OptifiNow's Social OnDemand: The Practical Union of Business and Social Media

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Social media: It's a blessing and a curse. This statement has never been truer than when said about the effect of social media on the workplace. While the reach of networks such as Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter, and others has the potential to do wonders for a brand, especially when utilized by many employees in their personal networks, there are inherent risks that come with the territory.

How do you monitor what is said? How do you know a company employee is doing his or her best to represent the company according to its brand? And how do you keep tabs on the amount of time employees are using out of their workday to spread the word on social media?

For these reasons and many others, there are plenty of companies that simply forbid employee interaction on social media. These companies either never register for company accounts so as to avoid risk all together, or they very heavily limit access while forbidding it to all others. The issue, of course, is that the power of social media is fully realized only when a brand can involve its fans; and there should be no fan greater than those found with a company's ranks.

To address the issue, OptifiNow, a leader in customer engagement solutions, recently announced the launch of its latest service, Social OnDemand. We took the opportunity to ask OptifiNow CEO, John McGee, some questions to get a better understanding of what businesses can expect.

Strategy: How does this tool work?

McGee: Social OnDemand empowers your sales teams to adopt social selling abilities to acquire leads, nurture prospects and convert customers. [It] allows your marketing teams to create rich social content, which can then be stored in an enterprise-wide Social Library. Employees can access the Library and, with "one-click," post the brand and legal compliant content to their social followers on Linkedin, Facebook, and Twitter.

Strategy: Does this tool address the regulatory concerns; and if so, what steps have been taken or are taken by OptifiNow to cut through a company's red tape and allay concerns of those who may not necessarily be the purchasing agent/decision maker?

McGee: Companies in certain verticals have shied away from social media for their employees specifically because of regulatory concerns. The fear of employees posting content that may be out of compliance is a critical concern. But in just the same way that companies have faced these issues in other communications channels, Social OnDemand provides the bridge. Using Social OnDemand, employees are not creating unique content; instead they have a library of pre-approved content from which to choose.

Using OptifiNow's Social OnDemand, employees cannot edit the postings that have been created for them. The system displays the message in its various formats—[such as] LinkedIn, Facebook, and Twitter—so the employee knows exactly what the posting will look like. And, with the click of a button, the content is pushed to their accounts.

The company can monitor the engagement level of the messages that have been posted using the suite of Social Engagement reports that are available in OptifiNow. Management can see what content is being posted, by who and when, and also see the number of fans and followers that have liked or shared the content with the next level of fans and followers.

Strategy: Do you find that employees still want to use social media platforms when their content is being directed and it's not their own?

McGee: We have seen a great acceptance by employees, especially the sales team, to adopt the predefined content social libraries. It gives them quick and easy access to professional, compelling content for them to post. It also removes the worry that employees have in posting brand or legal compliant content.

Strategy: What is the process like for a manager to create a library of content? Is it self-generated, are there recommendations, or a combination of the two?

McGee: Managers are enabled to create content in Social OnDemand through a simple WYSIWYG editor that allows them to enter Messages, URL and Images. They can choose which platforms—[such as] LinkedIn, Facebook, and Twitter—the message supports. They can choose which Groups, Regions, and Divisions should have access the content, so that content can be created for specific subsets of employees also.

McGee emphasizes the importance of social media interaction for business and brands. "Times are changing; customers, prospects, and leads are more connected and informed than ever before," he shares. "As more customers adopt social channels, companies must move with them and learn to sell socially. Social media is not just a tool for people to stay connected with friends, it is a place for progressive companies to connect and build relationships."

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