



Business
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& Marketing
NEWS

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Buffer: The social media scheduling tool for beginners

and further information
from the BDM segment

Editorial

Dear Reader,

First of all, let me take this opportunity to wish you a very belated happy 2017! With another year upon us, it is sure to bring a whole new set of challenges for all our businesses to face and embrace. Whatever hurdles may arise, it is important to keep working hard and to persevere in order to achieve the desired result.

As always, I would also like to thank you for your continued support of the Business Development & Marketing (BDM) Practice Group newsletter with

so many of you, once again, putting forward your fantastic article ideas. I applaud you for putting aside your precious time to offer your expertise and advice to help support other GGI members. In this publication you can look forward to such topics as “How to sell without selling”, “Becoming a visible expert” and “Do we really know what we are selling?”

I will leave you with these very wise words from author, speaker and broadcaster Vern McLellan, who once said, “What the New Year brings to you will depend a great deal on what you bring to the New Year.” I’m sure you will



agree that we can all identify with this. It is a great message to carry forward into BDM meetings and workshops as we take opportunities to further create success for our businesses in the coming year.

Alan Rajah
Global Chairperson of the
GGI Business Development
& Marketing Practice Group

Buffer: The social media scheduling tool for beginners

By Paul Atkinson

There is no question that social media has become a much bigger part of what we do online.

Of course, having a strong social media presence leads to greater brand awareness as well as opportunities to build stronger relationships with customers, target sectors you want to forge new partnerships with, and (probably the ultimate aim) to boost the volume of traffic your website receives.

As Twitter, Facebook, Instagram and LinkedIn continue to increase in

popularity, it is essential to develop strong social media skills in order to engage, listen and respond to your newly-acquired audience.

The biggest challenge that social media can pose is time management. Planning and organisation are essential, but with a number of different social media networks to juggle, it can sometimes be very difficult to stay calm and focused.

You will be delighted to know, however, that there are several tools on the market – FREE to use in most cases – which are designed to help save you valuable time organising your daily messages.

They can assist with the scheduling of posts and also deliver insights on how your messages have been performing (using markers such as clicks, retweets and likes) through their analytics tools.

I have chosen a platform that I think would be perfect for any of you looking for an easy message scheduling tool to get yourself started – let me introduce Buffer.

By the end of this article, I hope you will have gained an understanding into how it works and how you can use it to analyse and understand the results you are getting from your social media efforts.

Disclaimer – The information provided in this newsletter came from reliable sources and was prepared from data assumed to be correct; however, prior to making it the basis of a decision, it must be double checked. Ratings and assessments reflect the personal opinion of the respective author only. We neither accept liability for nor are we able to guarantee the content. This publication is for GGI internal use only and intended solely and exclusively for GGI members.

If you are tentatively dipping your toes into the deep waters of social media and looking for a stress-free tool to help support your multi-messaging across a number of social media platforms – be brave, dive in and take a closer look!

In terms of complexity, Buffer is very user friendly and easy to navigate. Using Buffer means that you only focus on scheduling your messages (see the content tab shown on the right), and also have the ability to monitor the performance of your messages (using the analytics tab shown on the right).

The idea behind Buffer is that you can create a schedule of messages (daily or plan them across the week) and then post them at the time you have specified. There is an option where you can pre-set your messages to go out at set times each day by using the “switch to Buffer schedule” button. You can connect Buffer to Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, Pinterest, Google+, Instagram etc (up to a maximum of ten profiles).

The simple analytics make it easy to see which social messages have been performing the best and you can then schedule them again if you want, using the “re-Buffer” button (see image on the right with the arrow).

