

Insights into Social Media Marketing in Asia

Recently NZTE Hong Kong office attended a workshop in Singapore on social media marketing which provided useful insights to businesses of all kinds, in particular B2C businesses, which are targeting Asian markets.

Asia, being a crowded market like other regions in the world, is very ad-driven. Hong Kong is one good Asian example. Businesses compete for marketing opportunities ranging from purchasing expensive TV air times to employing means of handing out flyers on the streets. Therefore social media marketing is a new, economical and powerful way to promote one's products.

The potential reach and effect is huge - if the right things were done after careful planning.

Social media marketing is useful in terms of amplifying and/or elongating the buzz created by traditional marketing methods, such as print campaigns, roadshows, PR campaigns. Social media marketing can be integrated to create emotional links with consumers, generate discussions within the community, and allow instant promotion to the market.

Statistics in April 2010 showed that within APAC Hong Kong has the 5th highest Internet usage penetration rate after Australia, South Korea, Japan and Singapore. Top five online activities in Hong Kong are information-seeking (80%), leisure-related (41%), education-related (31%), instant messaging (30%), and finance-related (26%). Examples of the popular websites in Hong Kong are Yahoo, Google, Facebook, and local websites such as Hong Kong Discuss, Open Rice, Baby Kingdom. These data provide insights as to which platforms would be beneficial for businesses to leverage from.

Social media marketing is an emerging trend in Hong Kong and it is escalating rapidly. Users of social media marketing now range from small local B2C businesses, large multinational B2C businesses, to celebrities in the entertainment industry, and even the Hong Kong government.

The workshop advised that is important to maintain one's social media marketing platform in a quality way to keep it "alive", i.e. constantly attracting viewers. Otherwise the platform no longer serves marketing purposes. It is also important for businesses to measure different indicators to gauge the effectiveness and profitability of each marketing action taken - there must be return on marketing investment otherwise one cannot justify the usage of social media. Indicators can be the number of unique individual visitors, number of page views, bounce rate, clicks, etc. Attention should also be paid to the quality of numbers as different visitors may generate different amount of sales.

There are numerous social media measurement tools, some of which are free while others are fee-based. More commonly used tools include Alexa, Google Trends and Google Insights.

New Zealand exporters that are interested to explore the implementation of social media marketing in Hong Kong are welcome to contact NZTE Hong Kong office for further information. Jane.lin@nzte.govt.nz

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