

HOW TO USE FACEBOOK. INSTAGRAM AND PINTEREST IN YOUR CREATIVE BUSINESS

Explore Your Enthusiasm #26 Transcript

Welcome to episode 26 of Explore Your Enthusiasm. Today we're going to talk about how to THINK about using various social media tools in your business.

We'll talk about:

- the strengths and weaknesses of the ones I get asked about most
- the most effective ways I'm seeing them used
- some ideas for how you might use them.

We'll also get clear on the thing you need to *before* you start thinking about using a tool.

Let's get one thing out of the way: I'm not a social media expert. I've taught Social Media for yarn shops at TNNA, the trade show for yarn and needle art shops, and arts councils in small towns throughout NC, and for alpaca farmers at their annual business conference.

I was actually asked, by an organization I was going to teach with: You must get asked this a lot ... but how can you call yourself a social media expert when you don't have higher numbers? And I laughed out loud and said, well, I have never been asked that because I DO NOT call myself a "social media expert" ... I just teach people how think about social media in their total marketing mix, and for the people I have taught those classes to, they were TOTALLY overwhelmed at the thought of social media. The fact that I have over 4,000 Twitter followers, well that might as well have been 4 million to them. But I'm not speaking about my OWN experience, but from the many hundreds of experiments my clients and students have held, and what they tell me what works for their businesses.

Now, you, my dear listener, you are probably more tech savvy than my social media for beginners audience, so today I'm going to take a snippet of that class and share it with you. But we'll take a little deeper dive into how YOU can use Facebook, Instagram and Pinterest for YOUR crafty business. You likely know some of what I'm going to say, so I challenge you, when you find yourself thinking "oh, I know this" - to ask yourself: *And how can I apply it to what I'm doing?*

Because it's one thing to know how the tools work, it's another thing to use them in a way that works for you.

So let's dive in.

SOCIAL MEDIA FOR CREATIVE BUSINESSES

BEFORE you use social media you have to be clear on four things:

1. Your people and what they are interested in.
2. YOU and your message (we get clear on this in the book [Market Yourself](#))
3. Your particular sparkle and how you can bring that to the world (we cover this in [Marketing for Crafters](#))
4. Your GOALS

If you don't know who you're talking to ... or you talk to NOT your right buyers, you're wasting your time. If you don't know what to say, you won't *have* anything to say. And if you're not bringing your sparkle, the thing that makes your offerings different from everyone else's, it won't actually work as marketing for your business.

When it comes to your goals: you need to have a reason for using the tool for your business. If you want to use it for fun, go right ahead, but *know the difference*. A business tool has a USE; it serves you. So before you dive into each platform, ask yourself, "What do I want to get from this?"

Your intention might be: more traffic for your website, direct sales to your followers on the platform, making your item easier for other people to share. As we talk about each tool, I'll tell you what goal I think it can help you reach.

But I want you to keep all of this in perspective. In the last 3 months, social media has accounted for 21% of my total traffic. And it has the highest bounce rate (people who leave the site right after they land). So social media is not, for MANY businesses, the most effective way of connecting with committed readers and buyers.

Now let's talk about the tools!

FACEBOOK FOR CREATIVE BUSINESSES

If you hate it, don't use it.

If you do use it for your business, create a **business page**, not just a personal account. OF COURSE in the beginning your personal account is going to generate more sales (if any), because those are friends! But you're not just focused on sales, you want a fully sustainable biz - right? And for that, you need a page.

Pros: everyone is on it. It's fairly likely that your buyers are on it unless your buyers are super early-adopter techies, or under 20.

It's easy to create events, if you actually hold LIVE events (don't create events for online things, like "launching my website", please).

Cons: All of the people who like your page won't see your updates. But the more a person likes, comments and clicks on your posts, the more regularly they will see your stuff.

This means that the content that works best on Facebook is content your people can somehow act on:

- Questions they can answer
- Stories or quotes they can share
- Contests to take part in

Facebook users like pictures and are more likely to click on something with a picture, even Instagram pictures you have sent to post on Facebook.

Goals Facebook can help you achieve:

- Drive traffic - if you include a link in a post, and people see it, they MAY click on it and go to your website. But you want to make sure that the thing they clicked on and the page it led them to makes sense and that you're aiming these posts at people you WANT on your website.
- Get feedback: It gives you the opportunity to ask a community of people their opinion quickly.
- Connect with people who want to see your stuff, but might be less likely to follow a blog or use another tool.

Be careful! It's easy to get obsessed with getting "likes" and to make that number as high as possible ... but what goal does that serve? Having a high like count doesn't guarantee any more people will see your work or that it will lead to sales or interactions. Focus instead on giving people what they want and on what your goals for your business are.

