



Women's Executive Network™



WXNETWORK

NEWS AND VIEWS FROM OUR COMMUNITY

Six ways to get into social media marketing

Many of the traditional rules of marketing are being turned on their head by the Internet. While the core tenets of marketing campaigns remain intact, conventional communications routes to market continue to be joined by an ever expanding array of new ways to connect with customers. And one of the most important ways to connect today is in the growing area of social networking.

Whether you like it or not, your brand is being discussed, dissected and analysed by consumers on the Internet. Word of mouth was always a key ingredient of marketing. Now the word of mouth can be global and instant. Some commentators have referred to this as the new 'conversation economy.'

The good news is that by adopting the correct social media tactics you can reach a global audience at a fraction of the cost of traditional marketing and advertising campaigns. This is a big plus

for Irish companies, which in the past could not compete with the multimillion dollar budgets of their global rivals. Large or small, marketing in this space is often less about the scale of your budget and more about the quality of your thinking.

“Like it or not, your brand is being discussed online”

1. Start Listening. Rather than jumping straight in at the deep end of this new world, many companies start by paddling at the edges and watching and listening to what is going on. For example, through a simple and free Google alert you can access what bloggers are saying about you.

2. Start Measuring. A website is central to today's marketing. Google (www.google.com/analytics) and Irish headquartered Statcounter (www.statcounter.com) provide a free service which allows you to monitor traffic to your site, identify the geographical location of visitors, keywords used to find the site and more.

3. Develop a strategy. At some stage you are going to have to

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Innovating your leadership

Get to know your fellow WXN members

GET TO KNOW WXN



Ellvena Graham, Director of Operations, Ulster Bank (and the newest addition to WXN's Advisory Board!)

Who inspires you? The person who most inspires me is my Mother. On a day to day basis, many of her values and beliefs are something that help me set direction and understand my priorities. Whilst it may be more usual to choose a famous person as a role model, if I am completely honest I think much more about my Mother's resilience, drive and positive approach to life when I am looking for inspiration.

Your tips on mentoring and networking? Whenever I attend a networking event or mentoring session I always learn something new and valuable which makes the effort worthwhile. Both are investments in yourself and others and it's so easy to allow time to slip by and realise you could invest more into these relationships. I have learnt over time to make networking and mentoring as important in my diary as other business priorities. A mentoring appointment is often the first meeting to get cancelled if other things take over, so I work hard to challenge myself in this area. My main tip to a Mentor is not to

(Con'd) decide whether you engage with bloggers or ignore them. While many monitoring services are free there is a significant labour resource involved in monitoring and reviewing the comments.

4. **Join in social networking.** The beauty of this new social media world is that you can start small. Build an online networking group through free and easy sites like LinkedIn (www.linkedin.com), Plaxo (www.plaxo.com) and Twitter (www.twitter.com).

5. **Consider blogging.** Health warning: this is not for everyone. As part of the social networking armoury, blogging is easy and cheap to do. The real value of blogging is that it increases your presence/profile on the web. Search Engine Optimisation (SEO) is the big focus of marketing today. See www.wordpress.org for an easy way to get started. But from a corporate perspective, as with responding to bloggers, you do need to make a significant commitment in terms of time, and establish rules of engagement.

6. **Use PR.** Another way to boost SEO is through public relations. If you can generate regular online media or other website coverage through press releases then this will boost your searchability on the web.

Jonnie Cahill, Head of Communications and Sponsorship, 02 Ireland

Fireproofing your career

Staying in employment has become an obsession for a whole generation of senior people previously used to having career choices – so fireproofing your career has suddenly taken on a completely new meaning. The first thing to consider is why your role exists and is it vulnerable? In a downturn, if you are far away from the revenue or customer side of things - you're probably more at risk. So start thinking in a more commercially focussed way. Business leaders we work with on senior recruitment projects reinforce the need for strong commercial skills in candidates -regardless of the role.

Ask yourself if you've become complacent over time. Are you still doing stuff *'because we've always done it this way'*? Stakeholders are looking for *newer, faster, better, cheaper* because that's what matters when the world economy is convulsing. Are you contributing to a new way of doing business or are you stuck in 'the old ways.'? Start looking at creative ways of getting things done. Make sure you're seen as an asset but be wary of irritating others by claiming too much ownership of achievements. Take advantage of every opportunity to up skill and learn more about the business you're in and your clients and customers.

