



Diving into the social media pool



Useful links

> We love the infographic (above) by Brian Solis and JESS3. It's a great tool to help match your communication objective to the right application.

(www.conversationprism.com)

Services

- > Strategy design and implementation
- > Online communication

I enter a pool with dignity. I dip my toe into the water to test the temperature before slowly easing in. It usually takes me 20 minutes to completely submerge.

My husband is the opposite. He takes a flying leap and jumps straight in.

When your organisation launches itself into the social media pool you generally won't have the opportunity to take the slowly, slowly approach. Once you make the plunge you usually need to think like my husband and dive straight in.

After you have started connecting with your clients and customers, it is very difficult to downscale your presence, or completely stop your efforts, if things don't work the way you'd like them to.

But the idea of letting go and jumping straight in can be difficult for many organisations to be comfortable with.

A solid strategy can be the difference between sinking and swimming.

At PRISM we believe that the decision to take the plunge should always be backed by thorough research, sound planning and a solid communication strategy. A solid strategy is like a diving board from which you can launch a graceful swan dive rather than a poorly executed belly flop.

In developing your strategy you need to ask a few questions.

The first question is *not* 'Facebook or Twitter?' The very first decision you need to make is about your communication objective. What do you want to achieve?

Do you want to change the way your customers think about your organisation? Maybe you want to prompt a behaviour change? Possibly you see social media as an opportunity to connect on a more personal level with your clients and customers, creating a new engagement approach? Are you trying to connect staff to improve collaboration?

Once you understand what you want to get out of your social media efforts and can clearly articulate your objective, then it is time to think about the right application to achieve your goals. Take the time to understand the attributes of each application to get the most out of each site.

By asking the right questions and focusing your thinking, PRISM can help you to develop a strategy that will help you to enter the world of social media with a big splash.

Here is a taste of some other questions you will need to answer to prepare your social media strategy.

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Figure 1 - Questions to ask when preparing a social media strategy