Concise Content #1

What do B2B budget holders REALLY think about social media?

Want to know what leading marketers are thinking and doing about social media, but don't have the time to read volumes? Here are the opinions and observations of 6 top marketing minds, gathered from a 2-hour roundtable discussion, but **condensed into a 5-minute read**.

Produced by Base One & B2B Marketing, May 2012

B2B Marketing

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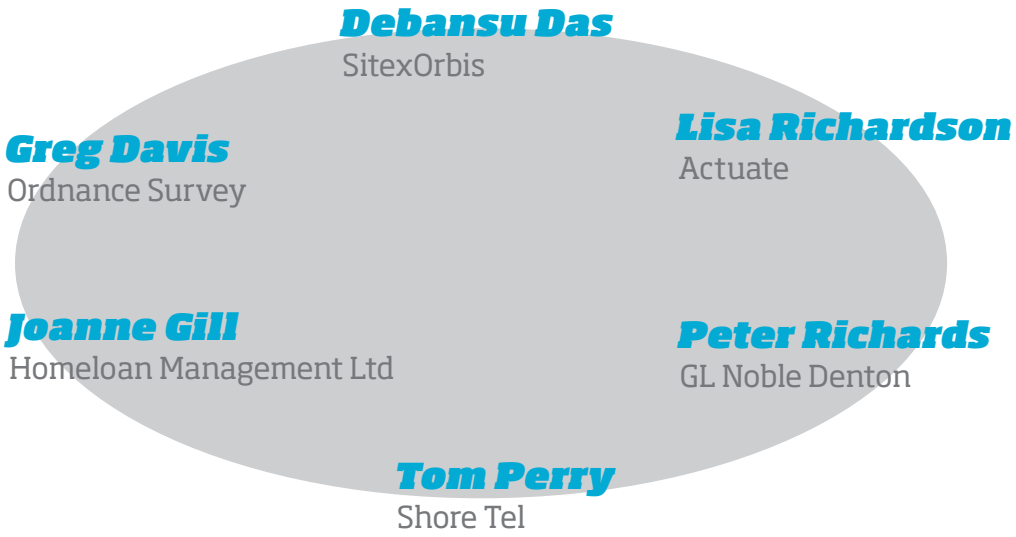
Concise Content #1: B2B Social Media Marketing

Six **leading B2B client-side marketers** got together around a table with Base One and *B2B Marketing* to talk about what they were doing in social media, and explain why.

They talked about what works. And what doesn't. Why they find it hard, and the tricks they use to make it easier.

And we thought **this would be useful to share**. So instead of giving you two hours to listen through, we have the key content here for you now, in **a quick five-minute read**.

Enjoy. And then get back to work.



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Why are you doing social media?

"We see it as a way of getting our name out there. It's not about driving leads, but using intelligent content in the right places to put us on our prospects' radar when they start the buying process"

"Thought leadership first, lead generation second."

"2 big competitors made us do it."



"2 big competitors made us do it. We could see that they were getting successes. We could see they were being talked about. A decision was made that we had to follow."

"It's a reflection on society that we all understand this stuff. We're all more media-savvy. Every company gets the fact that they need to be part-media company at the same time. It's just that some are getting there more slowly than others."

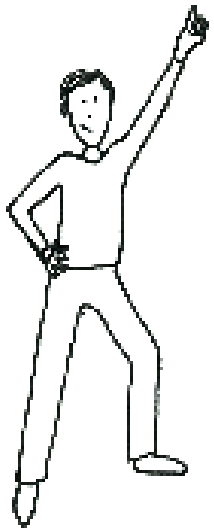
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Why would you not do social media?

"Some people within the company believe the brand shouldn't be associated with social media. They say that a traditional brand doing social media is like your dad dancing at a wedding. It just doesn't look right."

"The CEO said LinkedIn was just a tool for self-promotion. Took six months to talk him round."

"Doing social media is like your dad dancing at a wedding."



"Most of the people who decide whether to buy from us do not use social media for chatting. These are over-50s. They just don't use it like that. But they do use Google to search for articles of interest, and that often directs them to our material via social media channels."

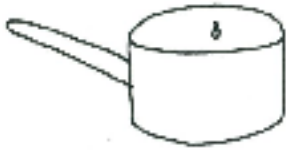
"Until six months ago, it was IT telling us that we weren't allowed to use it."

