

Expert advice and guidance from the  
**Communications Sector**

# DEBUNKING THE MYTHS OF SOCIAL MEDIA

## MEET OUR EXPERT


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Sara Drawwater is Director of Communications for Something Beckons, a web design, marketing and training company based in Peterborough. Sara is also Vice Chair of the Cambridgeshire Chamber of Commerce Communications Sector.

Something Beckons specialises in online communications, helping businesses increase leads and build valuable relationships. The Something Beckons approach is to challenge clients to step outside of their comfort zone and communicate in a way that stimulates conversation and adds real value. This YouTube video explains more: <http://tinyurl.com/o9a5lds>

[www.somethingbeckons.co.uk](http://www.somethingbeckons.co.uk)


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Would you like to get involved with our Communications Sector? Do you have ideas for future events or expertise to share in a guide like this?

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## Debunking the myths of Social Media

There are two myths responsible for the failure of social media in business. It has been wrongly championed as easy and free. But we all know that nothing of value comes easy or free.

Technology has made it easier (but not easy) for businesses to communicate and market through social media.

Social media channels like Twitter and Facebook may have made it more affordable (but not free) to communicate with key audiences.

Using these tools may at first appear to be free. But mastering and managing these communication tools takes time, effort and expertise. These are definitely not free.

## Top tips for Social Media

People need to scrap the idea that social media is easy and free, and acknowledge these six ingredients for social media success.

- 1 Know your business**  
Start with the basics and be very clear about your business goals. Consider where you want your business to be in 6, 12 or 18 months. Identify all the different types of products or services you offer and prioritise them in order of importance for your business. Consider who your ideal customers are. Carefully break down the needs of prioritised existing and potential customers by thinking about market segments, customer profiles and their real problems. This information is key in helping you clarify what you say through social media channels.
- 2 Social media is nothing without content**  
Valuable content is the fuel that drives social media. Social media is a tool that helps you generate conversations, and build relationships and communities around your content. As a business you will offer some kind of expertise that forms the backbone of the products or services you offer. This expertise is your key ingredient for valuable content. Use your knowledge to create content that persuades your audience to take notice of you and believe you have products and services that solve their problems.
- 3 Cohesive communications**  
Ensure your social media activity integrates with a strong website hub, a content marketing strategy (driven by the information in point 1) and all other communication and marketing channels.

- 4 Inspire your people**  
Know who will carry out social media activities, how it will be resourced and what support they need to deliver. Do not throw social media at someone who has little understanding of it and no extra resource (such as time and budget) to make it work.

- 5 Tools and systems**  
Invest time in selecting tools and systems for smart and efficient social media delivery.

- 6 Links to other departments**  
Think about how your social media activity can generate leads, enhance Research and Development and improve customer service. Get these teams working with each other and you'll start to experience tangible business benefits from social media.

Get it right and social media can really help you attract the attention of your ideal customers.

