

Why your social media sucks: The 5 levels of social media marketing (Part 2)

 By [Dylan Kohlstädt](#)

9 Jul 2018

Dylan Kohlstädt continues to list the levels of social media and unpacks the definition of next-level social media?



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If you haven't read Part 1 (which includes levels 1, 2 and 3), click below, then continue reading...



Why your social media sucks: The five levels of social media marketing (Part 1)

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4. Level four social media marketing: Me Too

Ok, so you've ticked the box, and you're producing content and posting it out regularly.

'Me Too' social media is basically your traditional content marketing. Companies on this level are posting more than just hard sell content or blah blah blah content on social media. They're starting to post 'Happy Friday', or 'What are you doing this weekend?' posts. They might even go as far as writing a blog about 'Seven Ways to Save Money' or 'Top Ice-Cream Parlors In Pretoria'.

Nothing wrong with this. It's necessary to go through this phase, just as it's necessary to pass through the five stages of grieving.

Usually on this level you start chasing likes - the vanity metric. Don't get me wrong - likes are important if you're a big, national brand. It's expected for you to have at least a few tens of thousands of followers. So do that, get them, and then work out what you're going to do with them.

Why? Because social media likes don't translate into sales. It's not SALES media. It's SOCIAL media.

Content here is usually too glossy, and not very believable. That's the basic flaw with most social media content plans - nobody believes you. Even though it's soft sell, it's still produced from your brand, for your brand, according to Nielsen. It's not credible, but don't stop!

There's no shame at this level, at least you are growing and moving up the social hierarchy.

Just don't get stuck here! Enlightenment is just a few posts away.

5. Level five: Kingmake me

When I started building my own brand, we created a product, where we turned thought leaders into digital influencers using video and social media. This then went on to expand into another product, where we used video and social media to inspire and unite a business. We did this either by filming the senior management live out the vision and values, or filming staff or even customers interacting with the brand in their day-to-day lives.

What I learned during this process, is that social media is designed for people, not brands.

If brands want to be active on social media, they have to do it as individuals, not as brands.

Sure, you can layer into your content plan the usual content marketing articles and images and videos, a few specials and products and hard sell posts, but you absolutely definitely also have to be using people (real people) in your posts.

Real people in the form of your senior management, CEO, staff, customers or other influencers.

Video

And it has to be video. And the video has to be cool and edgy and vibey, showing what it's like to be them, what it's like to walk in their shoes, not dull boring 'interview-style'. What's great about this style of video is that the person being filmed gets used to the camera, and even forgets about it. Think of day one in the *Big Brother* house – the Jacuzzi starts heating up only a few hours into the first day, cameras, inhibitions, clothing and reputations all forgotten as the story takes over.

Video communicates tone, body language and personality in a way that no other medium can. I can sense your mettle just by watching you on video.

Video communicates authenticity. You can't fake it in front of a camera. And the great thing about creating authentic video content is that people want it to look 'real' and not glossy and overproduced.

Imagine, instead of creating an interview-style video of your vision for the year to share with your 3,000 staff members situated globally, our camera crews follow you for a day or two, filming your day, filming how you live the vision, how you live the values, and sharing that with your team daily.

And that's the thing... once you start making video, you can't stop. You need to create daily snippets for your followers who want to connect with you and feel a part of your vision, dream and day.

Remember, it's not unusual for millennials, even Gen Y (and a few of the really with-it Gen X's) to form relationships digitally, and to not distinguish between virtual relationships and actual friendships.

Influencer marketing

Influencer marketing resides on this level. If you don't want to be an influencer, then approach influencers. If you don't want to produce this kind of content, then approach the many people who have built up a following, and ask them to collaborate. Get them to write a guest blog for you, sit on an expert panel, or review your product to their followers.



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The bad thing about influencer marketing is that it's already starting to lose its shine. Followers stop believing posts, as influencers take money to promote brands, authenticity and trust are lost, and as a result, relationships are burned.

Community management

Your community management has to go to the next level here too. You can't simply reply to comments. We are talking Social Amplification here. Teams of people who are proactively building relationships, becoming friends with your followers.

Live video

Live video is being prioritised over normal video by nearly all social platforms. Live video gives your customers and followers a chance to engage with you, face-to-face, virtually. Yes, that is a thing.

Content on this highest level has to be credible, believable, authentic and build relationships. If you mix this in with your Me Too content marketing, then you are onto a winning formula.



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What's next after level five?

Funnily enough, we are going full circle: from hard sell in the 50's, to soft sell in the 80's, to content marketing in the 00's to face-to-face, real, genuine, person-to-person connections in the 10's.

Virtual and augmented reality will bring you face-to-face with brands like no other technology.

Whatever's next is going to be more relationship driven, more personalised, and more real...even if it's virtual.

If you don't hop onto the social media bandwagon now, it will be a rocket ship to Mars by the time you try get on board.

Start now: level two.

ABOUT DYLAN KOHLSTÄDT

Dylan is the founder and CEO of Shift ONE, a creative integrated digital marketing agency with 12 full time staff members. Shift ONE was incubated by CTI and Google for Entrepreneurs and she now gives back by offering digital marketing training and workshops and talks to entrepreneurs. She has also facilitated the CTI Women in Business programme and mentors entrepreneurs, marketing managers and women in business on a regular basis.

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