



Facebook Marketing, Twitter - Social Marketing Interview
Mari Smith - MariSmith.com
Relationship Marketing Specialist, Facebook, Twitter and
Social Media Business Coach Free Facebook Tips

About Mari: Dubbed the “Pied Piper of Facebook” by FastCompany.com, Mari Smith is a Relationship Marketing Specialist and Social Media Business Coach. She helps businesses, entrepreneurs and nonprofits accelerate their profits using an integrated social marketing strategy, with particular focus on Facebook and Twitter. Mari is passionate about showing fellow professionals how to develop powerful profitable relationships using social media.

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Interview by George Williams, Communications Specialist, Planned Legacy

Planned Legacy: Mari, you’ve risen to the top of your profession as a Facebook/Twitter Relationship Marketing Specialist and have become very well known as one of the leading social marketing experts in the world. Can you please tell us a little bit about yourself and how you came to be where you are today?

Mari Smith: Well, I have always had a passion and an interest in the world of relationships, and in the early 2000s I studied and got certified as a relationship coach. At the time my field was predominantly concerned with personal relationships. I taught classes for singles and provided coaching for couples and singles and studied in depth the different types of assessments, particularly personality assessments. Two of my favorite personality assessments were the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator and Reiss Core Desires.

At the same time, from the mid '90s onwards, I was also involved with computers and the Internet, building Web sites and e-mail lists, blogging, studying copywriting and writing information products on e-mail marketing and for the relationship world. So I had these two separate but related worlds. I followed these two parallel tracks for about 10 years and then in 2007 I was invited to be on the Alpha team of a Facebook application called Podclass, a place where you can teach and take courses. And that really just transformed my whole life.

I literally went to Facebook.com, signed up for an account, and figured out rapidly because of my technical aptitude that this was going to be a really special platform. It had already started to head that way. I loved the white space of it and I

loved the ability to connect with so many people. And all of a sudden I became this overnight success 10 years in the making with my two worlds, my two passions and skills.

My two major skill sets, relationships and Internet information marketing, basically merged and became one. I've never looked back. It was like the perfect culmination of all my years of training and I was suddenly completely immersed in the world of Facebook and social media.

Planned Legacy: And all of a sudden you were in high demand. So it was like the perfect storm?

Mari Smith: The perfect storm, yes, you said it George. And the other thing is my accent. A lot of people ask me about my accent and it is basically Scottish and Canadian. I was born in Canada and I grew up there in BC until I was 12 and then went to Scotland for 20 years. Both my parents are Scottish and I really consider myself Scottish more than anything. In 1999 I came to San Diego and that was a radical change. I had been an employee for almost all my career up until that time. Since then I have been self employed, so it was just a phenomenal journey. Sometimes I feel like I have lived several lives already.

Planned Legacy: Can you give us an explanation of relationship marketing? Is it part of the social media marketing phenomenon or are they one and the same? Can we group them together under a term such as social marketing? There seems to be a lot of terms being used, such as social media marketing, social marketing, relationship marketing, it gets a little confusing. Is it really just all about relationships?

Mari Smith: It really is. Sometime ago, I think it was back in the '80s, a gentleman wrote a book called [Relationship Selling](#). His name is Jim Cathcart. He is actually right here in San Diego. I have met him and he's a wonderful person. You've heard people talk about how relationships are the new currency and I am like, oh okay, there is some truth to that, but nonetheless, relationships as a form of currency if you will, have been around since the dawning of man. What's new and different now is the medium. The online medium now allows us to rapidly increase our connection time, rapport, and what I call virtual rapport through Twitter and Facebook.

You can build rapport to the degree now that the only thing left to do is to meet in person. When you meet people in person, all of a sudden it's like you have been best friends for years. So it's the media that has shifted, not really relationships.

I like to establish myself as a relationship marketing specialist because different social media platforms could be here today and gone tomorrow. I don't think platforms like Facebook and Twitter will be gone, but it's possible some of the others might not be around. I've been a relationship marketing specialist for years regardless of the mediums. Now social media includes videos, blogs, social networks and a wide variety of online platforms we can utilize to socialize and do business.

Planned Legacy: How do most people use Facebook and how does that compare to individuals or organizations that use Facebook for social marketing?

Mari Smith: Most people will use a social network such as Facebook just to share photos with family and to stay connected with people that they went to school with a long time ago. The average number of friends that any member of Facebook has is between 100 and 125. Very few people are at the current 5000 maximum friend limit on Facebook.

The social marketing aspect comes into effect when people utilize these online social platforms to market their products, services or fundraising initiatives. Businesses and marketers are using social media platforms to gain more visibility, more traffic, more subscribers, clients, media attention - to rise to the top and be seen as industry experts in whatever industry they're in. The middleman has been taken out. There is a level playing field now. Anyone who wants to define themselves as a thought leader or otherwise in their industry, any industry, can do so through these social platforms.

Planned Legacy: Why is it important for non-profit organizations to establish profiles on the social networks and become involved in social marketing? How valuable is this going to be for them in the future?

Mari Smith: Huge. This is a phenomenal time for nonprofits and we have seen more money raised for non-profit organizations through social media than ever before, one of the reasons being that it is really fascinating. I recently saw something amazing happen regarding a cause. Different organizations have different causes for which they raise money but as an example:

David Armano, VP of Experience Design with Critical Mass, knew a young woman who had been battered and abused as a wife. She had left her home and she had her young children, no money, and nowhere to go. He really wanted to help her raise some funds so she could get an apartment for her family. He added a widget called [Chipln](#) to one of his blog posts ([Please Help Us Help Daniela's Family](#)) and then posted messages about it on Twitter. He was hoping to raise \$5,000 in a week. Within 24 hours they had something like \$11,000 raised for this young woman! It just was mind blowing. I think it absolutely stunned, certainly, David and the young woman, but also everybody involved, myself included.

Planned Legacy: What about the trust factor, with regards to social marketing, for nonprofits and other organizations?

Mari Smith: What we find with nonprofits and charities; the people that support them; and the social media sites, is that the knowing, liking and trusting factor is accelerated. We have more opportunities to build those knowing and trusting relationships in such a way that people feel a sense of integrity and a compelling desire to be involved.

I have probably spent more money on non-profit causes and charities in the last 12 months than I have in the last 10 years. If somebody is asking for \$10, and I happen to be in the fortunate financial position of having some disposable income, I will purposely donate \$100. I'll donate 10 times what the host is looking for. And then I will talk about it on Twitter and Facebook, saying that I just gave a \$100 to such and such a cause - just because I could - and to incite and invite other people to do the same.

So this is a fabulous time for nonprofits to get involved in social marketing. If they are not involved, they are really missing out on people who have disposable income and who want to contribute and support and help their campaigns go viral.

Planned Legacy: What are the most important things to keep in mind for an organization or individual taking their first steps into the world of social marketing? Why do some organizations or individuals fail at social marketing?

Mari Smith: The number one reason people fail in social marketing is because they don't have a strategy. That's the biggest challenge. Some people will just jump in and set up accounts all over the place on Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn, YouTube, Plaxo etc. and they've got a blog going and feeds and widgets up the wazoo and then it's like, "Okay, now I 'm all confused and I don't know what to do."

Some people think the name of the game is just to add thousands of friends and get thousand of followers and then somehow they will figure it out. Well granted, having a big following definitely allows you more leverage, but you have to have something worthy to say. You have to have a clear and focused message, that is very important, and you have to have a site to drive people back to so you can capture names and e-mails.

You have to have a business model, a revenue model or a fundraising model. You've got to be able to make or raise money and turn all this traffic into tangible assets and cash, so it's really important to do some homework first. You have to do some research and find out what your demographic is and where they are online on the social networks. Who are you trying to reach and why?

I'm an enthusiastic evangelist for Facebook and I know the vast majority of business people will find their demographic there, but it could well be that your specific demographic is elsewhere too. In the case of real estate world, you should really be active on ActiveRain.com because it's the largest social network for anybody in the real estate world. There are many examples like that - all kinds of neat social networks out there that you should be aware of and include in your strategy accordingly.

Planned Legacy: What are some of the unwritten rules that everybody must follow when participating in social marketing?

Mari Smith: One of the unwritten rules of social marketing is not to broadcast. You have to be a participant and converse with people. Gone are the days of one-way marketing or push marketing. You have to think conversation marketing, relationship marketing, attraction marketing, two-way and even multi-way marketing.

There is a term called social computing and for a company or organization it would be like a firm that involves and includes all of its marketplace to actually co-create products and services. I just think that is the wave of the future. Threadless, Nike, even Starbucks could be considered to be engaging in social computing, where consumers/fans get to have a say in what is created, shaping the future. Facebook is actually doing this with the announcement of how users will get to vote on their new TOS!

Planned Legacy: How does someone go about figuring out a strategy for social marketing? Do they hire a social media strategist? Is that something you would describe yourself as now?

Mari Smith: Oh! Absolutely! Yes! I call myself a Social Media Business Coach. There are a lot of terms being bandied around right now, because social media, social networking, social marketing and relationship marketing all tend to fall somewhere under the same umbrella. There are a variety of descriptions for what we do, but basically everyone knows that they just need to be participating in the social marketing phenomenon. And yes, we help businesses, organizations and individuals design and develop their social marketing strategy.

People will come to me all the time and say, "Mari how do I make money on Facebook?" I tell them, "That's a great question, but let me just press the pause button for a second. I need to ask you a few questions. I want to find out from you, what your business model, profit model, revenue model or fundraising model is. I want to ask you this question - If I were to buy into everything that you offer; all your products, services or fundraising programs, how much would it cost me and what would I get for my money?" That really stops people in their tracks.

They are hoping that if they just focus on the medium it will generate cash, but they have to have the revenue model and the plan in place first. Otherwise it's like putting the cart before the horse. Once they know their revenue model and demographics, we can choose whatever social platforms will work best for them. I choose to use Facebook, Twitter, YouTube channels and blogs mainly. I don't write as often on my blogs as I'd like to, but I am active on Twitter and Facebook every single day.

Planned Legacy: So before any organization starts participating in social marketing, they need a revenue or fundraising model in place. And would that model be anchored by a Web site or blog?

Mari Smith: Really it's either a blog or a Web site that is going to form the foundational co-operating piece of any business, profit or nonprofit. The Web site or blog is fed by a giant marketing funnel which is filled by customers and potential customers that have found out about your organization from a variety of different sources. This includes Google and other search engines, TV and radio ads, press releases, teleseminars, articles etc, and of course all forms of social media.

When you're a member of social networks like Facebook and Twitter, even if you're just making friends and having fun, followers can start pouring into your marketing funnel and you have to have somewhere, some way, of capturing those people into your own system, a system that you control.

You never know when you might lose your account on a social networking platform simply by triggering one of their algorithms, even if by accident. If you haven't captured these people into your own system, you may have lost that marketing opportunity. It's always risky to build a business entirely on a third-party platform, or depend on one system for leads. So it's very important to let people know that you have a hub such as a Web site or blog, with your own content.

Usually a blog works best, because you can have a content feed, interactivity in the form of comments, and other Web 2.0 widgets and plugins that allow for the pulling and pushing of content and other forms of interactivity.

Planned Legacy: So establishing a blog or at least some area on their Web site where they can provide more information and possibly gather e-mail addresses is the absolute starting point before you start your social marketing campaign?

Mari Smith: It really is. I mean if you go off and set up a profile on any of the social media sites, all of them ask you to add links to your Web site, your blog etc. You want to put something in there because otherwise, like I said, you know, you're missing out on how you can actually redirect that traffic and redirect the people. I mean you could have Facebook Group, but again I'd just caution not to put your eggs into one social networking basket.

Planned Legacy: Ok, let's say they have their blog or Web site ready to accept and establish relationships with new visitors. What are the different types of personal and business/nonprofit profiles or pages that can be set up on Facebook?

Mari Smith: There are two really distinct features of Facebook that are important to know. The first is the personal profile, and the terms of use stipulate that you can only have one. The account for the personal profile will be set up in your first and last name. Don't set up a personal profile in a charity, nonprofit or business name. And don't set it up in a fake name or as a duplicate account. It's very, very important that you understand that.

The second major feature to understand is called a Facebook page, which is different from a personal profile. A Facebook page is also sometimes called a fan page or a business page. You do not have to have a personal account in order to have a Facebook fan page. Some nonprofits might be well served to just go ahead and check that option if they want to keep their own personal profile separate, maybe it's a non-profit organization with several staff members and they're trying to decide whose personal account is going to be used as a Facebook admin for the organization, but you don't have to do it that way.

If you go to Facebook and you're not logged in, you will see the navigation at the very bottom is the same as whether you're logged in or logged out and it's about advertising, developer's jobs, terms of use etc. If you click on advertising, you can then click on Pages and set up a Facebook fan page for a nonprofit or business.

Alternatively, my recommendation would be to have the Facebook fan page tied to a personal profile account. So whoever is going to be the admin of the Facebook fan page would log into their personal accounts and set up the fan page in the same way as clicking on advertising at the bottom. The interesting thing is that Facebook does not connect the two together. For example, I have my own [Mari Smith: Fan Page on Facebook](#) but I have to become a fan on my own fan page, because Facebook does not tie them together.

With a fan page, you can have unlimited fans and you can click a button that says update and send a message to all your fans. You can have hundreds, thousands even millions of fans. American President Barack Obama's fan page on Facebook has almost six million fans. One click of a button and he can message six million people on Facebook. That could easily be you, your company or your nonprofit on Facebook.

Planned Legacy: Ok, so a Facebook fan page, business page or nonprofit page are identical. What about Facebook groups?

Mari Smith: Facebook groups can be terrific and do have some advantages. You can message your group members (up to 5,000) directly into their e-mail inbox. You can have a group with hundreds, thousands, even millions of members, but you cannot measure them beyond 5000 and there are reasons for these restrictions. They don't want spammers coming in and abusing the system. As an example, Facebook groups are often built around a special interest, specific cause, if somebody's writing a book or if they have a special event. There's actually a Facebook application called Events.

I really like the Events function. You can have an event on your page. The name of your page could be the organization name, it could be the name of the host of the event, or the name of the group could be the host of the event. Hope it's not too convoluted here, but you go to Facebook Events and you can set that up. So once you've set up different features within these, you can capitalize on them. A nonprofit could for sure.

Planned Legacy: So would an organization use all three types of pages on Facebook, a personal profile page, fan page and a group? Could they make them all work together?

Mari Smith: You could definitely make them work together. I had actually written a blog post about that very topic because people ask me about that quite a bit. Actually, the number one reason to have a fan page or a business page is because it gets indexed by Google. It's one of the few features that gets fully indexed by Google, so you can get top search engine rankings in some cases. Facebook is the fifth most trafficked Web site in the world, so you can capitalize on that. For example, my Facebook fan page is called Mari Smith - Relationship and Buzz Marketing Specialist. If you go to Google and you type in "buzz marketing specialist," invariably my page is number one because of that indexing. So we love that. Extra free Google juice as we call it.

Planned Legacy: You have all kinds of functionality added to your personal profile page on Facebook. It appears you also pull in your content from other sources. That seems to be a valuable use of Facebook. Are there any issues with possible duplicate content? Is there anything in particular related to this that you would recommend?

Mari Smith: I don't worry too much about duplicate content because you never know when someone is going to see your information directly on your blog or through Twitter or through Facebook or on any of these other different platforms. There are a number of ways to pull in your blog feed and one of them is through the Notes application on Facebook.

That's the one I like to use, and I also like an application called NetworkedBlogs. This application allows you to put a little tab actually, on your personal profile and it says "Blogs." Facebook has now launched a new design for Facebook pages. The new design includes tabbed browsing and the ability to update your status. Pages are almost the same as personal profiles except that they are for organizations. I think this is a very wise move on Facebook's part.

Planned Legacy: Is there anything else you can pull in besides blog feeds? What does FriendFeed do?

Mari Smith: I love FriendFeed. I use FriendFeed extensively. I probably have about 20 feeds coming into FriendFeed and really it's two things. FriendFeed is an aggregator, so anything that has a feed can be added and aggregated into one long feed. It is also a social network and a micro blogging site. It often "competes" with Twitter. I know a lot of tech guys and girls who like to use FriendFeed instead, or as well as, Twitter. I pretty much set it and forget it. I think my FriendFeed currently has Flickr, YouTube, Twitter, parts of Facebook and my own blogs. It also has BackType, which I really like. BackType creates a feed out of any comment that you make on other people's blogs.

You pull all that into FriendFeed and you have the FriendFeed application on your Facebook profile and now you have a whole bunch of content. There could be some duplication. Someone might see your tweet on Twitter and they might see the same tweet on FriendFeed, and they might see the same tweet on Facebook, but the chance of one person tracking your every move all over the Internet, all over these multiple sites, is highly unlikely. So I don't worry too much about duplicate content.

Planned Legacy: So if you have a nonprofit or business and you have one employee assigned to participate on Twitter, Flickr and a number of other social networks etc. you could pull all those feeds into FriendFeed and send them back into Facebook as a means of promoting your organization? I mean, you could actually have one person doing all this for your organization, a full time employee?

Mari Smith: Interestingly enough, I saw recently Shel Israel had written blog post entitled: [An Open Letter to CEOs: Don't Cut Social Marketing Staff](#), and he talked about how if you're downsizing, rightsizing whatever you are doing in your company, getting rid of staff, and just trying to turn back expenses, the last person you want to get off your team is someone who is handling your social networking. In fact, you want to go out and incur that expense because that person is the one who will reap you the greatest rewards.

You would want to have a full time, dedicated member of staff handling your social networking. Not just handling in terms of participating in social media, but also handling reputation management, monitoring all the different keywords, all the different conversations people are having related to your organization, whether negative, positive or neutral.

Planned Legacy: Can you expand a bit on the importance of reputation management, anything organizations should be aware of?

Mari Smith: Reputation management when social networking is absolutely critical and there are certain things you need to know. For example, I think people absolutely vastly, grossly underestimate the power of Twitter.

There was a story about a consultant going off to speak to a FedEx office, I don't remember the town, but he went on Twitter and tweeted something like, "I'd die if I had to live in this town." It's just like an inner thought, and I think that is what happens with Twitter. