

# The Best Social Media Practices for an Individual Franchisee in the Restaurant Industry

A Senior Project  
presented to  
The Faculty of the Journalism Department  
California Polytechnic State University, San Luis Obispo

In Partial Fulfillment  
of the Requirement for the Degree  
Bachelor of Science

By

Stephanie Francesca Ronca

March, 2013

© 2013 Stephanie Francesca Ronca

## Table of Contents

<b>Chapter 1</b> .....	3
Introduction.....	3
<b>Chapter 2</b> .....	5
Literature Review.....	5
The general concept of franchises.....	5
The general concept of social media and public relations.....	7
The use of public relations in a franchised restaurant.....	11
The best uses of social media for an individual franchised restaurant.....	13
<b>Chapter 3</b> .....	15
Methodology.....	15
<b>Chapter 4</b> .....	16
Data Analysis.....	16
Research Questions.....	16
Results & Discussion.....	17
<b>Chapter 5</b> .....	21
Conclusion.....	21
<b>Work Cited</b> .....	23
<b>Appendix</b> .....	26
Rock & Brews' Social Media Marketing Plan.....	26

## **Chapter 1: Introduction**

In today's fast-paced and technologically advanced society, it is important that businesses utilize multiple social media platforms within their public relations and marketing plans in order to succeed. Using social media can provide more awareness, publicity, advertisement and customer outreach for any company trying to grow and increase revenue. This research project has been created to benefit the future success of a bar and grill in Redondo Beach, California called Rock & Brews PCH. The research I am conducting is based off of the best social media practices for an individual franchisee in the restaurant industry. Rock & Brews will be opening April 1, 2013 as the first franchise of the original Rock & Brews in El Segundo, California. The bar and grill is an all-ages friendly place for people to hang out with friends, family, children and pets. The bar and grill will feature live music, a wide selection of beer, prime location on the Pacific Coast Highway and inexpensive, quality food. The El Segundo Rock & Brews has had great success since opening less than a year ago. Their Facebook page currently has over 6,000 likes and over 1,000 followers on Twitter. These numbers show that the original Rock & Brews has been very successful through their usage of social media and the soon-to-open Redondo Beach Rock & Brews can be just as successful if the social media platforms are implemented efficiently.

Understanding how to use social media platforms in the restaurant industry is very important because of the trends in using smart phones, the Internet, social networking and society's need for getting information fast and efficiently. Many businesses are taking advantage of this free form of marketing and advertising to improve their company's brand and sales. In relation to the restaurant industry, using social media platforms can be

crucial to the success of a restaurant and how information is dispersed and received.

Restaurants no longer need to rely on traditional public relations and advertising to gain new customers and inform loyal customers about their current happening.

Along with the research, literature review, methodology, results and discussion, this project will include a social media marketing plan to be implemented once Rock & Brews in Redondo Beach is open. The methodology involves interviews from two restaurants and a winery in San Luis Obispo, California discussing useful information about using social media in the business setting and the beneficial ways to utilize social media. With the mission statement of “great food, craft beer, phenomenal service,” Rock & Brews PCH in Redondo Beach hopes to implement a social media marketing plan in order to drive customers through their doors and engage users on platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Foursquare and YouTube. In turn, the cultivated research and social media marketing plan will provide Rock & Brews PCH with the important information they need to grow and gain more customers online.

## **Chapter 2: Literature Review**

My review and research on published literature regarding the best social media practices for a franchisee in the restaurant industry is divided into four sections: 1) the general concept of franchises, 2) the general concept of social media and public relations, 3) the use of public relations in a franchised restaurant, 4) the best social media practices for individual franchise restaurant.

### **The general concept of franchises**

According to the International Franchise Association, franchising is a method of distributing products or services. At least two levels of people are involved in a franchise system: the franchisor, who lends his trademark or trade name and a business system; and the franchisee, who pays a royalty and often an initial fee for the right to do business under the franchisor's name and system. Technically, the contract binding the two parties is the “franchise,” but that term is often used to mean the actual business that the franchisee operates. For a franchise chain to start imagine a store owned by an individual with a particular idea or unique brand. If the business is successful, the owner may develop multiple stores and hire employees for everyday operations. At that point, if the entrepreneur still wants to expand. but does not want to manage additional stores himself or herself, he or she may decide to “franchise” the store name and business system to an independent business person known as a franchisee. In return, the business owner may ask for an initial fee and/or a continuing royalty payment based on a percentage of that franchisee's sales. The business is now franchised and the franchise chain has begun (International Franchise Association, 2004).

In 2001 there were 767,483 business establishments in all domestic franchise systems, meaning they were either owned by franchisors and franchisees, and employed almost 10 million people. These businesses account for large percentage of all establishments in many important lines of business: 56.3% in quick service restaurants, 18.2% in lodging, 14.2% in retail food, and 13.1% in table/full service restaurants (International Franchise Association, 2004). By 2005 the United States franchises employed 11 million individuals and was responsible for 4.4% of the United States' private-sector economic output. Franchising has become a popular route into domestic and international organizational growth (Davis, 2011).

