

Beyond Marketing Webinar Questions & Answers Log

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Presented by Christopher Parsons, Founder and CEO, Knowledge Architecture

Q: [I am a principal at a] small firm. What is a guide for first steps: which are best platforms for which type of firm / project type; how much time should I budget; generating content seems time consuming and am worried about delegating (writing skills, and industry knowledge) and getting quality results. [[Allegra Kochman](#)]

CP: Hard to answer such broad questions in a paragraph—this is a whole presentation in itself. I'll cheat by taking the last of the three since I think my answer can help with all three questions. What kind of content (analog or digital) are you already producing? For example, do you write? Speak? Photograph? Are you a connector of people? I ask because you want to keep not only quality, but also sustainability in mind. If you want to be doing this 18-24 months from now, you better enjoy it. If you can tap into something you are already doing, a "renewable source of content" if you will, then you should not only be more efficient, but also more likely to keep going, and finally, likely to produce great content since your passion will carry you on days you don't feel like producing.

Q: Did your research methodology include small firms and very small firms? The top 250 and 100 would seem to exclude them. [[Roderick Wolfson](#)]

CP: No. We shared our methodology in the beginning of the presentation. However, there were two very small firms mentioned, Build LLC and Mark English Architects, who are doing great work with social media. I'm sure that there are dozens of additional great cases out there.

Q: Chris, what do you see in terms of the information maintenance of being involved in social media - meaning depending on an individual or firm's involvement and number of site or groups involved in, how does one maintain the immense amount of discussions and information as well as WHAT a firm or individual might post so that they stay current? [[Jay Frisco](#)]

CP: I addressed this in my close. It really comes down to your audience in my opinion. For us, my audience is our team, clients, prospective clients, and that's it. Everyone else--partners, competitors, national media, industry media, etc.--are not a priority. If they happen to read what we're writing, OK, but I'm very aware of managing my time. Same thing for following: I want to spend my time learning things that are going to help my team, clients, and prospective clients be successful. Does that mean that's all I read? No. But that's what I make sure I read. (See Steven Covey and Big Rocks for more on this.)

Q: Are there any liability issues connected to increased information being disseminated in social media? [Allegra Kochman]

CP: I'm sure there are but that has not been an area of focus for us. I'd imagine a good starting point would be your existing electronic data policies. In short, if you don't want people discovering it, don't write it down. (I'm not a lawyer.)

Q: Chris, what information have you found as to a firm's content control - large firms with multiple offices may have great information but it's hard to corral within the firm itself much less determine what information a firm may wish to post or distribute in an expert manner to the masses - the firm may have more problems trying to figure out if, what and when to post rather than just having experts within the firm post? [Jay Frisco]

CP: That's what communications professionals are for. Hopefully they are connected into firm strategy.

Q: What would you say to a firm who "worries" about what they may post or being transparent in terms of social media and its potential (being "big brother-ish" if you will)? [Jay Frisco]

CP: I would ask what they are afraid of. They may be right.

Q: Do you have statistics re: how much time viewers typically spend on a blog site or social media site? [Donald Hunsicker]

CP: I don't.

Q: Interesting about the Campus Kit of Parts, but just trying to get on the site now it was blocked as a "verified fraudulent site" [Heather Marquard]

CP: Eek. I just e-mailed their team to let them know. Thanks!

Q: How do firms afford research when profit margins are so slim in architecture? [Roderick Wolfson]

CP: Good question. We'll be posting several talks from our annual conference, KA Connect, this week. You can find the talks specifically on research here: <http://ka-connect.com/talks.php?vdx=0&vct=12&vcf=0>

The short answer is some combination of grants from the government, getting clients to pay for it, getting industry partners / vendors to pay for it, and investing profits. Most of the firms we talked to claim they are more profitable due to research and that profitability fuels more research and so on. In other words, research begets research.

Q: Are there ways social media can help changing sectors? [For example] I do a lot of residential renovations and want to add new sectors but not sure I have the content to sustain

their interest, and don't want more of the same. [Allegra Kochman]

CP: If you want to add new sectors this is a great opportunity to demonstrate your interest in their sector. Go interview some prospective clients for your blog or a video series. You'll learn about the market, build relationships, and demonstrate you care about more than just the building.

Q: Have seen resumes done in YouTube video format? [Onkal Guzey]

CP: No, sounds great!

Q: How does a small firm build an audience? [Kevin Connolly]

CP: One audience member at a time. I'm serious, start by getting everyone you know and meet into your network. Then produce great content. And repeat.

Q: I'm an old guy and relatively new to blogging. It seems this medai is very transparent. How do you prevent staff from blogging company secrets, precedures, etc. that make you more competitive in the industry? Especially a disgruntled employee? [Robert Weidler]

CP: 1) Don't have disgruntled employees. 2) Communicate your expectations about what is OK and what is not OK to blog about via a social media policy.

Q: How do you see the breakdown of responsibilities being spread across marketing, HR, IT, and the technical staff? [Jennifer Andrews]

CP: Eeek. That's too long to answer in this format, other than to say it is a team game.

Q: If a firm has a website which has the latest informaion and ideas; why they need to go for social media? [Nihad Tarfa]

CP: Websites are generally one-way or broadcast platforms. Social media allows for a conversation and more engagement.

Q: I appreciate the general guidelines. Do you have examples of written social media policies that could be shared? [Heather West]

CP: Yes, there was a great discussion thread on the KA Connect LinkedIn Group a couple months ago. Several firms shared theirs. .

http://www.linkedin.com/groupItem?view=&gid=2952414&type=member&item=84370210&trk=group_search_item_list-0-b-ttl&goback=%2Egna_2952414

Q: Are there any concerns about publishing copy righted material? Going to a show at a museum, and having a camera photo of a piece of work that is copy righted and have it show up on a blog as inspiration, for instance. Concerns? [Richard Hayes]

CP: Maybe? That's not my area of expertise.

Q: GREAT PRESENTATION!!! [[Jay Frisco](#)]

CP: Thank you!

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