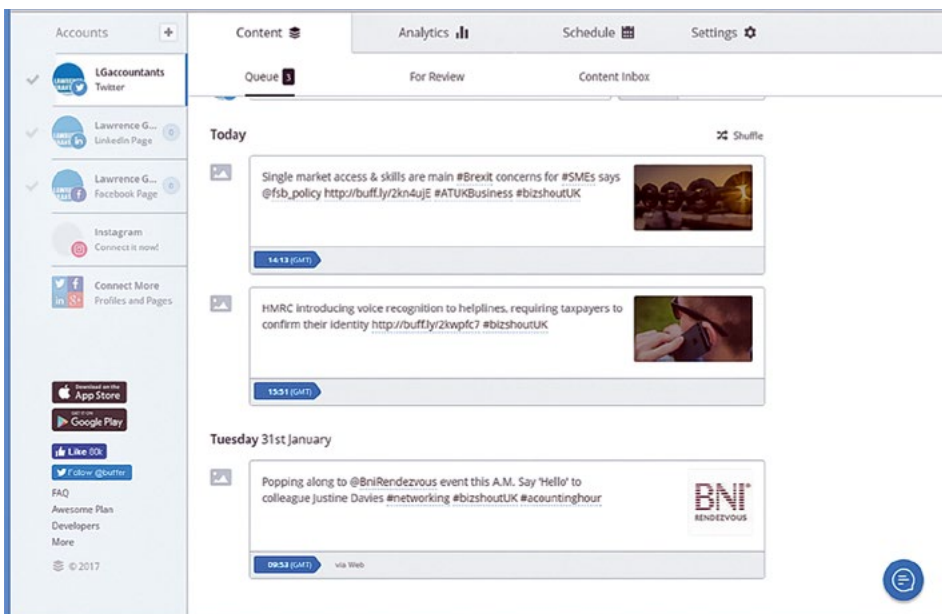
TIP: Depending on how many messages you are going to schedule daily or weekly, make sure you leave a reasonable amount of time before you ‘re-Buffer’ the same message again, as you don’t want followers to be irritated by seeing the same posts repeated too frequently.

Pricing

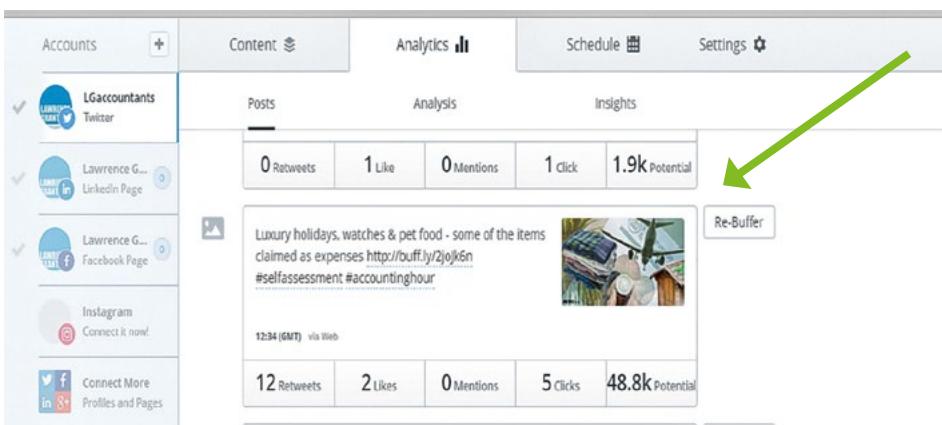
Buffer is free to use but limits you to one user and ten social media platforms.

You can upgrade (with prices starting from USD 10.00 / EUR 9.30 per month) for access to more analytics reports and to allow a greater number of people to be involved in scheduling more messages, which is particularly handy as you grow your social media platforms.

You are just one click away from setting up your profile. Visit <https://buffer.com/> to kick-start your journey to social media scheduling success!



Buffer content tab



Buffer analytics tab

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Established in 1969, **Lawrence Grant, Chartered Accountants** has built a reputation for its distinct approach to individuals, sole traders, corporate businesses and multi nationals, offering personalised accountancy services and taxation advice. They offer professional expertise and specialist servic-



es, helping clients to grow their business and personal wealth.

Paul Atkinson has been the firm’s Marketing Manager since 2011, overseeing the launch of five social media platforms, a logo revamp, website content and branding of all literature and merchandise.



Lebanon and its increasingly Western business practices

By Carine Khouri

“It’s not what you know, it’s who you know” is a universal business standard, especially in Lebanon. However, the desire to attract Western investment has changed the known business norm in Lebanon.

Despite the high importance placed on family and friends, employers value a candidate’s education, experience and what he/she has to offer rather than personal ties.

Most businessmen have experience working in Western countries; therefore their business practices have shifted away from Lebanese tradition and now have a more Western feel.

As a result, the usual tendency for businessmen to hold extensive negotiations and prolonged business meetings has shifted to shorter meetings with straight forward ideas.

