



YES, SOCIAL MEDIA WORKS FOR INSURANCE AGENCIES

By Michelle Longo

Love it or hate it, social media is here to stay. More than two-thirds of Americans have at least one social media account, with Facebook the most popular. In fact, a recent study by GlobalWebIndex indicates 40% of consumers use social media to research a new brand or product, and a poll by Hootsuite found that 90% of brands use social media to increase brand awareness.

Simply put, your prospects will try to vet your agency on social media, and if they don't find you, they'll likely find your competitor.

Alexis Nasser, Digital Marketing Account Manager at Forge3 says, "Social media marketing is a powerful way to get your agency out there and noticed, ahead of others in your industry who aren't leveraging social media."

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TOP THREE REASONS TO USE SOCIAL MEDIA ADS

Social media is a very useful tool for establishing credibility, generating leads, networking, and prospecting. Sure, you did all those things before there was social media, so why do you need it now? Here's why.

1. Billions of people log into their social media accounts daily.

But it's not just about how many people see your ad, it's about which people see it. Facebook's targeting tools means that your dollars are spent showing the ad to the people you want to target and are most likely to buy your services.

2. It's more cost effective than traditional advertising.

For as little as \$200 per ad, you can reach tens of thousands of people in your selected demographic. If you like the results, you can spend more, but you don't have to drop a ton of money upfront.

3. You can effectively measure results.

Consider a billboard, a newspaper ad, or a mailer. They're out there, but how many people actually see them? You can make an educated guess, but you'll never truly know. Social media allows for tracking how many people see the ad, how many click through to your website, and more.

Running ads on social media, particularly with Facebook, is an easy and low-cost way to get your brand out in front of more people. Once your ad is finished running, review your results to see how well it performed. It may take some trial and error to find which of your content resonates most, but once you get rolling, setting up your ads will be second nature.

LEVERAGING LINKEDIN

We've found that the vast majority of producers we talk to, upwards of 90%, aren't using LinkedIn to their full advantage. If you're just accepting connections and nothing else, you're missing out. When you proactively engage, you'll start to see the results fairly quickly.

Successful LinkedIn users have something in common. They all put great emphasis on what we call the three pillars: Profile, Search, and Sharing.

Profile - This has to look sharp! Remember, this is your virtual introduction. Your picture should be professional and inviting. Look at the camera and smile, just like you would when shaking someone's hand.

Search - Search is a very underused feature of LinkedIn. Search for the industry you want to focus on, and then use the filters to start narrowing down your results. You can narrow things down by geographic location, title, and other factors. Now you've got a prospect list right at your fingertips. For personal lines, try looking for referral partners such as real estate agents, wealth management firm owners, and the like.

Sharing - Sharing information is an easy way to put yourself in front of others. You don't necessarily need to come up with brand new information. You can simply share links to articles and information your prospects would find interesting. Also consider tagging someone you think will especially benefit from the information.

While LinkedIn is a phenomenal prospecting and sales tool, take care not to start selling too soon. You wouldn't walk up to someone you've never met and start your pitch immediately. Instead, make sure you're building relationships with people and establishing yourself as a credible resource. Remember the third pillar above, sharing? It's the perfect way to reach out to someone.

If you're looking to take your LinkedIn game to the next level and you want to dive deeper into how you can start using this valuable tool for prospecting and sales, check out our free webinar recording "LinkedIn for insurance professionals/3 pillars (profile, search, sharing)." You can find it at forge3.com/li. ▲



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