

# B2B Social Media Marketing



– Special Posts, Presentations & Series For **B2B** Marketers –



By Christina "CK" Kerley  
[www.CK-Blog.com](http://www.CK-Blog.com)

# The B2B Business Case for Social Media.

[Click here to view slideshow](#)

In a world brimming with MySpace teens, Facebook fans, Celebrity Twitterers and blogs about cute kittens, it's no wonder so many B2B marketers view social media, and the Social Web, as strictly a "consumer play."

But that mindset is costing B2B companies potential revenues, new customer relationships, unparalleled reach and, quite possibly, their relevance. This slideshow details the top 10 social media benefits that build a strong business case for B2Bs.



# B2B Lead Generation: 5 Opportunities Meet 5 Challenges.

[Access the post here](#)

From new ways to build relationships (that beget revenues) and increasing reach, to learning how to deliver value before the sale and grasping how to "sell without selling," the online landscape offers B2B marketers many lead-generation opportunities... along with some mighty challenges.



# B2B vs. B2C: It's the Engagement Level, Stupid.

[Access the post here](#)

In this post I posit that social media represents a veritable goldmine of potential for B2Bs. More to the point, I contend that social media is MORE opportune for B2Bs than B2Cs.

How can I say such a thing? “It’s the engagement level, stupid.” And for marketers? Engagement is the Holy Grail of marketing: the uber goal, the most critical of critical success factors, the paramount payoff, and the pinnacle benchmark of how well your marketing is performing (or lacking).

But business audiences, unlike consumer interests, are engaged by virtue of needing to protect their very livelihoods... and needs always trump interests.



# Age-Old B2B Behaviors Meet New-Age Media.

[Access the post here](#)

When it comes to these new media, not everything is \*new.\* Why? Because the needs and behaviors of business professionals haven't changed... the media has.

In fact, business professionals leverage the new functions, features, freedoms and access of social media to transform the way that they meet their age-old needs and to perform the tasks that they've been performing for decades.



# Fear! Irrelevance! Overwhelm!

(B2B Social Media Objections)

[Access the post here](#)

When it comes to B2B companies integrating social media into their marketing mix, objections are alive and well. So it's imperative for those of us who have been working and participating in social media for years to take a **BIG** step back and realize that this space is still very new to most B2B companies... and change takes time (and comes with objections aplenty). That's just the nature of change.

To that very end, this post addresses the 3 main objections I run up against with B2B companies—namely fear, irrelevance and overwhelm—and provides ideas and advice on how to overcome objections, change minds and ergo, change conversations.



# B2Bs, The World is Your (Web 2.0) Oyster.

[Access the post here](#)

This piece outlines 10 reasons why Web 2.0 holds high revenue potential for B2B companies. From lowering risk to building relationships, extending thought leadership initiatives to decreasing complexity of offerings, and many more.

So get into the Web 2.0 world, B2Bs... plenty of pearls await you.

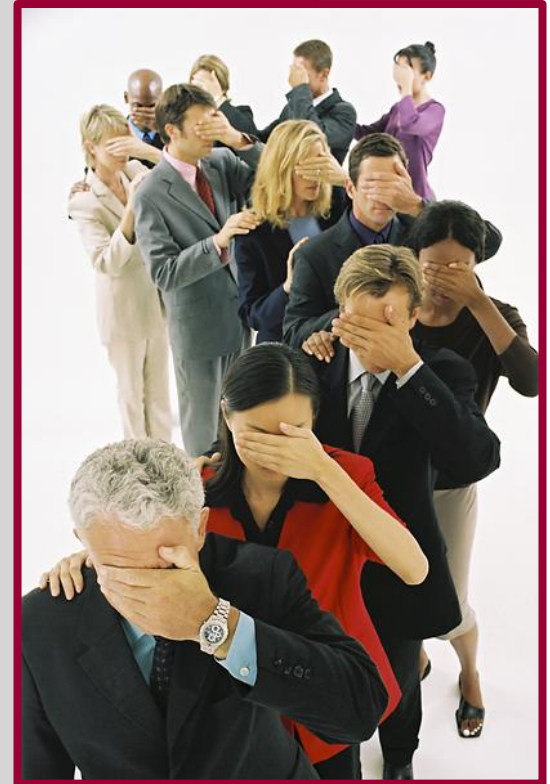


# If your B2B markets have changed, why hasn't your marketing?

[Access the post here](#)

Using a recent new media study as a launching pad, in this post I map 2009 social media B2C trends—ranging adoption rates, media usage, influence, purchasing drivers and preferences—to B2B marketing implications in order to build the case for integrating social media into the B2B marketing mix.

Benefits range higher revenues, new channels for brand engagement and, for really smart companies, gaining competitive advantage.