With the growing popularity of franchising, franchisors and must complete with each other to market and brand their businesses to potential franchisees. The franchisor relies on the franchisee for a source of income and to grow the organization to be successful and consistent with the brand idea from the franchisor. In turn, the franchisee depends on the franchisor to continue his or her commitments with advertising, training, input sourcing and other commitments. The organizations identity and success is dependent on the interdependent relationship between the franchisee and franchisor (Davis 2011).

Although the economy is not doing so well in its current state, restaurant franchises continue to open and expand. The franchisors are still able to make a good profit by marketing themselves to prospective franchisees and gain profit when they franchise a restaurant because the franchisor will always make profit or receive royalties from the franchisees. Some of the large corporations that own restaurants like Applebee's and KFC are selling company-owned restaurants to be franchised and run by

an independent franchisee. This in turn saves the companies millions of dollars and they do not have to manage and run an individual restaurant. However, running an individual franchised restaurant is not as simple as some think. More than half of franchise restaurants will fail within three years (Hsu, 2011).

### **The general concept of social media and public relations**

Public relations and social media can work hand-in-hand with the common goal to gain public interest and build strong relationships with the public. Social media platforms can be used a public relations tactic to build online communities of followers and increase brand awareness or profit share (Kang, 2011). The Public Relations Society of America defines public relations as “a strategic communication process that builds mutually beneficial relationships between organizations and their publics.” It is ultimately a communications process of building mutually beneficial relationship between people, companies, organizations and brands (PRSA, 2012). The American Marketing Association Board of Directors define marketing as “the activity, set of institutions, and processes for creating, communicating, delivering, and exchanging offerings that have value for customers, clients, partners, and society at large (AMA, 2007).” In whole, public relations and marketing can go hand-in-hand when trying to build relationships, brand a service or product and sell something to an individual or demographic.

The relationship between public relations and marketing has changed tremendously over the past decade. Both professionals and the concepts behind public relations and marketing try to work together because they both deal with organizational

relationships and employ similar processes. In 1989 four distinguished marketing and public relations scholars (Ehling, Jackson, Jones and Kotler) met to discuss the underlying concepts of both functions. They all determined that the techniques, strategies and theoretical base are the same. They concluded that the two functions have to be differentiated by the mission or assignment and that the true difference is the outcome they are trying to achieve (Duhring, 2012). Due to new channels of communications, especially social media, public relations professional have acknowledged the change and revamped their techniques and strategies to conform to the changing markets. For both marketing and public relations, there will never be unidirectional corporate communications but two-dimensional, engaging communications that must take into account the interests of stakeholders. Many public relations professionals and scholars have awaited and understood this idea even before the shift in large-scale communications, but many marketing professionals have just recently acknowledged this new shift. In conclusion, marketing it moving towards a public relations approach and more concerned about shareholders in the organization than heavily concentrating on customers (Duhring, 2012).

For any business to succeed, they must utilize professional and strategic public relations and marketing tactics. Public relations involves working with the public and telling a story. The better one can tell the story then the greater chance the public and your target audience will accept it, and the better public relations one will be practicing. The public part of public relations implies things like community relations, public affairs, investor relations, press conferences, media events, internal communications and crisis communications. It also involves a lot of behind-the-scenes activities that do not



necessarily involve the public. Some of public relation could involve writing a press release, creating a media kit or list of contacts, coordinating a conference, securing credentials or lobbying for article placement. Ultimately, public relations is a means to getting the word out about a company, service or product to a target audience one is trying to sell something to. Public relations is simply one part of marketing and marketing is made up of many things that can tie in with good public relations tactics (Lautenslager, 2003).

Marriam-Webster Dictionary defines social media as “forms of electronic communication through which users create online communities to share information, ideas, personal messages, and other content.” Social media is a platform that allows users to share information through content, photos, and videos. Social networking, such as Facebook, Twitter, and LinkedIn, is a platform that allows people with common interests or goals to come together to connect and share information (Eybsen 2011). Social media marketing is referred to as the process of gaining website traffic or attention through social media sites. Social media marketing programs usually encourage social media users to interact and share the content posted on social media platforms. Corporate-run social media sites greatly encourage sharing from user to user, or a third party source, differently than a brand would. Ultimately this form of marketing is driven by word-of-mouth with the end result being earned attention rather than paid media attention (Freebase.com).

In relation to professionals and business owners, social media can be used as a platform to elevate ones impact in a community and overall business. There are now over 9 million businesses on Facebook that use the platform to create and enhance brand

awareness and connect with other social media users, for free. All sizes of businesses can use social media as a form of free advertising and marketing and reach millions of people in a matter of seconds, unlike traditional print advertising. To the left is an infographic of how small businesses can utilize social media as a free marketing tool. Most companies do not realize the advantages of implementing social media outlets into their everyday marketing strategies. The Harvard Business Review asked 2,100 companies about their own usage of social media to create a statistical slideshow about the platform. 58 percent of the 2,100 companies currently use social networks such as Facebook, Twitter and YouTube. Figure 1 below is an infographic of the overall effectiveness of using social media from the survey answers. 50 percent of the companies surveyed answered that using social media has increased awareness of their organization, products, or services among target customers. Since social media platforms are free, it should be necessary that all types of companies take advantage of the benefits social networking can bring to a business' image, website, brand, products, services, etc. (Ennes, 2011).

