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7 Symptoms of Poor Social Media Hygiene

The monster that emerges from you when posting on social media is fraying of the fabric of society. Cut it out!

May 9, 2019 6 min read

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Forget the baby pictures, the posts of thankful people who love their families, the Instas of your food or vacation.

They can get annoying, but at least they're positive. At least they're not contributing to societal problems or projecting negativity into social discourse. There are others, however, addicts to strife and drama, who contribute to disagreement and contention, fraying the social fabric.

Like me, you need to check yourself when it comes to social media. Sometimes, when you get so into your own social media

world, it becomes who you are. You may not even realize that you are acting the way you are.

Now is the time to audit your social media prowess. Take a look at your profile, your social media brand. Read these seven symptoms, take a look in the mirror, and identify the worst social media poster within you.

1.) You over-post like you're having a real-time dialogue with someone.

One word: Twitter. You real-time tweet your life, acting as if you are actually having a conversation with the rest of the world. It's over the top. It's unnecessary. The other necessary question: How are you pumping out so many tweets and keeping your full-time job?

Related: Biggest Social Media Fails of 2017

2.) You broadcast your life's events – hourly.

You have a friend or are that friend who announces to people, "In case you didn't know/wanted to know, I am taking a break from social media for a while."

"Thank you, but who cares?" Taking a break from social media doesn't require a post so that your friends and followers don't worry. There are some who are so consistently on social media that watching a movie interrupts that time and they let people know they're two hours out from their next post. It's ridiculous.

3.) You post opinions as a social media tough guy/girl.

This is similar to squaring up on someone in real life. You think you are Andre the Giant or Ronda Rousey. You are unstoppable. That's the way you post. You tend to come off like you're better than others. No one can hurt you because you're that big, hiding behind your phone or technology miles away. Well, you are not 10 feet tall. In fact, you become even smaller when you hide behind social media.

4.) You're mean.

You're just flat-out mean. Everything you post is mean and negative. Any person who offers an iota of disagreement, you blast them. I see it all the time. God forbid someone doesn't agree with you 100 percent of the time.

And, naturally, you preach bipartisanship: *We need to be bipartisan. We need to treat each other right. We need to get things done together.*

Then, at the slightest sign of disagreement, you hate their guts, and your true partisan ways are exposed. You can't walk both lines. Either you commit to treating people well and state that on social media, or you commit to not posting about things that you know will be met with contempt.

5.) You never admit you're wrong, or you justify your wrongness.

You never admit you're wrong. I see this all the time, especially when I worked in Congress. You are wrong about certain things you post. You get super aggressive in your post, lambasting and going after someone else.

When you find out you're wrong, you won't admit it. You instead try to justify it in some quasi-roundabout way. Instead of admitting, "I'm sorry, I was wrong," there's no accountability. It doesn't exist in your vocabulary. You refuse to be the bigger person and own up. You don't even have to apologize. Just admit to being wrong.

Related: Why Everyone and Everything on Social Media Is Fake

Based on the aggressiveness of the post, you may need to apologize for getting behind something so severely without having all the facts. Now, something comes out about this topic, and you have nothing to do with it. You're wrong, and you won't admit it because you're stubborn.

6.) You pretend to be effortlessly wittier and smarter than everyone else.

Ninety-nine percent of your posts take 30 minutes to craft. You want to emit wit. You think you are an absolute comic. Every tweet is an over-the-top, wannabe funny post. You ask people to not take you seriously, but the unspoken message is, *take me seriously because I'm so smart, and this tweet shows you I'm smart. I spent an hour crafting this, but I am so cool*.

In reality, you would never talk to a person this way, or come up with such a pithy comment, but here you are, researching your opinion to mimic your beliefs in a certain sort of way.

7.) You make social media your pulpit.

You talk down to anyone who doesn't share your beliefs. As mentioned above, you may refuse to admit you're wrong, and you

may end up being flat-out mean. You regularly use the phrase, “Do the right thing,” as if you’re opinion is 100 percent the right thing. It’s obvious, and there could be no other way!

There are a lot of people who write about social media, how ridiculous it is, and how it’s making our society go crazy. Just look at Jussie Smollett. People use social media to go off the Richter scale with speculation and to air their most private or impolite thoughts.

Social media allows speculation to grow and grow.

Related: Top 10 Powerful Moments That Shaped Social Media History Over the Last 20 Years

Here’s the prescription: Awareness. Looking for even the slightest symptom in yourself, and treat it. If you have a cold, you would verify the symptoms and do everything in your power to make yourself better (Vitamin C, water, medications).

Do the same thing with social media. Once you are aware of how you can treat the issue, drink some water, think twice, and choose to post positivity instead. #Postpositive

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3 Proven Methods Brands Like Glossier Use to Grow Their Social Media Impact

Webby Awards executive director Claire Graves recommends taking a page out of Gritty and Glossier’s book to create a more powerful social media footprint.

May 2, 2019 4 min read

As you grow your business you want to meet your customers where they are, and that means creating an online presence that is unmistakably you. When brands try to contort themselves into something they are not, the results can range from awkward to tone-deaf. So what can you learn from the brands that are doing something right?

