

# How to (Actually) Earn Money (Now) with Social Media (Really): Part 1

Contributed by Search Engine Watch Blog  
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OK, everyone knows the nearly mythological powers of social media to help grow long term site equity. Link building comes to mind immediately to most. Traffic waves can carry motivated visitors who might subscribe to your feed, engage in comment threads, complain about how bad your company sucks, and/or rave about fantastic customer service. It's all good.

True, leveraging digital assets and hot social channels for long term SEM benefit has now become SEO 101. However your boss or client may need to be convinced that investing in another layer of content management system (CMS), content, and conversational networking WILL in fact yield measurable financial results soon. There is no better way than to set and achieve short term goals for immediate social media cash flow, to get folks excited about the long-term.

Here's a few ways to get hands plenty dirty and flow cash in the first quarter of your initial social media forays:

- Social PPC starts with Facebook if your demographic includes 14-26 year olds. Make no mistake; savvy clients are making millions of dollars in the space. Drill down into the Facebook social graph and you'll find fascinating PPC categories (aimClear has charted about 10,000 preset interest-categories on the USA Facebook PPC social graph.)

Anything in the pop culture, sports, music, education categories fly really well. Software, games, kissy, and in some cases even an emerging young corporate mindset can work. FB is noisy, applications are really annoying, and sometimes carefully crafted PPC works very sweetly amongst the clutter. Make it go Ka CHING\$\$\$ the first day with landing pages segmented by interest categories (Buzz Pockets) rather than keywords.

- Other communities have different gateways to insert paid advertising. StumbleUpon, Digg, MySpace, and LinkedIn have advertising options. Whatever the community there is nearly always some paid method to insert advertising by way of a the site's own and/or major ad platform partners like Google, MSN and/or Yahoo. Some communities use multiple ad platforms, both internal and third party.

Open a door with outbound linking for your boss or client to make a sale right away. You'll find an abundance of blogging-tips in the SEM trade pubs regarding the incredible value of outbound linking as a PR mechanism. At base, link out to bloggers and corporate sites to benefit your clients and customers. Any marketing department quality enough to warrant your outbound link will soon discover that you did it. Identify 30 authority-writers in your product or service's space (who don't directly compete) and ping them with an outbound link on compelling anchor text.

After linking out to them in properly published content, have your VP send an email to alert your target site's VP to the link. Tell your sales department that you've "made a new friend." Suggest they invite the friend out for gruyere and Fume Blanch. This tactic is a more aggressive version of linkbaiting and can work really well. A) The social media department softens the target up. B) The sales staff at corporate follows. Case in point, here I invite distinguished CopyBlogger Brian to the table @ SEW Blog. He'll hear about it in a daily alert. "Hello there" Brian Clark! Use this technique and make a goal of directly associating a SINGLE sale in the first 60 days from which the conversion can be directly attributed at least in part to a social media tactic.

- Increase conversion on traditional (AdWords/Panama/AdCenter) PPC landing pages by mashing in headlines from feeds of corporate or customer activities. In other words, take the top 3 headlines each from the corporate media and community relations feeds and display them just above or below the conversion goal mechanism you're trying to get users to bite on. aimClear's data shows that when PPC landing pages display mashed-in headlines radiating from true community activity, conversion rises in a measurable way. Ka CHING\$\$\$ again!

BTW, yes it's certainly OK to moderate what excerpted content is allowed to bubble into PPC landing pages, or any pages for that matter. If you've not incited much user generated content yet, prime the pump by originating the mashed-in feed content as "push PR" from a department of your company I.E. like customer support and relations. There's nearly always good recurrent content available to source somewhere which will prove interesting to potential clients.

### Money Talks, BS Walks

Methods to immediately quantify the value of investment in social media are limited only by the creativity of the SEM team. With social PPC and other paid SMO, financial objectives are immediately attainable. If cash matters and you're used to PPC, the first questions to ask of any potential social value are "what are these folks chattering about" and "What Ad Platforms insert ads into the SMO stream?"

Outbound linking targeted to savvy customers (who monitor their reputation) can be a terrific door-opener. Partner with your sales department and upper level executives to maximize the "overture of friendship" embodied in giving a high quality outbound link.

After priming community activity within your own site's data flow, mash-in community feed content to traditional PPC landing pages and watch how the authentic nature of the content spurs conversion. Show your boss or client the cash-money early in the game in order to achieve buy-in for long term link, traffic, and community building CMS and content building investments.

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Read more at: <http://feeds.searchenginewatch.com/~r/sewblog/~3/257786196/080325-123439>.