Both corporate and small businesses are using social media platforms to increase website traffic and awareness of the company and its services or products. The marketing and public relations strategy of focusing on cost-effective social media marketing has helped many companies spread the word about what they have to offer, continue to reach out to old customers and drive new customers to their pages, website and through their doors. "Effective marketing strategies make for a successful restaurant business. In the current economy, companies are increasingly using a new generation of cost-effective tools, such as social media networking, blogs, viral videos and other online channels to maximize their word of mouth potential," said Lorna Donatone, Convention Chair for

NRA Show 2009 and President of School Services at Sodexo Inc (Stensson, 2009). The traditional form of marketing and advertising has transformed into a consumer based one that relies heavily on social media.

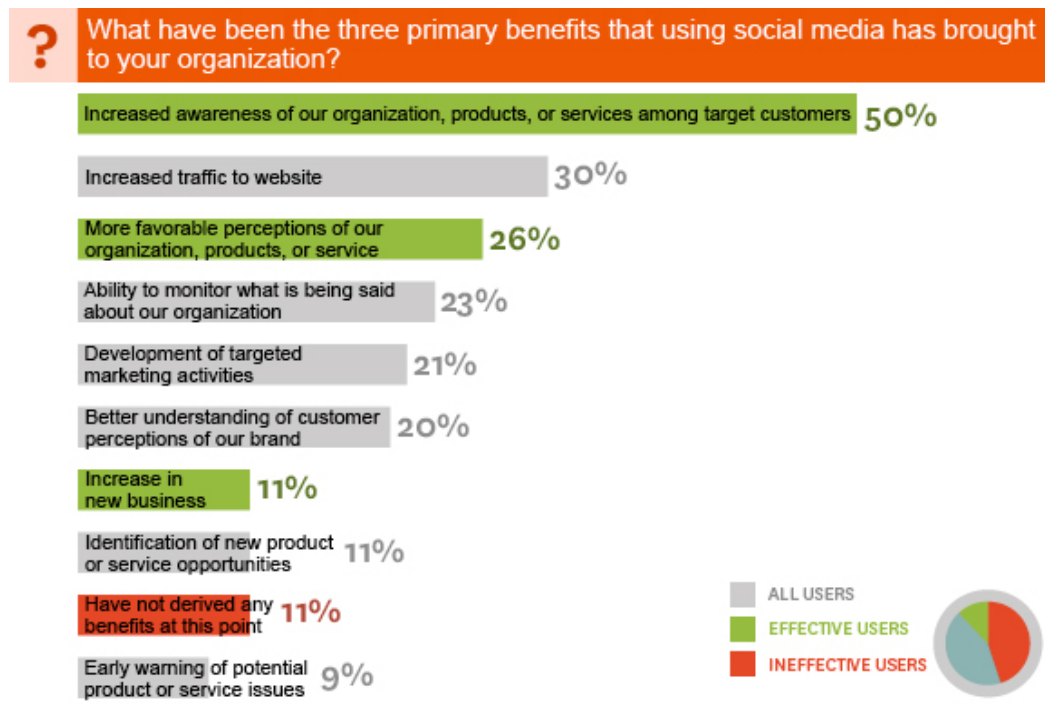


Figure 1 (Ennes, 2011)

### The use of public relations in a franchised restaurant

For some franchisors and franchisees, public relations may not be the top way to bring in sales, but it can help a target audience hear about a company and its services in a more relatable way than traditional advertising. If a franchise does not have an in-house marketing or public relations team, it is wise to hire a public relations firm to deal with writing and sales. Getting the press to notice a franchise's story starts with selling a well-

written story to the media. Most people read the news oblivious to how certain stories got there, but about 60 percent of the news stories published in print and online were “placed” there by a public relations firm (Siebert, 2005). It is important for any franchise to have a strong public relations team or firm working for them to get publicity about their company placed in the press.

In today’s technologically advanced society, social media has become to most efficient way of reaching a large audience. Public relations firms have adapted to this interactive form of storytelling and have begun utilizing social media outlets as one their main form of communication. In a restaurant setting, social media forms such as Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn and Instagram can help customers feel more comfortable and willing to spend more time at the restaurant. "You walk in a restaurant and you want to know your host and you want to know the servers and you want to know the chef," he said. "You want to know the people who are about to serve you food, and that's always been the case, but it really has been difficult [to let customers meet everybody]. Social media is giving you the opportunity to start doing that," said Steve Patrizi, the Vice President of LinkedIn (Smith, 2010).

Having a strong understanding for public relations or a knowledgeable public relations firm is beyond beneficial for franchised restaurants starting out. A public relations firms can provide a restaurant with strong media, industry and community relationship, provide and honest assessment of the restaurant and convey it in a useful manner, demonstrate integrity in their approach to both clients and the media, create a public relations strategy with either short term or long term goal that meet the restaurants needs and place important information about the company in press. A public relations

firm will see themselves as a partner in the business and take the success of the restaurant seriously with their reputation and profession on the line (Baum).