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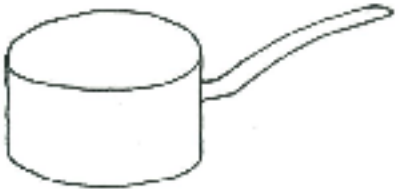
What's your strategy?

"It's all about content. Content creation has replaced traditional marcomms. It's not about campaign bursts – it's a drip-drip strategy. A constant, consistent, relevant presence."

"The online world is littered with beautiful campaigns that just don't connect together. We make sure we are consistent and that we stay focused."



"We encourage our people to actively maintain focused discussion groups on LinkedIn. Individual thought leadership creates a positive brand effect. We block people who come in to sell. It takes time, but it works."



"The best way of making sense of it is to start with the key themes that link you to your customers. That way you can focus your time and play to your strengths. Don't allow yourself to get distracted from these – you'll waste time and resource."

"It's a drip-drip strategy."









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How do you produce content?

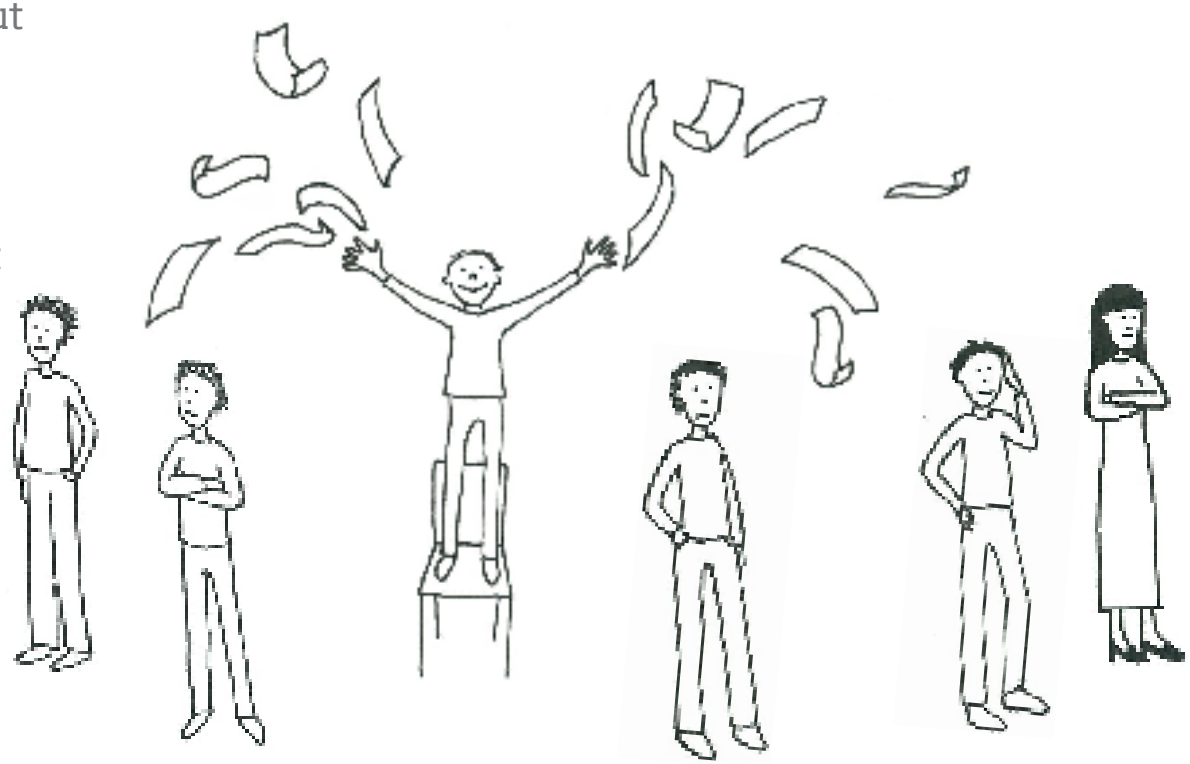
"People don't read whitepapers like they used to. There's a big fall-off. Anything more than two pages won't work."