When it comes to these business meetings, punctuality has become key. The Lebanese have always had a relaxed approach to time, but business owners have begun to value every minute of their day and believe in the popular Western concept of

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Sarkis Sakr & Partners is a full service accounting firm which provides audit, tax and advisory services. They offer their clients high quality and innovative solutions whilst remembering the

importance of personal attention to clients’ needs.

Carine Khouri is an Associate responsible for short term audit plans and financial planning. She has an international MBA degree as well as a Bachelor of Business Administration in Finance and International Business from Florida International University.



“time is money”.

Younger generations have undertaken their higher education at Western institutions either in Lebanon or abroad, with an increasing number of these students establishing small and medium-sized businesses. In order to achieve their goal of bringing about change and improving Lebanon,

students are applying the Western practices they have learned to their business.

In general, Lebanese businessmen target Western investment, so the intention behind applying these business practices is to provide comfort to Western investors.

A fish in its own pond

By Elisabeth Colson

Devry Smith Frank (DSF) has more than doubled in size over the past decade – growth due in no small part to its marketing team.

DSF's marketing strategy focuses on branding and brand recognition. Although it is difficult to track clients generated through print ad campaigns and trade show sponsorships, the firm is committed to those conventional brand recognition methods, along with client appreciation events, and participates in community charity events which further increase brand visibility.

Digital media strategies provide better client intake tracking. Google ad campaigns have resulted in increased calls from prospective clients, but have not necessarily generated new clients. Website traffic increased significantly as the firm established its social media presence and added a webinar option in addition to in-person attendance at its various seminars.

The firm's website now includes short biographical videos of some of its lawyers. This video presence is innova-

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Fluent in English and French, **Elisabeth** received a BA Hons in Political Science from McGill University and a law degree from Université de Montréal in 1989. She has been admitted to the Bars of Quebec (1990) and Ontario (1996) and has extensive experience in a wide range of business law matters. Her current practice includes all general corporate and com-

mercial matters with a particular focus on mergers and acquisitions, franchising, corporate structuring and tax-driven reorganisations, succession planning, partnerships, joint venture agreements, shareholder agreements and shareholders' rights and remedies.



DSF's marketing strategy provides a foundation for a personalised, trusting relationship between prospective clients and DSF's lawyers. A surprising challenge is that a number of lawyers are reluctant to participate

in this campaign.

The most recent decision in DSF's promotional push, which was to join an international group, capitalises on all of the firm's current marketing initiatives and will hopefully give rise to opportunities to explore many more.

How to sell professional services without being a salesperson

By Jim Ries

Selling professional services does not have to be a daunting task, we just need to take a new approach. People like

to buy, they just do not like to be given a hard sell. Consider these tips to give them what they want and have them knocking on your doorstep:

- **Be prepared.** Do some homework and

learn about the business and the person you are meeting with. This will help you to ask the right questions.

- **Be likeable.** Relax, smile, and have a sense of humour. *...next page*



- **Be authentic.** Do not try to impress, just be yourself.
- **Be interested, not interesting.** An interesting person talks about himself too much. An interested person asks others questions about their business and personal life.
- **Be confident, not arrogant.** Show the prospective client that you understand their business and challenges, but do

not act as if you know their business better than they do.

- **Be client-focused.** Listen more than you talk. People love to talk about themselves, their families and their businesses, so indulge them. The more they talk, the more information you will have to identify their needs.
- **Be helpful.** When it is your turn, explain how you can help to solve their

problems. You can also help in other, simpler ways. They may mention that they are looking for a good mechanic and you can recommend one that you trust. They will remember this and reciprocate.

- **Be patient.** Selling professional services is a marathon, not a sprint. Do not push to close the deal.

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Offit Kurman is a dynamic full-service law firm. As trusted legal advisors, they help clients to maximise and protect their business value and individual wealth. They strive to maintain clients' trust in every interaction,

furthering their objectives and helping them to achieve their goals in an efficient manner.

As Director of Business Development, **Jim Ries** works to increase Offit Kurman's visibility, reach, and value in the business community. In support of this and in tandem with the firm's marketing team, he develops and manages outreach programmes designed to educate business owners and entrepreneurs at every stage of their business and personal lives, as well as provide resources to families who wish to protect and pass on their wealth.