### **The best uses of social media for an individual franchised restaurant**

As previously stated, social media can really elevate a company's publicity and notoriety. For a franchised restaurant starting out, it is wise to create Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and Pinterest accounts that will engage a target audience and create inbound public relations. If it is allowed under the franchise rules, the franchisee or manager of the franchised restaurant should create social media pages to engage with one's audience and drive social media users to the restaurant. From breakfast, lunch to dinner restaurants want to include offers on their social media platforms that customers cannot resist. Social media outlets such as Foursquare, Facebook and Yelp! can create check-in offers and other exclusive deals that will bring new and old customers through their doors, while also relaying the deal on the individual's own social media site (Ong, 2012). Foursquare is a great outlet that allows people to check-in whenever they are at a restaurant or place, and whoever checks-in the most becomes the "mayor" of that place. Restaurant managers can take advantage of this and offer deals or prizes to the people who check-in the most. Foursquare also allows users to post their Foursquare check-ins to their Twitter and Facebook accounts, allowing other social media users to be notified where their friends are (Brandau, 2010). Twitter can keep restaurant clientele up to date and notify them of cancellations, daily deals, menu changes or additions and relevant news. Twitter is a fast and easy way to create a simple but effective message with 140 characters or less. You can even tweet photos of the menus so people know what they want prior to a lunchtime

rush. Posting images of delicious dishes, drinks, recipes and pastries from a restaurant can be efficiently posted on Instagram and Pinterest, and will ultimately drive users back to the restaurant's site or through the restaurant's doors. YouTube can be used to create a channel for the restaurant and post recipe tutorials, behind the scene action, restaurant tips and exclusive interviews. People love to feel like they are getting a sneak-peak of something or getting to see something that most people cannot (Boies, 2012).

Blogs are sometimes overlooked in the restaurant industry. Creating a blog that can be connected with the company's Facebook and Twitter is a great way to share with customers and create a loyal following. Restaurants can also create guest blogs where customers can write their own reviews or experiences on the blog to share with others. Going mobile is also a great thing that many restaurants like Chipotle and Pizza Hut have already done. Making the restaurant's website compatible to mobile phones is key to keeping customers on your site and getting their business. Depending on the target audience, many people use smart phone today so making an accessible mobile site for smart phone makes it easier for individuals to surf the site and look at the food choices and pictures. Restaurant managers and anyone in charge of the social media content, can track the number of times their specific restaurant is mentioned online by using Google Alerts. One can set up Google Alerts to be notified through e-mail about when the restaurant name is mentioned online, and see if the restaurant is being mentioned in a negative or positive light, and improve upon that ([www.MenuCoverMan.com](http://www.MenuCoverMan.com)). In all, the use of social media in the restaurant setting is extremely beneficial and can elevate a restaurant's publicity and ultimately increase revenue.

### **Chapter 3: Methodology**

To continue my research on best social media practices for a franchised restaurant I have conducted three interviews about how to utilize social media to elevate a business related to Rock & Brews PCH. I sat down and interviewed Creeky Tiki's managing partner Mike Marquez, Marston's Bar n' Grill bartender Kate Mesa and Tolosa Winery's marketing and event director Katie Noonan. The interviews I conducted asked questions relating to social media practices, different social media platforms, social media tips and beneficial utilization of social media. The interviewees revealed their most used social media platform as Facebook, but they all use it differently and work with other platforms to spread the word about their business and its services. The answers I received from these three individuals will help me in my results and discussion sections where I will be able to analyze and incorporate some of the useful answers and information they provided. The information I learned from these interviewees provided me with invaluable information that Rock & Brews PCH's social media marketing plan will greatly benefit from.

## Chapter 4: Data Analysis

### Research Questions

For my research I chose to interview three individuals working in the restaurant, hospitality and spirits industry in San Luis Obispo, California. The questions I asked were directed to my research question about the best social media practices for an individual restaurant franchisee in relation to the opening of Rock & Brews PCH. I interviewed Creeky Tiki's managing partner Mike Marquez, Marston's Bar n' Grill bartender Kate Mesa and Tolosa Winery's director of events and marketing Katie Noonan.

1. What social media platforms do you use at \_\_ (business name \_\_\_\_)?
2. What kind of content do you post on those platforms?
3. How often do you post on those social media platforms?
4. Which social media platform do you use the most?
5. How has using those social media platforms helped increase \_\_ (business name \_\_\_\_)'s business and sales?
6. What social media platform has brought \_\_ (business name \_\_\_\_ the most success?
7. For a business starting out, particularly a restaurant, what would you recommend they do with social media to expand their business?



## **Results & Discussion**

The interviews I conducted in San Luis Obispo, California with Creeky Tiki's managing partner Mike Marquez, Marston's Bar and Grill bartender Kate Mesa and Tolosa Winery's marketing and event director Katie Noonan, provided insightful information about the best social media practices to be used for a restaurant. The three individuals all rely on Facebook as their primary source of spreading information about their business, but in very different ways. Marquez and Noonan use a variety of social media platforms for their social media objectives, while Mesa and her fellow employees only utilize Facebook and the consumer-based Yelp!. The tactics they shared about using different social media platforms were very useful for any restaurant starting out.

