

Social Media Manager Interview

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Abstract

In this paper, I will interview a social media manager to explore and learn more about what it takes to be successful in the field of social media marketing. The format for this paper will begin with an introduction section to briefly define and describe social media marketing. Next, an about section will be included to introduce the subject of the interview. Then, an interview section will be included with dialogue. This interview will follow a traditional question and answer APA-style dialogue where the question (Q) represents the interviewer, and the answer (A) represents the interviewee. Finally, this paper ends with a conclusion to briefly summarize the material.

Introduction

For any brand with a digital media presence, social media managers are essential to the success or failure of a marketing strategy. Social media managers are marketing communication professionals who provide strategy, guidance, and direction for any business with an online presence. The primary purpose of a social media manager is to build, maintain, and enhance the brand by creating, engaging, and interacting with the market. Since social media is such a new and dynamic field, each business has a unique approach to management, and sometimes it can be challenging to understand what the industry is all about. So, to get a better idea of what a social media manager does, I interviewed the consummate IMC Professor, Social Media Manager, and Marketing Professional—Randa Hovater.

About

Randa Hovater is a Marketing professional who specializes in Social Media Marketing. A former student of the University of Alabama and current resident of the Muscle Shoals region in North Alabama, Randa holds a Bachelor of Science and Master of Arts in Integrated Marketing Communications. Randa also holds a certification from Florida Atlantic University for Hospitality and Tourism, and she is currently licensed by the Southeast Tourism Society. With over 7-years of experience in Social Media Marketing, Randa has held positions as a Web Designer, News Anchor/Reporter, Newspaper Editor In Chief, Brand Designer, Graphic Designer, Marketing Specialist, Media Relations Manager, Marketing Manager, City Council Member, Adjunct Professor, and Director of Communications—which is her current title at North Alabama Medical Center. So, without further ado, let's dive into the interview!

Interview

Q: "Hello, thank you for taking the time to do this interview! My name is Matthew Mason, and we'll go ahead and start with the first question: What is your name?"

A: "Hi, Matthew! My name is Randa Simpson Hovater!"

Q: "Okay, Randa, what is your job title?"

A: "I am the Director of Marketing Communications at North Alabama Medical Center."

Q: "How long have you been in the industry?"

A: "I've been working in the Marketing and Social Media Industry for about seven years!"

Q: "Okay, I know you've already answered this, but could you restate the company you work for?"

A: “Sure, I work for the North Alabama Medical Center and North Alabama Shoals Hospital!”

Q: “What made you get into social media marketing?”

A: “First of all, I love people! My career started off in the tourism and hospitality industry, which allowed me to connect with visitors worldwide while promoting a destination. This kind of kickstarted my love for the social media marketing industry!”

Q: “Nice, can you tell us a little more about your current job and job duties?”

A: “Yes, I’m in charge of all internal and external communications for both hospitals [North Alabama Medical Center and North Alabama Shoals Hospital]. I’m in charge of community engagement where we tap into local markets, schools, churches, nursing homes, and everything in the local community of the Shoals area. I’m also in charge of tapping into regional markets such as rural Tennessee. This includes everything such as the purchasing of billboards, conducting media interviews, writing press releases, and managing all of the social media accounts for online communications. With each of these, I’m in charge of content management, photography, videography, and graphic design.”

Q: “Wow! That’s a lot; what does a typical day consist of?”

A: “Haha, the typical day is... there are no typical days! In the hospital world, every day is crazy and different. If there is a normal day, we’ll have a director and manager meeting at 8:30 in the morning. These meetings are usually about anything relevant that needs to be addressed. We may discuss anything from the Covid Census to any good stories that have happened that would be good for a press release, social media release, or campaign. If there’s a good story, we’ll gather content, take photos, videos, write copy, and do whatever we need to do to tell the story.”

Q: “Nice, can you share a story or talk about one of your most successful campaigns?”

A: “Yes, one of our most successful campaigns was actually one of our more recent campaigns! In September, we started a social media story about collecting wedding dresses for babies who have been lost at birth. A family member of our staff takes these wedding dresses and creates dresses, tuxedos, and even pockets for pocket babies born too small. So, we’re taking these wedding dresses and making them into useful items for the community. In about a month, we’ve been able to collect nearly 300 dresses locally and internationally. Many of the dresses come from our region, but some have been sent from as far away as Canada! The campaign was much more successful than we initially anticipated, so now, we’re making plans for the surplus to help the surrounding area and hospitals to give back to the community!”

Q: “That’s interesting. You know there’s a common misconception that social media is just a waste of time, but I think your story here proves otherwise. What is one thing that most people may not know about social media?”

A: “I think it’s easy for people to assume that social media marketing can be done by anyone with a smartphone, and many businesses or companies just hire someone they know who has a kid or friend that’s active on social media just because they know how to use Facebook. Without any concept for business or marketing, many people on social media don’t have any direction, method, or strategy, and that can be super frustrating to professionals in our industry. It’s also assumed that people in social media shouldn’t get paid because they just play on their phones all day, but that’s just a big misconception!”

Q: “I totally agree! The social media profession is still young, but I think it’s only a matter of time before businesses understand the actual value that it can offer. Is there anything else you would like to add, or anything else you can share that you’re working on for the future?”

A: “Well, right now, we are completing our strategic plan for 2022, which includes creating campaigns and selecting new markets to focus on for the coming year. It’s a never-ending process of setting goals, following objectives, and integrating tactics for our strategy! We’re currently going over things that worked this year and things that didn’t work! For everything that did work, we will continue into the next year, and we’ll be discontinuing or redeveloping everything that did not work. We stay busy!”

Q: “Well, Randa... that’s it! Stay safe and take care! Thank you so much for your time, and God bless!”

A: “Thank you! I enjoyed doing this, and if you would like to know anything else about the industry, just let me know! Have a good day!”

Conclusion

In summary, we can see that a social media manager requires many skill sets. From engaging with the company internally to interacting with the community externally, a social media manager is the primary frontline representative of a brand. In such a new, fast-paced, and dynamic industry, it’s clear that there are no typical days for a social media marketer. Each day is different, and a social media manager has to expect the unexpected. In order to stay competitive and adapt to the ever-changing market environment, social media managers must be able to set clear goals, follow sound strategies, and use solid tactics. Contrary to common misconceptions, the social media manager is not an easy occupation as it requires skill, training,

and expertise. In the end, as the popularity of social media continues to grow and more companies embrace an online social presence, it's safe to say—the Social Media Manager is here to stay!