you'll post – e.g. industry news or trends, company news or photos, etc.
- **DO** share other people's content and be sure to tag them or use their profile names so they know.
- **DON'T** put social icons on your website if you're not active on the platforms.
- **DON'T** make your audience jump from one platform to another to read content – e.g. posting links on Twitter to Facebook content.
- **DON'T** let your social media profile go silent for months or years; either delete the profile or put some renewed energy into it.
- **DON'T** feel like you **have to do** social media. If you don't want to, consider something else, such as a monthly newsletter.

Question of the Week

What's an impression?

An impression is the number of times an online ad, search engine listing, or social media post is shown (or fetched).

The term “impression” describes what’s essentially a passive activity: if you go to the baseball game and you see sponsors’ names above the jumbo screen – all the people looking at those names would be considered impressions (or eyeballs 👁 👁 👁).

Impressions are good to measure if you’re working to increase exposure of your brand. They also give you a good feel for how many people may have seen your posts as they scroll through their feeds.

To gain actionable insight from impression data, however, you have to include other data, such as clicks, clickthrough rate (CTR), engagement (likes, shares, etc.), or conversions (filled out a form, called or emailed).

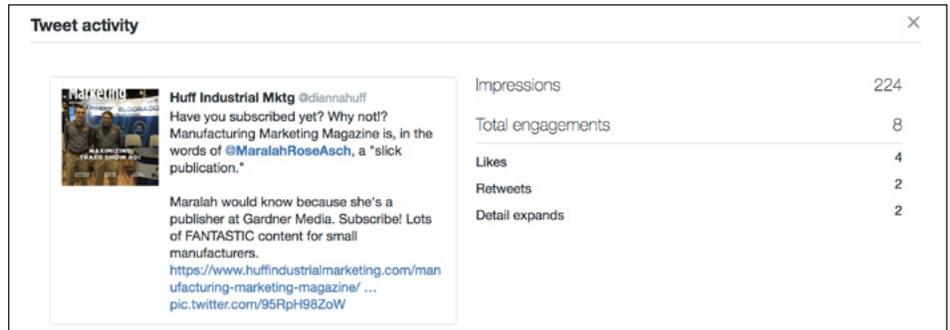


Figure 3: Impression and engagement data for a tweet

In Figure 3, you can see impression and engagement data for Twitter. This tweet had 224 impressions (the number of times users saw it on Twitter) and eight engagements (4 likes, 2 retweets and 2 “expands”) for an engagement rate of 3.6%.

Engagement is good, but what you really want to know is how many people clicked through to your website – and even better, if they took some sort of action. You can get that data from Google Analytics.

DID YOU KNOW?

The regular American Airlines flight AA1776 from Philadelphia to Orlando is named after the year the Declaration of Independence was signed. Find more fun facts on Twitter’s [@funfacts](#).

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QUICK TIP

Build a Followers List

It can be daunting to start on social media with only a few followers. Try these tips to build your followers:

- Follow your customers, vendors and suppliers.
- Follow industry trade organizations you belong to – and people you’ve met at meetings or people on the board.
- Follow industry publications you read. Make your company known to editors by following them and sharing their content.
- Follow your state’s Manufacturing Extension Partnership (MEP).
- Follow national orgs, like the National Association of Manufacturers or the Department of Labor.
- Share relevant content created by others.

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