Today, most businesses rely on Facebook pages as a free form of marketing and advertising to share information and content with many people in seconds. Marquez, Noonan and Mesa all use Facebook to publicize Creeky Tiki, Tolosa Winery and Marston's Bar and Grill in San Luis Obispo, California. Marquez uses Facebook to share information about upcoming events, post pictures of loyal customers, share information about what is currently happening at Creeky Tiki, post daily food and drink specials and posts picture slideshows of people at Creeky Tiki. Creeky Tiki has its own business page and Marquez uses that page, as well as his personal Facebook page, to share information with over 7,000 friends and followers combined. Marquez has also utilized celebrity/athlete connections and even his tennis friend Bob Bryan has posted on his personal Facebook wall about Creeky Tiki, liked the business page and shared with others to do the same. Noonan posts four to five times a week on Tolosa Winery's

Facebook page and over the last three years she has noticed that Facebook is consistently one of the top five referring sites to Tolosa Winery's website. Noonan posts everything from pictures of wine specials, events, the staff and customer, related videos, articles and information about their current photo contest. Marston's Bar and Grill operates differently on Facebook with both a Facebook business page and a personal Facebook page that they use to add people in the San Luis Obispo area as "friends." Their friend/personal page has more friends than likes on the business page so they mainly share content through the personal Facebook page. This allows friends to tag them in posts, tag them in photos, invite people to events they are throwing, tag DJ's or individuals in their own posts and check-in their bartenders and wait staff at work. Employees at Marston's are encouraged to check-in at the bar and grill when they are working and post about daily specials or deals on their own Facebook page, in hopes that Facebook friends will want to come in. On both the personal page and business page Marston's will post daily deals or discounts for customers who check-in at Marston's as a social media incentive. All these types of social media incentives make the customers happy by simply clicking a few buttons and enable the businesses to spread awareness easily and fast.

Both Creeky Tiki and Tolosa Winery use the social photo-sharing platform called Instagram to share pictures of their products and services to followers. Instagram is a social media platform that allows users to "follow" other users and view, comment and like the pictures users share. Both Marquez and Noonan say they post pictures sporadically on Instagram just depending on the relevant and interesting content they have to post. Marquez will take and post pictures of people enjoying their time at Creeky Tiki to show followers the atmosphere and what is happening in hopes that those

followers will want to come into the bar and restaurant. He also post pictures of local beers on tap or delicious food choices to drive customers in. Instagram is completely photo-based and provides a great opportunity for restaurants like Rock & Brews PCH to share with followers current happenings, food and drink specials and customer or staff pictures.

Out of the three interviewees, Tolosa Winery was the only business to use multiple social media platforms besides Facebook and Instagram. For Tolosa Winery, Noonan uses Pinterest and Twitter to connect with social media users. Tolosa Winery's Pinterest account has become very successful and she uses it to give followers insight on the San Luis Obispo region, where to stay overnight, where to eat, articles on the winery, upcoming events and ultimately as a helpful tool for customers, rather than just a promotion outlet. Using a Twitter account for Tolosa Winery has provided Noonan with an additional way to reach her target audience. She primarily uses it to reach media outlets, bloggers and people in the wine, agriculture and hospitality industry. Both Marquez and Mesa expressed interest in other forms of social media, but Marston's has been so successful with Facebook and Creeky Tiki with Facebook and Instagram, that they do not feel the need to exert energy in those other platforms.

For a business starting out, using social media is a go-to form of free marketing and advertising, if it is utilized appropriately. When the three interviewees were asked what they would recommend a new business do with social media, their answers were both insightful and helpful in relation to Rock & Brews' social media marketing plan. Noonan's suggestions were exceptionally insightful for a new restaurant starting out. "For a new business do what would be manageable and fit into their business best.

Twitter and Facebook are the obvious, but make sure you are going to be interactive on them. But Instagram can also be a great fit for certain business that has great photo opportunities, like restaurants, so food and drink photos can be a huge success. Also making sure when you do post for your business don't always sell, just share and give fans and followers something interesting or informative, and photos always will rank higher than just text." Noonan said. Mike Marquez of Creeky Tiki also provided great information that relates greatly to Rock & Brews and any business trying to gain loyal customers and followers. "The most success I have seen working at Firestone Grill and as the managing partner at Creeky Tiki, is making a daily presence in the restaurant. It leaves a positive impression on the customers and supplementing it with Facebook helps the customers want to stay connected with the business and people at the restaurant," Marquez said. Using social media platforms supplementary for a restaurant's publicity and success is important in order to gain loyal customers and followers at the restaurant and online.

It is obvious to most that Facebook is a go-to social media platform for any business that wants to spread awareness about their brand, product and/or services. Some businesses, like Tolosa Winery, have expanded beyond solely using Facebook to creating accounts on Twitter, Instagram and Pinterest to reach multiple audiences in multiple forms. Sharing relative and interesting content is key but also creating social media engagement keeps social media users intrigued and interactive with the business' account. In relation to Rock & Brews PCH, it is crucial that the restaurant uses multiple social media platforms and utilizes them appropriately in order to generate engagement, online followers, informed customers and ultimately increase profit share.

