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Social media and what works best for your firm

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Social Media - a firm definition is not available in the dictionary but this term is used on a daily basis in all lines of business. If you want to review definitions in the dictionary of social they would include everything from 1) relating to human society and how it is organized to ability to 2) allow people to meet and interact with others in a friendly way. While the 2nd definition more relates to social media as it is meant today there are so many means of communication and determining what is necessary and what will be useful for your specific business is a challenge. In order to assist our BOMA members, our April program offered insight into social media and online essentials for today's business.

This program included information on how to get started, what is important to know and what are some of the legal concerns that business should consider before entering into the social media platform. A panel of experts was compiled to assist in getting our members up to speed on this every changing means of communication. Stacey Cohen, president/founder of Co-Communications, was the moderator for our program. Cohen's firm is a full-service PR/marketing company who assists companies with setting up systems and determining what types of social media best fit their line of business. Members of the panel included Holly Alexander, founder of Top Spin Communication; Daniel Schwartz, Esq., partner with Pullman & Comley; Ellen DePasquale, regional development director with Constant Contact; and David Hoffman, founder of Search Smart Marketing; all of which have extensive backgrounds with either assisting customers with setting up social media programs, providing support for programs which have been established as well as providing legal advice when it comes to social media.

The panel offered much insight into what needs to be considered prior to setting up any social media program.

The most important aspect of social media and deciding upon what works best for your firm is knowing your audience and having a firm decision on the type of message you want to send. While you can modernize your face to the world by getting into the social media field you need to ensure you have a consistent theme and that the individuals that will be in charge of the social media for your firm are aware of your vision and keep that consistent. Similar to your marketing plan on your web site, your social media plan should be engaging and offer additional value to those that use it. Utilizing the appropriate system depending on the audience you want to reach is also important. While in the rural areas Facebook may suffice to send out information about your firm but in a fast paced urban environment you may need to utilize Twitter. Again knowing your audience, your environment and the message you desire to get out is key to success of any program.

Just think of it this way, while most of us do not even think about sending an E-Mail or a text message to communicate information however, less than 20 years ago this was considered to be in bad taste since you were not communicating verbally or person to person. Times are changing and in order to keep your business successful we all need to look for new ways to communicate and keep our company name out there. While there are some legal concerns surrounding social media if you ensure you have knowledgeable personnel in charge of your program you should not have any problems. Start small (just having your friends and family as members) and then start adding more once you feel more comfortable. All forms of social media provide a service to certain groups of individuals - finding what works for you and your firm is what is important. Give it a try - it may just be the boost your firm needs to get to that next level of success!

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