INSTAGRAM FOR CREATIVE BUSINESSES

I love Instagram. But if you don't already take several pictures a week of your life, or if you're not interested in sharing any snippet of your personal life, it might not be for you.

Pros: It's so easy: You snap a picture, make it look pretty and post it. Everyone who follows you sees what you post, and you can write a little or a lot. I've found you can also spark conversations or use it to explain something visually.

Cons: You can't embed links, so the only way for Instagram to drive traffic is via the link in your profile.

Goals that Instagram can help you achieve:

- Connecting with customers. Your customers want to see how you do what you do and what inspires you, and Instagram gives you a quick, easy way to share that with them every day. I've found that IG really deepens the bonds I already had with people, because I feel like I'm truly getting to know them.
- Building social proof. You can create a hashtag for your product (like I have one for this podcast, #exploreyourenthusiasm), and it lets you see how your customers use your products and it lets them see that you have more than one customer (or listener!)

Tips for Instagram:

- ✓ You must prioritize good photos. They don't have to be professional-grade, but they do have to have good lighting and be clear. A stream full of dark or fuzzy photos will get no followers.
- ✓ Hashtags: When you tag something, it's grouped together with everything else in this tag. For this reason, you want to be very careful with what tags you use. I would search them before you use them. Do some digging to figure out what your customers would use, and use that liberally, WHEN it truly applies to your photo. To meet more people and get more followers, join in some fun ones, like I use #vegan or #vegansofIG when I post a meal picture or #caturday when it's a cat picture.
- ✓ If you want to drive traffic to something specific, change the URL in your profile! You can change it as much as you want, so I regularly update mine with the newest blog post or podcast, if it's related to a recent picture.

PINTEREST FOR CREATIVE BUSINESSES

I tell all small businesses: While we're talking about marketing, forget for a second about using Pinterest as a USER. Sure, you can pin stuff forever, but that really doesn't get traffic back to your site. And if you only pin your stuff, you're never going to get any followers.

Pros: It's very visual, which can be a good way to display your products or blog posts.
Cons: It's more about content sharing than product selling.

So instead, focus on Pinterest as a content creator. As a Pinterest-worthy-generator of content.

This means:

- Give every piece of content (ie, blog post, product, offering) a great, pin-able picture. Make it clear to anyone who sees that picture on Pinterest what it's about ... so put text right on top of the picture.
- Recognize that your image is going to get separated from your words, so put the text on the picture and make the description of the picture when you add it. You can also generate a Pin-it button and write the description in that.

Goals that Pinterest can help you achieve:

- If your goal is to drive traffic to your site, which is Pinterest is good at, then that's where to focus your energy: on making your goods Pinteresting. USING Pinterest doesn't do that. USING Pinterest is more like using Instagram, where you are demonstrating the kind of style you have and things you're into, by what you pin.
- If you are in the lifestyle brand, or if you provide a service like photography or party throwing or styling, or if you're a professional blogger (by that I mean your business model is that you sell ads on your blog, not products), then Pinterest makes sense because it shows your eye and style, and gives people a kind of mood board for working with you.

If you don't have that kind of business, then I recommend using Pinterest for fun - pin what YOU want to remember and what you like, and over time it will become a kind of scrapbook of your own style. I don't know that that will generate sales or traffic, but it may deepen some already existing relationships.

You can also pin your own work, if you spread it out, and you put it on an appropriate board, with a useful description. Remember - you want the pin to spread beyond you (get re-pinned), so write a description that anyone can understand. (Handmade wooden bowl, vs my new bowl.)

Ok: So that's the tools I get asked about most.

Remember: You do not HAVE to use any one tool. Your business can thrive without any of the tools we've talked about today. Your time on a platform will be totally wasted if you hate every second of it. So instead, only work with the ones that interest you, that get YOU excited.

Last thing: the number one thing that readers and students say keeps them from using social media effectively: They don't know what they want to say or share. So no matter how much you understand a platform, you have to get clear on what it is you want to communicate.

Now, we covered a lot, so I challenge you to get clear on what your goal is RIGHT NOW for your business, and to decide if you want to change how you use any of these tools to help you reach that goal.

You can tell me about it with the hashtag #exploreyoureenthusiasm and be sure to watch the blog at taraswiger.com this week and next as we'll be talking more about using social media: how to avoid overwhelm + how to avoid wasting your time.

You can find links to everything at taraswiger.com/podcast26

Thanks and have a great day!

Links mentioned:

[Social Media Primer](#)

[Delight your customers](#)

Get clear on your people and your message with [Market Yourself](#)

Create an entire marketing plan based on your sparkle with [Marketing for Crafters](#)