## **Chapter 5: Conclusion**

Creating a successful business starts with utilizing social media and public relations techniques in order to gain loyal customers and increase market share. Social media provides businesses with a free form of marketing, public relations and advertising to can extend to individuals in more ways than traditional forms. Public relations and marketing firms have created job positions such as social media coordinators, to accommodate the increase in social media usage and demand for businesses to increase their own social media use. Social media platforms have become a supplemental form to public relations, marketing and advertising for many businesses trying to reach a new demographic, spread awareness, launch a campaign, increase engagement and/or increase revenues. Social media marketing helps businesses or companies gain website traffic or attention through social media sites and spread the awareness inexpensively.

Social media platforms and social networking sites help consumers share opinions, experiences, insights and perspectives with eachother, while providing feedback fo the restaurants as well. Although there is no specific site that has agreed upon as the best one to use, they all satisfy the objective to spread the awareness and information about a business to current and prospective customers. One consistent theme that all business owners and social media coordinators can agree upon is that social media provides a useful form of advertising, public relations and marketing for any brand and company at either zero or little cost (Crews, 2012).

In the following years it will become more evident that social media and consumer-based online reviews are a huge deciding factor for Internet users and younger generations. Social media provides networking users a chance to have their voice heard,

share with others, provide feedback and get honest answers from fellow social media users. The free to no cost form of advertising lures many companies into social media as way to reach out to customers and develop new relationships with new and old ones. Traditional public relations, marketing and advertising are no longer the go-to source for professionals looking to expand a business or a company's network because of the power social media has on consumers. The accessibility to the Internet and demand for information fast has expanded social media's popularity and usage among consumers, customers, professionals, business owners and people all around the world.

## Work Cited

1. Baum, Jennifer. "What Restaurant PR Brings to the Table."  
*NYrestaurantinsider.com*. Restaurant Insider, n.d. Web. 20 Feb. 2013.
2. Boies, Jason. "Five Restaurants Serving Up Tasty Social  
Media Strategies." *Salesforcemarketingcloud.com*. Salesforce Marketing Cloud 5  
Restaurants Serving Up Tasty Social Media Strategies Comments, 16 Oct. 2012.  
Web. 20 Feb. 2013.
3. Brandau, Mark. "Turn In, Check In, Eat out." *Nation's Restaurant News* 44.5  
(2010): n. pag. Web. 17, Mar. 2013.
4. Crews, Tena, DiPietro Robin, Cathy Gustafson, and Sandy Strick. "The Use of  
Social Networking Sites in the Restaurant Industry: The Best Practices." *Journal  
of Foodservice Business Research* 15.3 (2012): n. pag. Web.
5. "Definition of Marketing." *About AMA*. American Marketing  
Association, Oct. 2004. Web. 9 Feb. 2013.
6. Duhring. 2012. *Web*.  
<http://web.ebscohost.com.ezproxy.lib.calpoly.edu/ehost/pdfviewer/pdfviewer?sid=897b730c-60ac-4820-8cb3-61493cbc884e%40sessionmgr113&vid=2&hid=126>
7. Ennes, Meghan. "Social Media: What Most Companies Don't  
Know." *HBR.org*. Harvard Business Review, 2011. Web. 2 Mar. 2013.
8. Eybsen, Frank. "7 Social Media Concepts Average Users  
Don't Really Know About." *SearchEnginePeople.com*. Search Engine People,  
2011. Web. 2 Mar. 2013.

9. Hsu, Tiffany. "FOOD; RESTAURANTS DISH UP MORE FRANCHISES; Eatery Chains Boost Incentives to Would-be Franchisees, Even as Most Fail within 3 Years." *Los Angeles Times* 26 Nov. 2011: n. pag. *ProQuest Newsstand*. Web. 7 Feb. 2013.
10. Kang, Juhee. *Social Media Marketing in the Hospitality Industry: The Role of Benefits in Increasing Brand Community Participation and the Impact of Participation on Consumer Trust and Commitment toward Hotel and Restaurant Brands*. Diss. Iowa State University, 2011. N.p.: n.p., n.d. *Proquest*. Web. 17 Mar. 2013.
11. Lautenslager, Al. "Why You Need PR." *Entrepreneur*. Entrepreneur, 17 Nov. 2003. Web. 07 Mar. 2013.
12. Lowell, Brett, and Tao Xu. "Frequently Asked Questions About Franchising." *IFA*. International Franchise Association, n.d. Web. 7 Feb. 2013.
13. Ong, Beng Soo. "The Perceived Influence of User Reviews in the Hospitality Industry." *Journal of Hospitality Marketing and Management* 21.5 (2012): n. pag. *EBSCOhost*. Web. 13 Mar. 2013.
14. Siebert, Mark. "Turn Good Publicity into Franchising Success." *Entrepreneur*. Entrepreneur, 24 Jan. 2005. Web. 15 Feb. 2003.
15. Smith, Sam. "Social Media Done Right." *Restaurant Business* 109.6 (2010): 20. *Business Source Premier*. Web. 10 Feb. 2013.
16. "Social Media Marketing." *Freebase*. N.p., n.d. Web. 17 Mar. 2013.
17. Stensson, Annikka. "Chain Restaurant Executives to Discuss Word of Mouth



