

# Why your social media sucks: The five levels of social media marketing (Part 1)

 By [Dylan Kohlstädt](#)

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I recently attended a social media marketing conference, where one of the large agencies talked about social media 1.0 (happy Monday, everyone), 2.0 (six ways to save on insurance) and 3.0 (give us a ridiculous amount of money, so we can fly our entire creative crew to the Serengeti and film elephants romping and produce an eff off expensive advert that you can post on social media, and we can win an award, and call it social media).



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That got me thinking. What are the levels of social media and what is the definition of next level social media?

When I started my company six years ago, I'll admit to you that, while I knew digital marketing backwards, I wasn't very strong on social media marketing. I had to work each social channel out, and fast.

This six-year journey has come with its fair share of learnings and epiphanies. One of the biggest revelations came shortly after deciding to build my personal brand on YouTube, Instagram, Twitter, Web, LinkedIn and Facebook.

I wanted to turn myself into a digital influencer, simply to understand the journey and the steps to becoming internet famous. Nearly a year later, I would like to share with you all that I have learned.

Based on my experiences, I believe there are five levels of social media marketing:



The Five Levels of Social Media Marketing: © 2018 Dylan Kohlstädt @ Shift ONE Digital.

## 1. Level one social media marketing: Dead silence

Level one is dead silence. Masses and masses of businesses aren't visible on social media, possibly for one of the following reasons:

- They're intimidated by this newfangled digital voodoo
- They don't have time to run a business, create content and manage platforms and comments all in one day
- They don't know how to and don't have the time to learn
- They don't know how to turn likes into sales
- They don't believe their customers are on social media, so what's the point?

If your business is at this level, the only questions I have to ask you are:

- Which platforms are your customers using?
- Can you master just one of these platforms?

Spend 20 minutes a day on this platform, familiarise yourself with your competitors' content and what your customers are talking about. Make sure you like posts and comment to increase awareness of your own brand. From there on, decide on a thought piece or post of your own that you can publish.

Even if you only do one of the above actions, the great thing is this: it's a 100% improvement from where your business is currently at.

Oh, and don't worry about making a mistake and the whole world laughing at you. I assure you, unless your post is racially charged, nobody will notice your blunder. So just starting doing one thing every day, and you'll learn and grow from there.

## 2. Level two social media marketing: Hard sell

This is usually where companies start out, posting their products, specials and company information onto social media.

After trying this for a couple of months, they complain that social media doesn't work for them as they are not making sales from their efforts.

Here's the problem: it's social media, not SALES media. If you want to hard sell, hire a big ad agency to make a TV advert for you – maybe a family sitting around a table, the kid runs in, his shirt is dirty from playing soccer and wham! The mom pulls out the detergent and his shirt is white again.

Social media won't work with hard-sell messaging, unless you have a product that sells itself. I can't get enough of their finely crafted, proudly South African sparklers.

Save the hard sell for outbound call centre staff who call at all hours trying to sell you a new cellphone or short-term insurance.

Social media is made for social engagements, social content, and building community and relationships.

After this content fails, you decide to move to the next level...

### 3. Level three social media marketing: Blah blah blah

Ever gone on a date with someone who won't let you get a word in edgeways?

That's what this level is about.

You've started posting content on social media (probably too often) just so the box can be ticked. It doesn't have the goal of creating engagement, eliciting a click-through to your website, or turning followers into fans. It's just so that you can say 'Yes, we are on social media, look at all the work we're doing!'

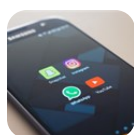
There's no problem with that. The problem centres on not replying to comments, or copy-pasting generic responses to save time.

I've been on so many social accounts, where followers are left out to dry, their lonely comments hanging in midair, like an ignored high-five.

If you start becoming a regular on social media, it is imperative that you not only check your replies and comments, but you also engage back in a timely fashion.

That's what social media is made for. Social. Media.

To continue reading, click here:



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Dylan Kohlstädt 9 Jul 2018



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## ABOUT DYLAN KOHLSTÄDT

Dylan is the founder and CEO of Shift ONE, a creative integrated digital marketing agency with 12 full time staff members. Shift ONE was incubated by QTi and Google for Entrepreneurs and she now gives back by offering digital marketing training and workshops and talks to entrepreneurs. She has also facilitated the QTi Women in Business programme and mentors entrepreneurs, marketing managers and women in business on a regular basis.

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