



## How to Get More Sales from Your Public Relations and Marketing Dollars

by Julie Keyser-Squires

When Chris Nassetta, President and CEO of Hilton Hotels Corporation, suggested that the rebound would not be immediate because “the psychological impact was too great,” many in the industry agreed. Many businesses in the global casino and gaming industry are in the wringer. The bright side is that when a company goes through a wringer, what remains is the true value in the business.

Executives can squeeze more value from public relations and digital marketing dollars with these four steps:

- 1) Know what the company is good at. Make an honest evaluation of the time plus in-house digital marketing and public relations resources - outsource the rest.
- 2) Develop high-value content. Export it consistently. With the shrinking news hole and proliferation of social media outlets, it is tempting to get caught up in the excitement of the medium. In fact, the most important marketing exercise a company can undergo is a deep dive into its message. What is the company's true value-add? Its differentiator? What business problem does the company solve? Answer these questions first, simplify the message and then consistently distribute it.
- 3) Search engines optimize everything. Search is the new homepage. After researching a company's keywords, sprinkle them through every piece of writing and micro-writing that it distributes.
- 4) Embrace social media technology to save your time. Social media will hit a tipping point of credibility and use in the casino and gaming industry in 2010 and will yield lucrative ROI strategies. Get started now, with one tactic at a time.

### Twitter Power Strategy

The below tactics assume you already have a PR and marketing plan in place and understand how twitter use fits into that plan and supports your business goals. Build your technology savvy:

- Read with Tweetdeck.
- Post with HootSuite. It lets you tweet from multiple profiles (@Juliesquires, @SoftscribeInc, etc.), schedule future tweets, and the Ow.ly URL shorter gives analytics.
- PDA post with Tweetie on your iPhone, OpenBeak (formerly Twitterberry) on your blackberry.

- Program your sources to provide as many interesting, relevant links as possible. Sources include *alltop.com*, *hotelmarketing.com*, *stumbleupon.com*. Use Google Reader to subscribe to select marketing blogs.

Remember Twitter is a moving stream. Treat tweeting like a business. Create a drum beat of high value content with your differentiator, benefit messages, and keywords, then search engine optimize it. Each tweet becomes its own webpage. To see this, go to Google and type in site: <http://twitter.com/yourname>. Use twitter for link-building. Follow industry leaders, and tweet high quality content that gets linked.

Create a consistently branded Twitter look and feel. Use a personal photo or photo scene for the thumbnail instead of the logo. Or use both with two accounts (personal and company). Create a 100% positive tone and avoid comments about politics, religion and money. Tweet at the same time each day. For every one tweet about your company, tweet 8 to 12 industry articles, or retweets from other people. Repeat top tweets (check HootSuite stats to find top tweets). Write headlines that start with “How to” “Why” and “Top 10.” Provide as many interesting, relevant links as possible.

Build your community. To build your Twitter community, become a subject matter expert. Follow Twitter leaders (@chrisbrogan, @copyblogger, @Guykawaskai) – learn from them how to use technology. Follow everyone who follows you. Always be linking to interesting stories, websites, blogs, experts.

Use behavioral targeting. Example: What do travelers like? Good food, currency exchange, time zone charts, etc. Follow prospects, clients, competitors. See who top hotel editors are following; use their lists. Track direct messages (DM), mentions and replies to the company; answer every one. Send @messages to industry leaders.

Measure your success. Establish measurement goals before you start – increased followers, click throughs to landing page, search conversions. Measure with Radian6, Sysomos, or your own homegrown approach that could include Google/Yahoo alerts, PRWeb news service metrics, Inbound links, Google analytics for landing pages and website, as well as coverage in blogs, other websites, and publications. You could develop a similarly efficient strategy for each social media tactic that supports your business goals. ♣

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