- Marketing, Social Media at NRA Show 2009." *Targeted News Service* (2009): n. pag. *Proquest*. Web. 13 Mar. 2013.
18. "Top 10 Ways to Use Social Media to Promote a Restaurant."  
*MenuCoverMan.com*. Blueberry Brands, LLC, n.d. Web. 2 Mar. 2013.
19. "What Is Public Relations?" *PR Definition: PRSA Official Statement*. Public Relations Society of America, n.d. Web. 7 Feb. 2013.
20. Zerfass, Dr. Ansgar, and Lisa Duhring. "Between  
Convergence and Power Struggles: How Public Relations and Marketing  
Communications Professionals Interact in Corporate Brand Management." *Public Relations Journal* 6.5 (2012): n. pag. 2012. Web. 8 Mar. 2013.

## **Appendix**

### **Social Media Marketing Plan**

Rock & Brews PCH – Redondo Beach, CA

March 2013

#### **Goals:**

1. To increase brand/company awareness.
2. To build a loyal and engaged online community of followers.
3. To create a strong online following that will translate into popularity, larger clientele, positive brand image, mindshare and increase revenue.

**Overall Strategy:** The strategy will provide guidelines for the best social media practices using the following social media outlets: Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Yelp!, Foursquare.

**Target Audience:** The local community and visitors in and around Redondo Beach, California. This includes people of all ages and demographics – also family oriented and dog friendly.

#### **Objectives:**

**Objective #1:** Increase Facebook Likes to 300 Likes 30 days after the grand opening of Rock & Brews PCH.

**Objective #2:** Create Twitter account and get 100 followers 30 days after the grand opening of Rock & Brews PCH.

**Objective #3:** Create an Instagram account and gain 100 followers 30 days after the grand opening of Rock & Brews PCH.

**Objective #4:** Get 15 customer reviews on Yelp! 30 days after the grand opening of Rock & Brews PCH.

\*Note: To take advantage of free social media platforms, we will be encouraging customers to write reviews that may be accompanied by incentives. There are other payable formats in Yelp! that we will not be exploring in this plan.

**Objective #5:** Get 10 tips on Foursquare 30 days after the grand opening of Rock & Brews PCH.

**Facebook Tactics:**

1. Post at least once a day about daily deals, specials, events, the atmosphere, current happenings, facts, questions, jokes, etc., to attract customers and increase social media engagement.
2. Post pictures as often as possible to increase likes and engagement on social media platform. Ex: behind the scenes photos of Rock & Brews, celebrity appearances, food specials, beer specials, customers, staff, family environment,

- dog friendly atmosphere, etc.
3. Post a deal/offer on Facebook once a week for customers who “check-in” at Rock & Brews PCH or tag Rock & Brews PCH in a picture or post.
  4. Encourage customers to like the Rock & Brews PCH Facebook page by posting a QR code on promotional literature, menus, drink cards or receipts. If appropriate, encourage wait staff to tell customers about the Facebook page and how customers can be apart of social media environment for potential deals, discounts, contests, information, photos, etc.
  5. Create unique contests to get social media users involved. Ex: create a photo contest in which people submit ex: “the best time they had at Rock & Brews PCH,” “picture with your pup on the patio,” or “picture with your favorite craft beer” to win a gift card to the restaurant.
  6. Get the chef or bartenders to share interesting facts about recipes or different types of beer that will encourage people to engage in posts and be intrigued by the information.
  7. When posting links, use URL shortener (like bit.ly or Google Analytics) to monitor clicks.
  8. Reply back to all questions and comments within 24 hours.
  9. For the most user involvement, post between the hours 2 and 4pm.
  10. Ask questions in posts to encourage discussion and inbound PR for Rock & Brews PCH.
  11. Monitor social media insights weekly and keep track of traffic changes.
  12. Future: Create a social media calendar that includes strategic post schedules and

content for each month.

13. Use social media management tools like HootSuite to schedule posts when admins are unable to post at designated times. But don't use tool for every post.
14. Encourage employees to check-in on Facebook that they are working and/or the day's specials, to encourage their social media friends to come into Rock & Brews PCH.
15. Promote any type of events happening at Rock & Brews, especially non-profit events, on social media platforms – ultimately spreading information about how Rock & Brews gives back to the community or is a great place to host an event.
16. Invite well-known, famous people to bartend as a “celebrity bartender” and have that person invite his or her social media friends to come visit Rock & Brews PCH and/or like the Rock & Brews PCH Facebook page.
17. Ask questions in Facebook posts to encourage discussion and inbound PR for Rock & Brews PCH.
18. Encourage a “flash mob” discount. Ex: The first 20 people to check-in at Rock & Brews when the doors open will receive 20% off.

