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Dishing social media: MOCIAL - mobile, social, local

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Other than the word "MOCIAL" sounding like it's the new ice-cream blizzard from DQ, in the social media world it stands for "mobile, social, local." For the first time ever, ICSC put together a conference around social media education called

MOCIAL that took place in Orlando the beginning of September. I had the pleasure of attending as a committee member, speaker and attendee. The conference was built around what the MOCIAL committee thought retail real estate professionals would want to know about social media. Popular topics included social media crisis management, how to leverage Facebook for B2B and B2C, geofencing, mobile payment, tips from a Google representative and retail real estate trends. Below are my key take-aways from the show.

"Never argue with a crazy person, they can always bring more crazies," said John Dee of Placewise Media out of Denver. On the MOCIAL crisis management panel, speakers mentioned that not all negative comments deserve a response, where others you need to respond to rapidly. Responses are best coming from the same social media network they were received, example: Facebook to Facebook. You can even learn from comments. Try looking at sites like Yelp to see if there are patterns in negative posts. Is your parking charge too high? Do you need improved cleaning schedules?

Ryan Panitz, director of communications at Edens, and I spoke about why even grandma is on Facebook and how to leverage the social network for B2B and B2C. By this I mean Facebook at the corporate level (B2B) and Facebook at the shopping center level (B2C). Facebook is a network that I believe is ok to talk about yourself on but you want to make sure that you incorporate value. As Ryan explained, each post that you make must include one of five value buckets:

1. Education
2. Inspiration
3. Entertainment
4. Reciprocation and
5. Exclusive Info.

I really feel that companies can use Facebook to show their corporate culture and true personality.

A new term for me at the show was, "direct to spend advertising." I learned about this when listening to a presentation by LevelUp (a mobile payment app storming Boston as we speak). An example of this is an ad at a bus stop. The ad includes a QR code that brings the mobile user to a \$5 off coupon for a store that is within an eyeshot. This allows the user to get a reward and use it immediately.

Julie Jin, account specialist for Google touched on the glowing star of MOCIAL, local! She is a mobile specialist and noted 80% of retailers don't have a mobile website even when 90% of mobile users search for local information. This made me think about how much work marketers in CRE have to do to help educate our tenants on the importance of mobile tech.

Ever think about helping not selling? Jay Baer, president of Convince & Convert has, and he helped educate the MOCIAL crowd on YOUtility. By this he means, if you help someone, you make a customer for life, where if they simply buy something, you make a customer for a day. Think about it.

Random social media intrigue: "Content is fire and social media is gasoline" - Jay Baer.

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