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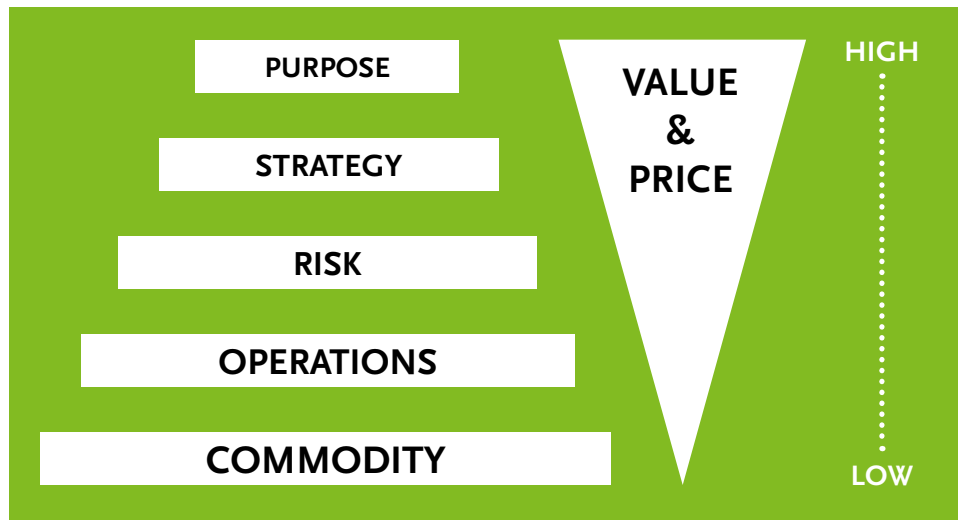
Creating client loyalty by understanding the value pyramid

By Robert R. Worthington

Services provided by accountants and lawyers are often very valuable. However, these services are traditionally priced by selling time instead of value – in other words, the billable hour model. This Marxist pricing model based on the cost of labour may not match the value perceived by a client. If the client perceives the fees to be higher than the value delivered, the client relationship can be negatively affected.

Zulauf's value pyramid is a helpful tool to understand the relationship between value and price.

The higher our services are on the value pyramid, the higher the justified fees. Commoditised services will typically fetch fees at the low end. As the services move up the pyramid, higher



fees can be charged. The location of services on the value pyramid is not objective and is more about the client's perception.

For example, suppose a tax plan will

save a client \$500,000 in taxes per year. From one perspective, the client might simply see an improvement to income and mentally situate the proposal at the middle to low end of the value pyramid (risk management or operations). Now, suppose the client's Board of Directors was contemplating an important acquisition, but the board was concerned about incurring debt to fund the working capital of the target company and that shareholders would be unhappy with the increased debt load. The tax plan may provide a solution, allowing the acquisition to be made, and move the tax advisor's services up the pyramid to the "strategy" level.

Two simple yet powerful observations emerge. First: it is important to ask salient questions and listen to clients' needs and underlying motivations. Second: by communicating the value of legal and accounting services with a true understanding of clients' underlying motivations, the fees will be much more easily justified, resulting in satisfied and loyal clients.

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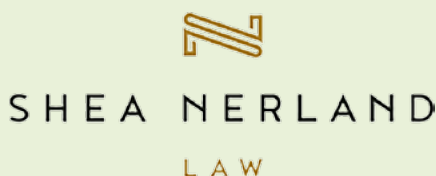


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Shea Nerland LLP is a premier tax and business law firm based in Calgary, Canada. The firm is at the forefront of complex tax planning, estate planning and tax litigation, with experience in capital markets, securities, real estate, mergers & acquisitions, business litigation, and strategic representation.

Robert R. Worthington is a tax partner at Shea Nerland LLP. His practice includes tax planning for trusts, corporations and

shareholders of private companies, as well as for transactions of a broad spectrum of complexity and size, both domestic and international.



Relationships and opportunities

By Errol Denman

One of the most interesting pieces I have come across in a long time was a post on Forbes' blog site a few weeks entitled "Consultants Are Eating The Agencies' Three-Martini Lunch". It opens with a seemingly counter-intuitive bang – the biggest advertising agencies are no longer going to be Ogilvy, BBDO and JWT, rather Deloitte, Accenture, KPMG and PWC. They're going boldly, and with a confident swagger, where no bean counters have been before – to the heart of advertising creativity.

