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Chamber's social media workshop offers marketing insights to businesses

By Sandy Barnes

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"We want our information now. The demand comes from human nature," John Spalvins said while talking about the Internet.



Sandy Barnes

Heather Galaska of Social Media Maiden shows jewelry designer Joan Mickelson how to create a Facebook page.

A video producer, Spalvins was one of the presenters at the Evergreen Area Chamber of Commerce's social media workshop last Thursday.

"Facebook is a great way to connect," Spalvins said.

Using videos on websites is a powerful way to connect with clients, he continued.

"As clients search a Facebook page, they are going to be attracted to photography and videos."

Unlike TV commercials, which viewers tend to see as interruptions, Web-based videos are "lean-forward" marketing tools that engage clients, Spalvins said.

"Web video is a very powerful way to connect with clients," he said.

Short videos can be uploaded on Facebook, You Tube and Twitter. For the initial introduction, Spalvins recommended that a professionally produced video with good content be used.

"How-to videos are very popular," said Spalvins.

Those who attended the chamber workshop also got information about the best time to post on Facebook and other related sites.

The two peak sharing times are 10 a.m. to noon and 8 to 10 p.m., said Jenny Kimber of Web Happy.

"Afternoon seems to be the key time for sharing clickbacks," she added.

When posting information on social media sites, Kimber said, businesspeople should consider what their clients might want more information about.

"Think like you're in a conversation with them," she said.

Lisa Hamm-Greenwalt, marketing manager for the Evergreen Park and Recreation District, offered advice on creating applications and social media management.

Using HootSuite, it's possible for a person to get all social media communications completed in an hour, she said. HootSuite, a social networking tool that allows people to schedule Facebook posts and Twitter messages, is a free service to which people can subscribe for additional applications, Hamm-Greenwalt said.

Another tool, involver.com, has the capability for incorporating other social media into Facebook, she added.

When using social media for marketing, another important consideration is measuring its effectiveness, said Tad Stephens of Media Market Experts.

"Am I making money, getting sales off this work?" is a question that needs a qualified answer, Stephens said.

Facebook offers Insights analytics, which is free with every page, said Stephens.

Using Insights, it's possible to track how many "likes" a page garners and how many people see posts.

"Basically, half the people who like your page will see your post," he said.

"Insights is your friend," said Stephens.

He also talked about the value of using photos on Facebook, which he said get 20 times more engagement than other forms of communication on pages.

To generate more activity on a Facebook page, Stephens suggested posting consistently interesting comments.

After the workshop presentations, the attendees divided into six groups to learn more about aspects of social media.

Heather Galaska of Social Media Maiden helped participants learn how to set up a Facebook page, using laptop computers they had brought to the workshop.

Evergreen jewelry designer Joan Mickelson said she was hoping to market her work on Facebook once she learned the basics of social media networking.

The workshop was held in the auditorium of the Evergreen Fire/Rescue Administration Building in Bergen Park.

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