

SMARTERBIZ.ORG INTERVIEW: THOSE WHO GET IT

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Question One: Who are you and what do you do?

I am David Moore, general manager and partner of Advantage, a commercial printer and marketing services provider. We serve small businesses, churches, and nonprofits with full service printing and cross-media marketing. We use the latest digital technology to make print relevant, personal, and interactive with the web.

Question Two: How did you get involved in social media?

I got involved in social media by reading other blogs, primarily Seth Godin. I used to get it via email. And once I was introduced to Google Reader, it was all over. I could search by topic of interest and I was hooked.

I don't even remember how I first heard about blogs with the exception that I used to think it was a diary of self-centered people documenting their love life and things like that.

But Seth Godin was certainly not that. He made me think and imagine the possibilities and see the potential. And along the way heard about Twitter. I signed up for Twitter about a year ago.

Twitter has been a love / hate relationship. I've started and stopped @davidamoore a dozen times. I enjoyed it more with 100 followers than with 1000+. I hate the spam and it's more difficult to keep up and build relationships. I have recently started a second account @churchprinter to correct the mistakes I made with @davidamoore. It's more focused and has a different subject matter than @davidamoore.

I have only been on Facebook 6 months or so. I use it more for local connections on my personal page. Like a local Twitter since very few locals are using Twitter.

Blogs and links from Twitter have really been a great source of education on all types of social media. New media, new ways to use, new tools. I love the resources.

Question Three: How do you use social media, and what kinds of things do you use social media for?

I am trying to use social media to create awareness of Advantage and to differentiate my company as a thought-leader. Ultimately, I would like the social media vehicle to remove geographical boundaries. By building awareness, trust, and expert status...relationships beyond typical small business range will purchase my products and services.

Right now I am just trying to provide valuable content, information and instruction. I haven't done any special Twitter deals or pump out several Tweets per day about products and prices.

Who do I tweet? @davidamoore isn't as targeted but I tend to follow more of the "marketing" types. @churchprinter is being built to follow and engage with those in the spiritual community: pastors, churches, church marketing people, some designers.

As I said, Facebook is more local. With 50% being conversation and the other 50% trying to be a resource of information.

Question Four – How do you straddle the line between obnoxious advertising and helpful informing? What are your online boundaries?

I don't straddle the line between obnoxious advertising and helpful informing. I always try to be informing although "in my mind" I am always advertising. I just don't want it to seem that way.

Question Five – Have you seen a return on your investment in social media?

I have not yet seen any real revenues directly related to social media. However, I think participating in social media has made me a better all-around marketer. And there is no question that social media and blogging has made me a much better critical thinker and more independent thinker. Instead of wanting to see what the majority thinks, I search for something more creative and innovative. Hopefully, that will pay off in dollars and cents over the next 12 months.

Question Six – You have one thing to tell the world. Social media related or otherwise. What is it?

Never ask others to do something that you wouldn't do (or haven't done) yourself. Whether it's scrubbing toilets or providing excellent customer service. Attempt perfection. Don't just do enough to get by. Your competition is doing that. Why not try to do it perfectly? It won't take that much longer and the internal satisfaction is priceless. And if you don't reach perfection, you'll still be the best.