

SOCIAL MEDIA MAGIC

CASE STUDY

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Executive Summary: John is the co-founder of Etho Tech, a Microsoft partner software firm that provides a suite of tools for firms that want to accurately track commissions. His firm also hosts The Spot, an annual industry gathering that attracts over 10,000 attendees. In this case study, John shares how social media creates more visibility for his firm and how social media has accelerated trust building with key partners and customers. He also boils down the biggest benefit that social media has delivered to his firm.

I had started looking into social media for myself personally prior to activating it with my company. In doing so, I just did my own research and signed up with a few different types of accounts: Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn.

As I was attending Microsoft conferences, I started looking for sessions that were about social media so I found a gentleman in our world that is very knowledgeable. I was starting to attend his sessions and learning more, and I really wanted to incorporate it into my company.

I attended one of your webinars that John was in and I believe another gentleman and with my marketing consultant that has been working with us since the beginning of Etho Tech.

After attending that seminar, we are really impressed with not only the knowledge that your company showed you have about social media which is this thing, this entity that people are trying to figure out right now and still don't have it figured out. Even though there is a lot of activity out there, there are still a lot of companies especially in my community that don't have this figured out and know how to use it.

You all sounded very much like you knew how to do it very well.

So that was exciting. So for me it was a good investment of my money and time. This goes to the people that are already your experts in doing this...instead of me stumbling and stumbling and trying to figure it out on my own.

So that's why we decided to engage with your company.

So what I was looking to get from social media was what I call "mindshare" in my community. We're a Microsoft partner and there are thousands of us that have products that we're trying to sell to tens of thousands of customers around the world as well as there are tens of thousands of Microsoft partners that we're trying to get to support our products and sell them as well. So it's quite a large community of people to try to reach out to.

So to be known in that community you have to stand out, and we've been very successful in doing that at conferences over the years. With social media coming about and with us being involved in technology and being software developers and at being Microsoft this was, to me, the next logical step to really get our name out there recognized as experts in what we do which is commission automation for Microsoft Dynamics.

Also just to be a resource for people to ask questions not only about our community but just also about social media. Interestingly enough, I get asked quite a few questions about what we did and how we did it and who we used and how it has benefitted our company.

My company, EthoTech and also The Spot which is the event I throw at Microsoft convergence each year, those are probably the two things that are at the top of my mind.

So at EthoTech, when I attend conferences or when I talk to partners that call into our company looking for products and services or maybe just advice, I always get comments from them on my social media presence. From the perspective of "You've been very

busy out there. I see you're offering a lot of good information". They ask me about specific things sometimes so I have to keep up with what's being put out there by your team which is nice. It makes it nice to get the monthly updates as well as to see the information as its happening because I'm connected in all those places.

Now with The Spot, this is an event that we put on for the Microsoft Dynamics community, and it's a convergence every year which is the show that I described here earlier that has about 10,000 people that show up each year in different locations around the country. This past two years it was in Atlanta, Georgia.

I started this event with another gentleman that owns his own company as a celebration of our community. We have customers that buy our products, partners that sell them, Microsoft that provides the technology and supports us, other ISDs [independent software developers] like my company that we collaborate together and work together. And without all of these people we wouldn't exist.

So we just started this party as just a celebration and it was just maybe 50 people showed up at the first one years ago. There were just a couple of sponsors or three sponsors. Since then and since I've gotten involved with Social Media Magic and the social media presence you've created for me with Etho Tech and myself personally, we decided to start incorporating that into my event.

That just blew up our event beyond. The numbers at our event grew so much that the venue and I had to be negotiating to the very last minute what we are getting from them because our numbers kept growing and growing and growing which a lot has to do with the social media presence that we had. Because of Facebook, event page was set up; LinkedIn event page was set up, there were Tweets going on, Twitter account, Facebook, post happening for all of the sponsors of my event. We had 20 of them [sponsors] this year.

All of that effort would have been virtually impossible for me to do on my own with having to run my company. I mean because this event is an event and I'm not an event planner. I'm a software developer. So having somebody manage the presence and the visibility of our event like that really puts us into a higher level event. Because there are other events going on during Microsoft Convergence, and so we are competing with them and we drew the biggest crowd, and a lot of that I believe has to do not only with that our party is well known now but what we've done with social media.

I can sum the main benefit up in one word and let me elaborate. I can sum this up in one word that answers all of it and its "trust".

In my community, companies will buy from us because they trust us. The biggest example I have of that is one of our customers (Eric Armand) is the company name and (Eric Google Burger) is the owner. They own a couple of our products and he would call me from time to time just to talk.

He always asks, "Do you have any new products?" And I said, "No. not yet". He goes, "Well you let me know when you do because I'm buying it". I'm like, "You don't even know what it is yet!" He goes, "I don't care. If you guys are making it, I'm going to buy it. I need it".

I wouldn't have that kind of relationship with him if it wasn't the trust that I build up in my organization. So I have this going on when I came across Social Media Magic. I felt a level of trust with your organization, and that's important to me now. You were all able to help me continue to make that trust grow throughout my community with even more people than I had access to.

By having personal interactions which to me is what social media is, it's really a personal interaction – one on one with people so they get to know you. That has helped substantially: it has helped us to substantially grow our business because now when a customer or a partner or even Microsoft, they contact us. They feel like they know us and

they trust us. They see me and my picture out there and they can relate. And then they see me at events.

So it has really helped to build a trust level that is so needed in my opinion in today's business world and especially in my community.

Because that's how companies buy in my community. It's based on the trust level they feel with the product, with the company, with the people, the consultants that are going to implement it. All of that is very important to them...that relationship.

So trust – that's the word.

Are you ready to be our next success story? Then please contact us at **(888) 500-2280** or email us at **info@socialmediamagic.com** to get hands-on training from the most trusted social media training firm.