



nerej

Social media: To Automate or NOT to Automate? That is a Question...

May 17, 2012 - Front Section

It seems that every social media discussion I have with business owners or marketing directors who are on the fence about "diving in" inevitably ends with this question: Can we automate our posts? My answer to them is definitively, NO! Social media is meant to personalize a brand. How can that happen if you use a robot? Unless that robot is IBM's Watson, who famously beat the two best humans we threw at him in last years Jeopardy tournament.

Another important reason not to automate your posts is Facebook's Edgerank algorithm. Facebook gives automated posts a zero "affinity score" which means that your post will not help you reach more news-feeds of those that subscribe to your brand. Subscribers and those that "Like" your brand are much more inclined to engage with your posts if they know that someone (a human) is going to engage back with you. Say you are being called by a telemarketer and it is an automated call (one of the worst things by the way), how fast do you hang up? On the other hand if that is a person making that call you at least hear them out before politely declining to purchase what they offer. One has zero engagement while the other at least minimal engagement and a chance to close the sale.

In conclusion, the time you save to automate your posts is not worth the cost of engagement. When posting and using social media your first and only thought should be: how does this post get the most engagement, and not, what is the easiest way to get it done?

Eric Wilson is special projects director at The New England Real Estate Journal, Norwell, Mass.

New England Real Estate Journal - 17 Accord Park Drive #207, Norwell MA 02061 - (781) 878-4540