# The “Share Economy” for B2B Marketers.

[Download the PDF here](#)

This new era and its avid exchanging of ideas—how freely they're traded, how dynamically they spread, and the new ideas they inspire—is most aptly coined The “Share Economy.”

What does this mean for B2B marketers? Social media is changing the way they do business, because they now have new voices in the business process. And while most age-old marketing principles still apply, many of the practices do not. This piece walks marketers through the profound trends occurring in their market and the changes they require from their marketing practices (and mindsets).



**Featuring Key Questions for B2B Marketers**

## The “Share Economy”:

In an Economy Brimming with BtoB Opportunities...  
Where's the Share to Today's Marketers?  
— by Christina Kerley (“CK”) —

When the Internet entered the business arena it ushered in an exciting new channel for sales, customer service and marketing. Companies used the Web as a modern, cost-efficient channel for communications and transactions with their target audiences. A decade later, online media has given rise to “social media,” a set of tools spanning blogs, microblogs, wikis, podcasts, video and social networking utilities. Through a few keystrokes, these “Web 2.0” technologies lend everyone a voice. And now business audiences are using their newfound voices to communicate with one another, instead of just with the companies targeting them.

Where people used to talk privately, millions now leverage social media to “speak” publicly on unprecedented levels—with millions more using that feedback as a major influence in their purchasing decisions. Empowered through online vehicles, people are buying into real-world recommendations and turning out manufactured messaging points.

What does this mean for marketers? Web 2.0 is changing the way they do business, because they have new voices in the business process. Why is this important to marketers? These voices are influencing purchase strings as well as corporate perception. So while most age-old marketing principles still apply, many of the practices do not.

**R**esearch to define this new era, pundits have been coining catchphrases ranging from the “knowledge economy” and the “conversation era” to the “conversation age.” But from where does knowledge, innovation and conversation stem? The answer rests in sharing: individuals actively and openly sharing information, insights and ideas with others. Therefore, the exchanging of ideas—how freely they're traded, how dynamically they spread, and the new ideas they inspire—is most aptly and accurately labeled “The Share Economy.”

“Trustworthiness” of sources used to make purchases, found that 81% of consumers rated word-of-mouth highest.

Further, in a DoubleClick survey (January 2007), more than nine in ten respondents cited a friend's recommendation as the most important influence when it came to buying a product or service. Yet, while the implications and opportunities are nothing short of striking, the reception from BtoB marketers has only been lukewarm. Among those utilizing these breakthrough technologies, the palpable absence of BtoB marketers raises some valid questions, namely:

If innovation drives opportunity, which in turn fuels new profit centers and lucrative market segments, why do the majority of BtoB marketers view this phenomenon as merely a BtoC play? Moreover, if business professionals automatically qualify as “engaged” around an expertise or practice area—unlike fickle consumers easily lured by the latest fad—why aren't more BtoB marketers engaging with them?

(continued...)

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## 2-Part Article: Selling B2B Social Media Internally.

[Access Part 1 here](#)

[Access Part 2 here](#)

If yours is a B2B company, 2010 is likely the year that you'll want to start integrating social media into your marketing mix... or have it play a much larger role than it has in the past.

But while your eyes are on your market, you must first get past the Executive Committee, who will have questions, critiques, and objections aplenty. That's exactly why this 2-Part article highlights 10 arguments to help you successfully build a B2B social-media business case for your toughest audience: the one found inside your boardroom.

**\*Please note: this article was developed for the premium content area for MarketingProfs, a subscription is required to access it.**



# B2B Social Media Success: Four B2B Case Studies.

[Access the post here.](#)

Developed especially for B2B marketers, this article provides 4 social-media case studies from companies ranging from industry veterans SAP and BusinessWeek, to newer and smaller firms Equation Research and Radian6.

As an added bonus, the marketers behind each winning effort share their *\*key tips\** to help other B2B marketers develop successful social-media programs.

**\*Please note: this article was developed for the premium content area for MarketingProfs, a subscription is required to access it.**



# Start Smart: A 10-Step Social Media Guide for B2B Marketers.

[Access the post here.](#)

There's no escaping it, marketers: Amid a flurry of headlines, bestsellers, and reports documenting social media's meteoric rise to the mainstream... the future has arrived. But for a B2B executive tasked with making sense of wikis, WOM, blogs, and buzz, wouldn't it be nice if the future came with a road map?

Follow this quick step-by-step guide to ensure your social-media program starts smart, launches strong, and enables you to get the most out of these new media.

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# Voice-In: The Value of Blogging.

[Download the PDF here](#)

Having polled a variety of marketing professionals on the value they receive from blogging, this “collage” presents their tremendous feedback and insights in a creative format.

Ranging from “connection” and “community” to “idea exchange, “innovation” and many, many more—the responses are both enlightening and educational for companies who want to understand the incentives driving professionals to blog... and the reasons that online business and consumer communities are thriving.



