



## Bright hints, tips and ideas

### What's all the fuss about social networking?

*Facebook, Linked-in and Twitter, it's all people and the media seem to be talking about these days. If you're not au-fait with social networking and are wondering how it can work for your organization, take a look at the below.*

#### **Social networking defined:**

*A social network service focuses on building online communities of people who share interests and/or activities, or who are interested in exploring the interests and activities of others. Most social network services are web based and provide a variety of ways for users to interact, such as e-mail and instant messaging services.<sup>1</sup>*

**Facebook phenomenon:** The phenomenon of Facebook as a social networking service has seen the site reach over 100 million worldwide users in 2008, with Myspace reaching the 100 million milestone in 2006. Sites like Facebook and Myspace have traditionally been used more for social networking than professional networking, but over the last 1-2 years organisations are adopting business profiles on the sites, as it provides free PR to a potential worldwide audience. For more information visit [www.facebook.com](http://www.facebook.com)

**So why do businesses use social networking?** Primarily businesses adopt social networking as a free medium to respond to customer's questions, to network, to reference or educate customers, messaging, advertising and promotion of their business and for creating and maintaining their profile.

**What's LinkedIn?** While some businesses have adopted Facebook as a business networking tool, LinkedIn is free a dedicated professional business network. Launched in 2003 it links more than 40 million professionals worldwide across 170 industries. A business will create a profile and build a contact network, which consists of their direct connections and then the connections of each of their connections. Linked in can then be used to find jobs and people and business opportunities recommended by someone in their contact network. For more information visit [www.linkedin.com](http://www.linkedin.com)

**What's Twitter:** Twitter is a free social networking and micro blogging service. It allows users to send and read each others' updates, which are commonly referred to as 'tweets'. Tweets are text-based posts allowing a maximum of 140 characters, shown on the author's profile page and delivered to other users who have subscribed to them. Twitter was created in 2006 and had grown rapidly in the UK in 2008 and 2009. Presently there are approximately 55 million people that 'Twitter' worldwide. The benefits of Twitter are you can send the author a direct (private) message and you can promote brief messages to your audience. Twittering is big news in the media, with a strong celebrity following who provide tweets to its subscribers. Organisations that use Twitter often send short sharp messages and links to articles on their website. For more information visit [www.twitter.com](http://www.twitter.com)

**Pros and cons of social networking:** The main advantages for adopting social networking for your business is the global reach it provides for your organisation. It's a free service and if updated regularly it can become a profitable sales channel and promotional tool for your business. The biggest challenge of social networking is that you need to manage your networks and profiles by regularly feeding them with up to date with information, which can be costly in terms of time and resources.

**The future:** Whether people you like it or not, the social networking hype shows no sign of slowing down. Many businesses are joining due to demand that has been created and to ensure they take advantage of the potential opportunities it can offer their business.

## **Need more bright ideas to help with social marketing?**

Bright Marketing Solutions is a full creative agency providing everything from consultancy, design and print, electronic to PR and copywriting. We promise to provide simple honest marketing solutions for your organisation to suit every budget. **We can also keep your social networking sites constantly updated with information so you don't have to!**

Contact us now and take advantage of a free mini business healthcheck\* and save 10% \*off your first booking with us. Simply quote 'welcome' \*Terms and conditions apply, see website for full details

**Follow us on twitter:** [www.twitter.com/brightmarketing](http://www.twitter.com/brightmarketing)

**Follow us on linked in:** [www.linkedin.com/in/brightmarketing](http://www.linkedin.com/in/brightmarketing)

**Email us at: [info@brightmarketingsolutions.co.uk](mailto:info@brightmarketingsolutions.co.uk)**  
**Visit us at: [www.brightmarketingsolutions.co.uk](http://www.brightmarketingsolutions.co.uk)**

1. Source, Wikidepedia