



# LIGHT TOWER MARKETING

## Is Your Website “Social Media Friendly” ?

### Social media-friendly content

People love lists, tips, how-to's, guides, and so forth. This type of content is very social media friendly. Why do lists attract more traffic?

1. **Lists are Scannable** - online readers are notoriously lazy. A list helps communicate a number of points quickly and easily.
2. **Lists keep posts succinct** - there is something about a list that keeps you from rambling.
3. **Lists look ‘neat’** –Visitors will quickly click out of sites with messily formatted text Lists on the other hand can be quite visually pleasing.
4. **Lists are easy to link to** – Bloggers like sharing information and they want to be perceived as sharing valuable information. Now see point #3!
5. **Lists can be comprehensive** – From 5 to 100...if they're interested, they'll keep going down the list.
6. **Lists are persuasive** - if you want to mount a case for something quickly, short and concise points can be quite convincing.
7. **Lists can add to the ease of writing** - Lists help the writer break down his/her thoughts into bite sized pieces, which is good for both the reader and the writer.

### 2. Ability to share content.

Content itself is only part of the equation. Effective social media users *share* their content, knowing that somehow, somewhere, they will be driving traffic back to their site. Word Press plugins are popular for this reason – they allow you to choose social site icons & links for people to click and share with friends.



If you don't use Word Press, or don't have a blog at all, [AddThis](#) and [ShareThis](#) offer a similar widget that can be installed into a standard web page.

*“Schoolboy turns out to be 34 year old woman!”*

### **3. Great headlines.**

Never underestimate the importance of a great headline in your articles, blog posts, and other content. Social media users aren't known to be patient; a bad headline will turn them away immediately. And if they see the bad headline linked from another site, they won't bother clicking through to read the article on your site. Common Headline Mistakes Include:

1. No Reader Benefit - needs to be relevant and worth the time investment required to keep reading.
2. Lack of Curiosity - Does your headline make you *have to know* what the promised answer is? Use questions, numbers, challenges and statements that compel the prospective reader to explore the beneficial content you're offering.
3. Lack of Specificity - Use variations of the “list” headline, use words like “this,” “these,” “here is” and “here are” to refer specifically to your content, and also use hard numbers and exact percentages when appropriate.
4. Lack of Simplicity - Stick to one concept, eliminate unnecessary words, and use familiar language.
5. No Sense of Urgency or Call to Action - Check to see that items 1-4 above are truly present. If so, try reworking the headline to make it more compelling without stepping too far into hyperbole. If all else fails, examine the premise of the content itself. Is it really “need to know” information?

### **4. Eye-grabbing photos.**

A compelling image can be the difference between success or failure. Just like a great headline, a striking image in your article can also help grab attention. When social media users are deciding whether to bookmark your article or vote it up, they often make that decision within the first few seconds after seeing your content. Best placement for a great image is at the top of your article.”



### **5. No ads, or the ability to disable ads on your pages.**

Generally speaking, social media diehards don't like to see ads on the content they're reading. If you can't eliminate them, minimize them as much as possible. What many social media marketers do is submit ad-free content, then put the ads back on the page either right after the content “goes hot” (i.e., hits the home page) or a week or two later when the traffic and links have died down.

## **6. Social community elements on display.**

Community is a big part of social media success, and showing that you're involved in some of the well-known social media communities is part of having a social media-friendly web site. It's not a must-have like some of the other items listed here, but having things like a MyBlogLog widget, Facebook Connect, or Google Friend Connect widget is a way of showing that you're engaged in social communities.

## **7. A blog.**

Social media is also about conversations, and there's probably no better way to encourage conversations on your site than a blog. It can be the place where numbers 1-4 on this list are housed. You can still have social media success without it, but a strong blog will become the hub of your social media efforts and can make your web site social media-friendly.

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## 12 Tips on Creating Content for Social Media

### 1) Pick and choose your social communities wisely.

- Get involved in the right place. You can create the most amazing content, but if you present it to the wrong crowd, it'll fail miserably.

### 2) Don't go in Guns a Blazing!

- Forum users are VERY sensitive to SPAM
- Contribute wisely and selectively
- Choose a value-added signature

### 3) Observe and Note:

- Contribute first by joining existing discussions on other content.
- Study the types of content that get the most attention, whether it be in the form of votes, comments, or whatever the 'hook' is for that social community.
- Knowing the audience is key to creating content they'll love.

### 4) Tell stories:

- A good story grabs anyone's attention. We love stories. We listen to the tale and imagine everything in our mind's eye. We experience emotion and are compelled to take action because of the stories we hear.
- Have trouble writing? Make a video presentation out of it.

### 5) Give away your own knowledge.

- Your experience and expertise in your field will probably be of interest to others in your social community.
- This might be in the form of posts on your own blog, guest articles on other sites, how to videos, photo galleries, white paper PDFs, and more.
- Giving away your knowledge sets you up as an authority, earns respect, and helps you develop an audience.

## 6) Interviews with industry personalities:

- Once you become a known entity and have an audience, people will be more willing to answer questions.
- An interview with someone your crowd knows and respects will often play well in social communities.
- Focus on developing great questions and letting your interview subject do the rest. *(Hint: Before the interview, ask your audience what they would want to know from this person, or take your best guess if you can't ask them directly before the interview.)*

## 7) Lists are almost always popular with any crowd:

- Take a look at the magazines in the checkout line next time you're at the grocery store. Music magazines will have lists of the best albums or hottest new bands of the year. Sports magazines will have articles listing the greatest games of all time, or the top rookies that year.
- Female-oriented magazines are almost nothing but lists! These folks have been selling magazines for *decades*; they know that lists work.
- Your list might be tips, resources, rankings, or something funny. The sky's the limit when it comes to lists.

## 8) Debate another popular member of your community, or take the opposing point of view on a current topic:

- Being a contrarian isn't for everyone; but disagreeing with the conventional wisdom, and having strong evidence or opinions to support your argument, can become great content.
- Debate yourself for your customers: pro's vs con's list

## Bonus Tips

A few extra thoughts on creating and delivering content for social media:

**9) Write great headlines** - This is where attracting a crowd begins.

**10) Follow through on the promise of your headline** - Don't disappoint people with an article that doesn't meet the expectations that your headline created.

**11) Tell your audience what's in it for them** - This can be in your headline, or early in the content — lay out the reasons they should pay attention to the content you've created.

**12.) Cite external examples and resources as evidence supporting your point of view.**

**13) If creating articles or blog posts, include quality imagery to illustrate your words** - Visuals can be strong reinforcements. They also help with usability by making long blocks of text easier to read.

## **Conclusion**

Creating great content for your social network starts with preparation. Get to know the community and the types of content they like before spending your time and energy on content development.

Once you know the people and what content plays well, you have lots of choices — lists, interviews, and stories are almost always popular with any social media community.

None of this, of course, comes easy. Like any type of marketing that's worthwhile, patience and persistence are a must.

Call us for a free consultation in which we discuss your online branding needs, analyze your website and online processes, and determine an action plan guaranteed to help your company capture the market share it needs!

**CALL US TODAY AT 201-281-8112**