

Simple marketing

By Donna Bennett.

Facebook, Twitter and blogging have all played their part on the internet landscape, with Facebook now having more than 7.5 million users in Australia (Facebook, December 2009). Businesses are also taking part in this trend as a valuable way to promote their products and services.

Scott and Sarah Butler established their small business, Organic Angels, in 2006. It is now Melbourne's leading certified organic home delivery service with an easy-to-use website and straightforward approach to delivery. Customers order fruit or vegetables online with a few clicks of the mouse. Organic groceries such as fresh bread, eggs, fair-trade tea, coffee and healthy children's snacks are also available. The products are then boxed and delivered straight away to homes and offices across Melbourne, delivering around 150-200 orders each week.

A year ago, Scott created a Facebook fan site for Organic Angels. "I soon realised that a lot of our customers use Facebook as way to communicate," he said. "We were receiving feedback from customers writing on our 'wall' and they were telling their friends about our service in their status updates. When they become a fan, all of their friends are notified, which increases awareness of our brand. Twitter has worked in a similar

fashion. A customer posted a photo on Twitter of a fresh produce box and within a few minutes we received a couple of new orders," he added.

A large proportion of Organic Angels' customer base is parents and women in their late 20s through to early 40s. Apart from that demographic being quite comfortable with using the internet, Scott points out the obvious - Organic Angels is an on-line store. "For a start, people need to be a bit more internet savvy. Most people find us through Google searching and most also have a Facebook account," Scott said. With around 500 regular customers that order at least once a month, more than half have now joined as Organic Angel fans on Facebook.

Twitter is different to Facebook in that users have 'followers' instead of 'friends', but there are usually many more followers, so more people read the posts. Scott has also set up an organic food blog

that provides information on healthy eating and benefits of organic food. "Not only does this give another avenue for customers to find your business, by searching the web for information and articles, but it helps the search engines index your website under relevant keywords," he said.

Organic Angels intends to increase the use of social media in 2010, by offering special offers and promotions to customers who spread the word. "Facebook is very community-based as well," explains Scott. "Even if you are a smaller retailer serving a community, you can still make use of it," he said.

And best of all, setting up these tools has been virtually free - the only cost to the business owner is the time to set up and update pages. "We have found social media to be by far the most cost effective way to promote our business and communicate personally with our customers," Scott said. 🛒

Social media in business:

- Reduces advertising costs
- Simple to operate and maintain
- Promotes and builds brand awareness
- Encourages public involvement
- Establishes community spirit.



Scott and Sarah Butler, Organic Angels.

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