So how did this happen? One reason is money. As agencies have been squeezed, particularly over the last decade, they've become less business partners and more business suppliers. Fewer heavyweight, experienced, big-client-connected brains and lots more



junior, overworked, underpaid drones. There is far more being done in survival mode and the offering is lower-level and less strategic, with a product increasingly regarded as a commodity.

Coming from another angle, the seemingly never-ending rise of social media has also meant that what companies and brands do is now paramount, but what they say is far less so. The big players now need help with what to do next. If they get that right, they know millions of users will say it for them.

As the Forbes piece says, the agencies have abdicated "owning the high-level strategy needs" and consultants have walked right in. Relationships and access to the top floor is everything. Agencies, increasingly, are not making it past the lobby.

To everyone in business, the lesson seems clear: relationships are like gold. Establish them, nurture them and value them above all else. Relationships are the key to the door; under-value them at your peril.

At Nolands, we have a simple objective in mind, encapsulated in the words "relationships and solutions". It's a real promise to clients and potential clients as well as a constant reminder to us all that real value begins from a genuine relationship.

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Nolands SA is a national audit, advisory and forensics firm, located in ten offices in all major centres in South Africa and also Zimbabwe and Mauritius, employing over 200 people focused on providing the best possible solutions for its clients. Nolands prides itself on being exceptional in its ability to integrate services and respond rapidly to clients' needs.

Three essential characteristics of effective marketing communication

By Gary Williams

The focus of our marketing communications programme is to inform clients and prospective clients about our services and specialisations rather than assume that they already know about them. Using a practical approach that is time-efficient, affordable and measurable, we are implementing three marketing essentials: key resources, retaining existing clients and gaining new ones.

1. Key resources: website, branding and professional profiles

We upgraded our website so that it is mobile-friendly and modernised our brand. While looking to the future, we retained elements recognised and trusted by our long-term clients. We developed professional profiles that go well beyond merely listing qualifications and experiences to actually begin the process of building relationships.

2. Retain marketing for lifetime client value

Our retain approach identifies the potential for existing clients to take up more of our services. Through regular communication using free email software, we share genuinely helpful information on topical matters that we know are relevant, meaningful and

appreciated by our clients. There is no suggestion of sales, just quality information that speaks directly to our clients and offers them help.

3. Gain marketing for niche specialisations

We also recognised the opportunity for communicating with a specific group of clients and prospective clients about a niche specialisation – film audits. We used LinkedIn to connect with prospective clients in the film industry and centres of influence and rolled out a series of articles to them that demonstrated our understanding of the challenges they faced when dealing with mandatory audit requirements. Importantly, we described a logical

framework that solved an otherwise complex problem in simple terms and were rewarded with new business enquiries.



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Rosenfeld Kant is a highly respected accounting firm located in Sydney, Australia, known for delivering taxation, accounting and business advisory services for high net worth individuals and business owners.

A partner of Rosenfeld Kant, **Gary Williams** provides leadership, financial advice and tax, audit and accounting services that enhance his clients' financial

circumstances and business prosperity. Gary specialises in the unique audit and accounting requirements of the Australian film, television and media industries.



Network-approach in outsourcing international financial services

By Jussi Ala-Risku

Nowadays, network-thinking is becoming more prevalent in everyday business life. This is also seen in international financial services, which have been part of this dramatic change. Many organisations outsource financial services, but due to a network-approach, the service providers are no longer seen as external actors. Rather, the service providers are part of their customers' in-house processes.

This new way to approach outsourcing from a network perspective brings many advantages to both parties. Organisations can outsource their financial services and at the same time make their service providers part of their in-house processes. This leads to a situation where organisations may gain cost savings through outsourcing and the service provider knows their customers' processes thoroughly. When a network-approach is applied, service providers can help their customers to improve and enhance their businesses in the best way possible. In this kind of relationship, the service provider can develop and customise their services based on their customers' changing needs and wishes.

The network-approach is one of the major changes that have affected outsourcing financial services. The more an organisation and their external service providers are like business partners, the more each of them can benefit from their business relationship.



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Apart from accounting and payroll services, Rantalainen offers a wide range of expert and

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Jussi Ala-Risku is a Business Director of Rantalainen Accounting Services and specialises in international customer relationship management.





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