# Social Media Planning Checklist.

[Click here for the checklist](#)

There's an extensive amount of upfront work involved in planning, launching and maintaining your social media presence and programs. And how well you plan directly effects your level of success.

This checklist provides a comprehensive list of questions—applicable for B2B and B2C marketers—that serves as a very helpful planning guide for companies starting out in social media.



## Reasons for A Social Media Presence (A Riddle).

[Click here to view post](#)

Why should a B2B or B2C company have a social media presence? What are the true gains in going to the time and trouble of launching and maintaining a social media presence?

There isn't one answer to this riddle, there are many. Ranging from branding, sales and research, to relationship-building, innovation, customer service and plenty more... this post highlights the numerous reasons, which are as vast as they are varied.



# Oh, the (many!) ironies of Web 2.0 marketing.

[Click here to view post](#)

Web 2.0 (aka "social media") is not just the most social of all media, but also the one most laden with irony.

In this post I illuminate some of the most notable ironies that have surprised, startled and taught B2B and B2C marketers just how complex marketing can be when people, profit-seeking companies and new technologies converge... oh, the irony indeed!





## Viewing The Social Web As A New “Region.” (not just a new marketing channel).

[Access the post here.](#)

When B2B and B2C companies globalize and enter foreign markets and new regions, a critical success factor that they’ve learned—and many companies have learned the hard way—is that they must first understand a new region before marketing to the region’s citizens.

Otherwise they increase their odds of failure, instead of upping their rates of success.

The exact same principle applies to social media and, more to the point, the Social Web. After all, the Social Web is not just a new marketing channel, it’s an entirely new region, given it’s a “place” that boasts such attributes as thriving communities, cultural nuances, a set of rules, common values, accepted practices and a preferred code of conduct.

Thus, the implications (and opportunities!) of marketing to this new region are huge... but marketers must first learn how to view the Social Web in order to succeed within it.



# Social Media = Marketing from Scratch.

[Access the post here.](#)

What should be a B2B or B2C company's social media strategies and tactics? There is no one-size-fits-all answer (no ready-make cake mixes here, sorry Betty Crocker!). The answer is always case-specific and custom for each company and every endeavor... even with like companies who have similar goals.

This "custom part" is where many companies get stumped, and understandably so. Between the turnkey technologies, platforms and plug-ins that make it easy to \*poof\* create a social media presence, and the low-cost tools making social media wholly tenable for big and small businesses alike, companies seek an equally easy answer.

But social media programs are nowhere near ready-made. Nope, no cake mixes requiring just an egg and water here. In this medium you're marketing from scratch. So, get cooking!



## Want To Succeed In Social Media? Focus On Your Market, Not Your Product.

[Access the post here.](#)

Maybe the reason that so many B2B and B2C social media efforts fail is because Web 2.0 technologies and tools are still very new, and lessons learned lead the way to best practices. Or perhaps it's because in launching social media programs, the majority of marketers are focused on their products rather than their markets, and a shift in mindset is in order before shifting their marketing spend.

Just as the goals of your social media programs should be focused on results not just "buzz," your programs must focus on your market not your product. And just as your products provide your market with unique value, so too must your social media programs.



# Social Media Communications: Don't Think "Technology" Think \*Humans\*

[Access the post here.](#)

Due to tremendous cost efficiencies and tremendously easy publishing tools, social media is the easiest medium to enter, but it's the hardest one to truly understand. What B2B and B2C marketers most need to understand in order to succeed in social media communications, is that they must get past thinking "technology" and, instead, think "humans."

Why? Because amid all these new-fangled technologies and other-worldly features, companies need to be ever mindful that \*people\* are on the other side of these technologies, and naturally want to be treated as such.

For companies this principle means engaging in a dialogue, fostering idea exchanges and building relationships... a very different way of marketing than with one-way, broadcast and traditional media. And if they don't? Just like a lifeless ad, they're going to be ignored (or worse, mocked).



# B2B Social Media Content Archive.

(frequently updated!)

[Access the content archive here](#)

B2B marketers need direction and advice targeted to the unique needs, challenges and intricacies of their professional audiences—and social media is no different.

This (frequently updated!) archive of content provides a wealth of B2B social media best practices, analysis and tips... so check back often.





# CK's Blog: Clever strategies, the new best practices and the smart (and not-so-smart) moves of today's marketers.

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Posted at 02:44 PM | [Permalink](#)

Tuesday, December 22, 2009

### Hold Up There, Marketers: Before You Leap into 2010, Take A Look Back at 2009.



It's that time of year when we marketers are knee-deep, up to our eyeballs and heads-down focused in planning for the next year. We're mired in forecasts, predictions, statistics and studies that are a promise of what's to come... not a portrayal of what has been.

Being it's the last month of the last quarter,

Many more marketing posts, tips and special features located at:

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