"Getting content out of internal experts is so difficult. Repurposing content in clever ways is absolutely key."

"The traditional press release is dead. We can't assume that people want to know about our products, but we often do. People suffer from delusions of grandeur but, to make social media work, we have to understand that there are wider conversations going on and we have to contribute meaningfully, not arrogantly."

"We use an agency to generate content - but the best storytellers are our own senior people."

"People suffer from delusions of grandeur"



"We're under pressure to use US-generated material. For US audiences, we talk about ourselves, our products. But we've noticed that doesn't work as well in Europe. I'm sure it's the other way round too. My French and German colleagues translate the material, but it's not the language that is the problem; it's the content!"

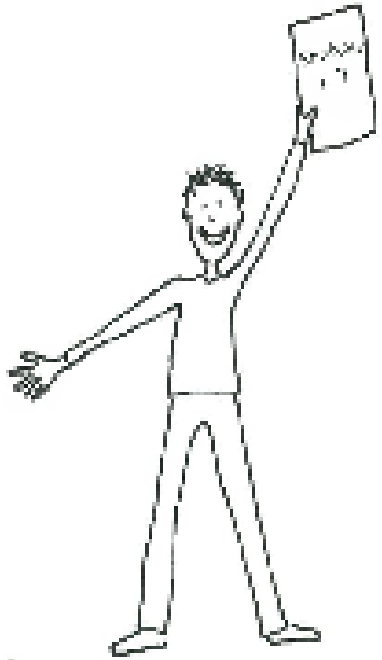
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How do you get senior buy-in?

"We tried to set a strategy several times before we got it right. Lack of senior-level buy in is always the difficulty."

"We did some advertising on LinkedIn to prove that our audiences were there. We could then take those results to the board as proof that this was a serious channel."

"We tried to set a strategy several times before we got it right."





"There is definite value from a brand perspective. But if the board told me I could have £150k if I could give them solid ROI, I'd have to refuse.'

"Want to find influencers? Surf the profiles on LinkedIn! And show the CEO that the other CEOs are on there..."

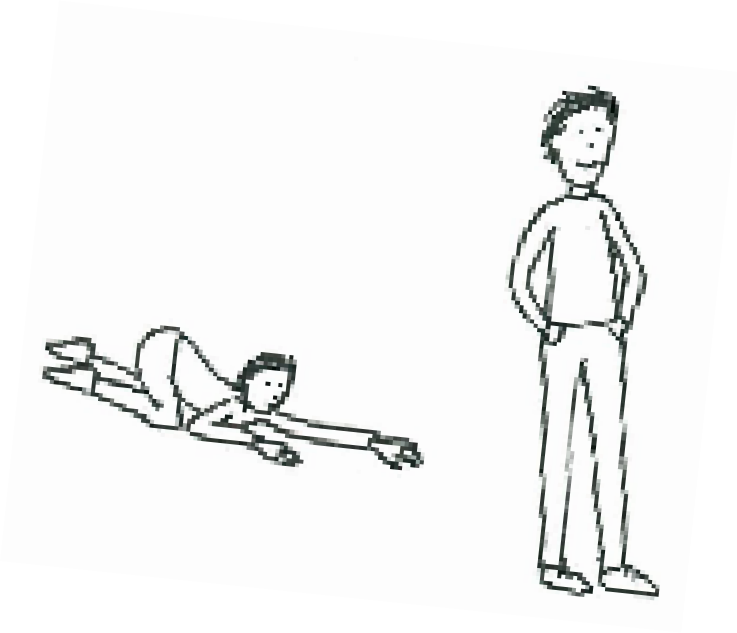
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What are the dangers of social media?

"Cannot have corporate opinion on anything regulatory - this is very dangerous ground."

"There has to be a presumption of competence amongst your staff. 99% are massively interested in furthering their careers, not bringing down the company."

"Social media isn't dangerous; people are."



"Social media isn't dangerous; people are. There is an organisational fear of losing control if people can say what they want. It's about selecting the spokespeople, training and focusing their activities. Don't forget that they want to keep their jobs!"

We hope you found this insight concise and useful. If you would like to talk more about planning and implementing a social media strategy, talk to Base One on +44 208 943 9999 or visit www.baseone.co.uk. Thanks for downloading.

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