**Twitter Tactics:**

1. Post at least once a day about daily deals, specials, events, the atmosphere, current happenings, facts, questions, jokes, etc., to attract customers and increase social media engagement.
2. Post pictures (Twitpics) as often as possible to increase likes and engagement on Twitter and get retweets. Ex: behind the scenes photos of Rock & Brews,

- celebrity appearances, food specials, beer specials, customers, staff, family environment, dog friendly atmosphere, etc.
3. Encourage customers to follow the Rock & Brews PCH Twitter account by posting a QR code on promotional literature, menus, drink cards or receipts.
  4. When posting links, use URL shortener (like bit.ly or Google Analytics) to monitor clicks.
  5. Reply back to all questions and comments within 24 hours.
  6. Ask questions in posts to encourage discussion, engagement and inbound PR for Rock & Brews PCH.
  7. Monitor analytics weekly and keep track of traffic changes.
  8. Use social media management tools like HootSuite to schedule posts when admins are unable to post at designated times. But don't use tool for every post.
  9. Promote any type of events happening at Rock & Brews, especially non-profit events, on social media platforms – ultimately spreading information about how Rock & Brews gives back to the community or is a great place to host an event.
  10. Keep it short and sweet, Twitter only allows 140 characters.
  11. Create a creative weekly hashtag that relates to Rock & Brews PCH and offer discounts if people post something about Rock & Brews PCH with the hashtag.
  12. Hashtag #rockandbrewspch is all Twitter posts.
  13. Offer promotional deals on Twitter. Ex: 20<sup>th</sup> Twitter follower to retweet this picture of our house ale will receive 20% off their next meal!

### **Instagram Tactics:**

1. Post relevant pictures 1-2 times a day to increase likes. Ex: behind the scenes photos of Rock & Brews, celebrity appearances, food specials, beer specials, customers, staff, family environment, dog friendly atmosphere, etc.
2. Try to only post promotional pictures when absolutely needed.
3. Do not spam Instagram followers with too many pictures in one day.
4. Post funny, creative, interesting pictures that will encourage followers to like photos.
5. People love to see pictures of other people so post pictures of the customers, bartenders, wait staff, chefs, families, etc.
6. Hashtag #rockandbrewspch is all Instagram pictures.

### **Yelp! Tactics:**

1. Encourage customers to leave Yelp! reviews about the experience at Rock & Brews PCH through appropriate literature.
2. Provide incentives for customers if they leave Yelp! reviews about Rock & Brews PCH.
3. Weekly, post an offer that if customers check-in at Rock & Brews PCH on Yelp! they get something for free or a discount (either directly on the site or have customer show server that they have checked-in).
4. If a negative Yelp! review is written about an experience at Rock & Brews PCH, address that individual and the situation appropriately so they feel take care of.
5. If a positive review is written on Yelp! address that individual and thank them for

writing the review and being a loyal customer to Rock & Brews PCH.

6. Post on Twitter and Facebook accounts about how customers can receive deals by checking-in or writing a review on the Rock & Brews PCH Yelp! page.

### **Foursquare Tactics:**

1. Provide incentives for customers who check-in the most at Rock & Brews PCH (i.e. the “mayor” of Rock & Brews PCH gets a free beer or 40% off their next burger). This ultimately could provide the benefits of the “mayor” reaching out to his or hers social media friends about their experience at Rock & Brews PCH.
2. Post on Twitter and Facebook accounts about how customers can receive deals by checking-in or leaving tips on the Rock & Brews PCH Foursquare page.
3. Create an incentive that benefits the community or non-profit. Ex: For the month of May, whenever someone checks-in on Foursquare, Rock & Brews PCH will donate a meal to the homeless shelter or a \$20 donation to a local charity.
4. Encourage a “flash mob” discount. Ex: The first 20 people to check-in at Rock & Brews when the doors open will receive 20% off.

### **Best General Practices on Social Media Platforms**

- **Create posts for the users:** Don’t just talk about Rock & Brews all the time. Provide useful tips and information for users that they wouldn’t get anywhere else.
- **Avoid spamming users:** This means that posts should be spaced out over time and should not be entirely promotional in nature.
- **Be casual:** Tell your story in your own unique voice (be conversational, personal and



authentic, not promotional).

- **Share rich content:** Always try to share photos, video and links whenever you post something. Create dialogue and ask questions through posts and tools that allow people to share and engage with your message.
- **Celebrate you milestones:** If you reach a significant number of likes, sharing that with you audience, thanking them for their supports and encouraging them to share the page with others. If possible, include some sort of deal for the day that if they show the celebratory post to a bartender or waiter, they receive some kind of discount or deal.
- **Include calls to action in your posts:** Can be achieved through posting deals or customer incentives that will involve customers doing something on Facebook to receive something at Rock & Brews PCH.
- **Track Analytics.** Set up Google Alerts to e-mail social media coordinator whenever Rock & Brews PCH is mentioned online. Also use Google Analytics, Bit.ly and Facebook's Insights to track traffic and social media engagement.
- **Make it fun.** Social media is about engagement, having fun and being social. Don't be afraid to think outside the box and play along with social media users.