Since 1996, the International Academy of Digital Arts and Sciences (IADAS) has honored excellence on the internet with The Webby Awards. And this year, Claire Graves, the Executive Director of the awards and says that there was a 30 percent increase in the work entered into the social media category.

Graves shared some of the winners who were most effective on social media this year, and some of her biggest takeaways from their success.

The 23rd annual Webby Awards will take place on May 13th, hosted by Jenny Slate.

Build authentic relationships

Graves cited Emily Weiss, the 34-year-old founder and CEO of cosmetics company Glossier who won the Webby for "Entrepreneur of the Year" as a prime example of someone using their platform to develop a community and create an open line of communication.

"She uses social media as kind of like a powerful listening tool to hear customers feedback and they use that feedback for new product lines and product improvements as well," said Graves.

Related: How Glossier Hacked Social Media to Build A Cult-Like Following

Show people what is possible

The New York Public Library won a social award for the "Best Use of Stories" with their Insta Novel campaign, which aimed to give readers an "immersive" and unexpected reading experience with Instagram for iconic books like *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland, The Yellow Wallpaper, and The Metamorphosis,* and in doing so reframed how the platform can be utilized.

"They are just using stories in a totally different way. And

being really smart about it, using the platform for people to see how they can use it as well. It’s a showcase of the platform,” explained Graves.

Lean into what makes you different

There really could only be one winner this year for the “Social: Athletes and Sports Persons” category – the Philadelphia Flyers’ orange, chaotic and lovably viral mascot Gritty. Created by Brian Allen and his company Flyland Designs with David Raymond, who was the first person to be the Phillie Phanatic, the mascot quickly established an attitude all its own that has resonated with fans.

“Everything he does is done with social media in mind. One of the things that he did when he came out for the first time was he took a huge spill on the ice which turned into a really big viral moment,” said Graves. “He is designed for social media, he looks like he belongs on social media.”

Related: 5 Smart Ways to Use Social Media to Grow Your Business in 2019

Having spent the last eight years at the helm of the awards, Graves says looking ahead, she sees social media as the place where brands will be aiming to make an impact.

“We saw huge growth in social media this year. Brands are able to experiment with those platforms easily to see what their audience responds to and then continue to build a dialogue with their audience as well,” said Graves. “I think that it’s where brands are spending their budget. They used to create microsites and for the last few years, they were making a lot of videos for Youtube or for their own platforms. But now they are putting budget where their audiences are, and where their audiences are responding.

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Taking a Stand Used to Be Taboo in Business. Now, It’s Almost Required.

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I started my career in brand management at Johnson & Johnson, a classic packaged-goods marketing organization within a top pharmaceutical company. My first assignment was on Johnson's Baby Shampoo. I was twenty-six years old and I'd never held a baby in my life. I was very low on the learning curve!

Johnson & Johnson was a conservative company at the time, as were many, and we followed a classic marketing approach driven by insights and fueled by creativity. We typically targeted new moms, and in fact, my thinking was considered radical when I suggested we should consider dad in the equation.

We would never comment on a social or political issue. No way, no how. Why would we risk alienating a portion of our consumer base? Back then, even the slightest move sparked a boycott, and we were terrified of the backlash.

When I took over the marketing lead for Clean & Clear, we were the first Johnson & Johnson brand to advertise on MTV, and several activist groups threatened to boycott. I argued that we were merely reaching our target audience of teenage girls on an entertainment property that they frequented. That was about as far as I could push it – going anywhere any further was taboo.

My, how things have changed! Blame it on the digital revolution, millennials, social media or brands becoming more active in communities. Probably all of the above.

Whatever the reason, brands are now breaking taboos and taking a stand on social issues that matter.

They partly have no choice, which is funny because I felt like

I had no choice to make that sort of stand back in the day. Consumers now want to know where a brand stands on issues that matter to them. They're looking for brands to make a positive impact on the world.

Patagonia is suing the government over the protection of public lands. Nike is supporting its athletes in their personal passions, be it social or otherwise. Dick's Sporting Goods changed its policies about gun sales, after yet another mass shooting. Starbucks is working to address racial bias.

These brands know what matters to their consumers, so they are taking matters into their own hands to have an impact. We've never seen this before. It's always been taboo.

But not every brand should take a stand on every issue. As a brand manager, how do you know where to go?

How to find out what matters.

Look to your consumers, your customers, your employees and any other constituents that matter to you and find what matters to them. Talk to them, follow their social channels, discover their influencers and uncover their concerns. If they are concerned about a particular issue, then you should be too.

I would encourage you to take some meaningful action. Keep in mind that it doesn't always have to be controversial. To this day, Johnson & Johnson supports careers in nursing because nurses are central to healthcare. NYU grants free tuition to its medical studies to keep the pipeline of medical professionals robust. Countless brands and organizations are working to close the pay gap. Not a lot of controversy in any of those issues, only opportunities for brands to bring about change that matters.

You don't even have to take a public stand. Understanding a social issue and being conscious about its importance may be

all you need to do. That understanding can help shape your overall programming, and just acknowledging the issues may be enough for your business.

Certainly, that can’t be taboo anymore.

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