Make sure you know your employers business priorities and make sure every minute in your job matches these priorities. Importantly - make sure that you are not inadvertently causing problems. Dump any conflicts – CEO's don't like having to sort out poor relationships on their teams – this is not the time for politics. Finally – work smarter. Almost everyone can up their productivity and make themselves more valuable by cutting out the time wasting and the distractions that lie in the way of a highly effective and productive working week.

Michelle Noone, KPMG Executive Search & Selection



(Con'd Ellvena Graham, Ulster Bank) assume because something is right for you, it's also right for your Mentee!

What's the best piece of advice you ever received? Again I wouldn't look that far from home to remember an important lesson I carry with me which is to "to remain true to yourself." I hold this advice in my mind and have lost count of the times I have used this to help me make decisions and frame some of my thoughts in both my work and personal life.

What does work/life balance mean to you? In my view there are two sides to work/life balance. Firstly, it's ensuring that work does not negatively impact continuously on your personal life. We all need hobbies and interests outside of work and it's important these are maintained despite how busy our working life may become at times. I also believe it's vital to strike a balance within our working life. Often you can get caught going from meeting to meeting, limiting your opportunity to add value to each. It's important to ensure your days are structured well, allowing you adequate preparation time and become more relevant in your interactions.

MISSED OUR LAST EVENTS?

Check out this [great video](#) from the March 26 breakfast in Dublin, courtesy of host Ulster Bank.

Read an insightful [blog](#) on the May 20 breakfast in Dublin on "Ireland's lost competitiveness," from Orlaith Blaney, MD of McCann Erickson Dublin.



WXN Breakfast Series, March 26, Dublin: Carol Bolger, Ulster Bank; Gina Quinn, Dublin Chamber of Commerce; Ellvena Graham, Ulster Bank

Five questions

Susan Cody, Head of Programme Management, *The Irish Times*

- 1. Who inspires you?** Following an accident, a friend mine who had left school early, began a Rosette-making business from her home. It required enormous get-up-and-go to get out and sell, particularly as my friend's ethics prevented her from approaching markets where Rehab, also a Rosette supplier, operated. However, she is also highly creative and designed extraordinary 4-foot promotional rosettes, giving her immediate W-O-M publicity. She sold her company and is currently running a successful property business. She has charisma, great ability and demonstrates that if you want to do something you can.
- 2. What can't you live without?** I am meant to say my iPod, or email but 'my children' is the only true answer. I love that my son thinks that every coin is 2cent and that 2cent can buy anything in the world, and I love the fact that my daughter's second word was chocolate. They remind me constantly that life is to be enjoyed.
- 3. What's the best piece of advice you ever got?** Probably to take my original job at *The Irish Times*! I love working in the media industry, I love that people on the commercial side of the house are as involved and passionate about the paper as those on the editorial side, and I love that the industry is constantly evolving making it a fascinating and challenging world to work in.
- 4. What's the worst mistake you can make in trying to advance your career?** There's nothing worse than seeing someone steal other people's work and claim it for their own. Akin to that is a failure to acknowledge team effort – if you don't value other people, they are unlikely to value you.
- 5. What does work/life balance mean to you?** Sometimes you have to work harder and for longer because of deadlines, or because there's an emergency in work etc. Equally sometimes you have to leave early because your child is sick – work life balance is being fair to both.



REGISTER NOW FOR THESE EXCITING UPCOMING EVENTS

WXN Breakfast Series

Dublin, June 16: Taking Your Career to the Top - Insights and wisdom from women who have achieved career success

With moderator Danuta Gray (CEO, O2 Ireland) and speakers Aileen O'Toole (Managing Director, AMAS), Róisín Brennan (Executive Chairman, IBI) and Geraldine O'Leary (Commercial Director, RTE Television)

Power Mentoring (following our Breakfast Series events)

Who should participate? Anyone who would like to gain from the insights and lessons learned from a senior leader who has wisdom to share.

Who are the WXN Mentors?

Business and thought leaders who have generously agreed to share their time and wisdom with younger members of the WXN community.

What questions can I ask? Anything in relation to your career: how to get ahead, office survival tactics, tips to balance personal and professional demands...

What can I expect? You will be seated at a table with 5-8 other WXN members and a mentor for a Q&A session, and have the exclusive opportunity to ask questions and seek their guidance on all matters relating to your professional life.

Visit www.wxnetwork.ie for more details and to register.



Get to Know WXN

Marian Corcoran, Head of Management Consulting, Accenture Ireland

Where did you grow up and where are you based now?

I grew up in Edenderry, Co Offaly and went to college in DCU where I studied for a degree in Biotechnology. Having lived in Dublin for 17 years I moved back to Edenderry when my eldest daughter was

born. I am based at Accenture's offices in Grand Canal Square, Dublin 2.

Tell us a bit about your career so far.

I joined Accenture as a graduate in 1988 with the plan to work for a couple of years, save some money and then to travel the world. Over 20 years on and I'm still with the company! In that time I have had multiple roles, multiple clients and have worked in Accenture operations in the US, UK and Europe - so it has never felt like I'm doing the same job day-in, day-out.

Today, I am a Director of the Accenture Ireland business which now employs over 1,500 people across many industry sectors. I am also Head of Management Consulting for the Irish business and have global responsibility for Finance & Performance Management in our Public Service practice.

What interests or activities do you have outside of work?

I am married (to Declan) and have three wonderful children who constantly remind me of what is really important in life... I have two daughters (aged 11 and 5) and a son (aged 8). So, while I'm constantly on the go, it's a busy but fulfilling life.

How do you find balance in your life?

By not comparing myself to anybody else, by remembering what 'makes me tick', by getting lots of help at home, by ensuring I take my three-week summer holiday with the family and by balancing my energy levels across work, family and self!

What's the most important piece of advice that you have ever received?

'Learn from those around you and stand up and be counted'. I have always been inspired by those who act with integrity and who really try to make a difference both at clients and in Accenture... life is just too short not to make a difference in your professional and personal life.

What does being an "executive-minded woman" mean to you?

Being serious about your business and being accountable for results whilst remaining authentic in your style and values.





OVERHEARD

“Too few good women are on air...

“A media interview is a performance. It’s a free way to get attention. Use it to sell yourself and your business.”

- **Clare Fox, Media Trainer**
(May 13 - Wednesdays with WXN webinar)

Stream a FREE recording and [register now](#) for the next **Wednesdays with WXN webinar**

June 10: Crisis Management - Why planning is even more crucial in a recession with Maree Gallagher, Crisis Management Specialist

Want to contribute to WXNetwork?
Contact Sara Falconer at sfalconer@wxnetwork.ie.

WXN THANKS OUR PARTNERS FOR THEIR COMMITMENT TO THE ADVANCEMENT OF WOMEN IN THE IRISH WORKPLACE

Innovating your leadership

How the downturn could actually help strengthen your team

The race is now on to reassess and make the necessary changes to enable us to evolve and survive. For many leaders, their instinct is to focus on cutting costs throughout the organisation. Now, people don’t like change and imposition at the best of times and, I think we’ll all agree, this is not the best of times. Employees tend to allot a large portion of their energy to resisting the change and not nearly enough to getting the work done. Imagine how they’re feeling now, with the added fear of the other R word?

On the positive side, this means there’s plenty of scope to substantially increase productivity for very little cost. By harnessing that energy and re-directing it into brainstorming creative and innovative ideas, whether cutting costs or identifying new markets or products, leaders can tap into a readily available reservoir.

Sounds simple, eh? However, if “asking,” rather than “telling,” is a cultural departure for your organisation, just holding the meeting won’t guarantee success. Instead of “holding a meeting,” consider “facilitating a workshop.” Explain context, both internal and external. Get people talking by using open-ended questions (e.g., what do you think of...). Listen and probe to gain full understanding. Allow concerns to be expressed, then ask for ideas to alleviate them. Don’t shoot down ideas; instead ask for other people’s opinions. Keep asking “what else?” Above all, stay positive and upbeat. Use humour - a little goes a long way.

Done right, the buy-in gained, the energy generated and the results achieved can be truly astounding, which creates an upward spiral of motivation and success, often in a short timeframe.

Irial O’Farrell, Evolution Consulting (www.evolutionconsulting.ie)

 **THE IRISH TIMES**
irishtimes.com





Mercedes-Benz







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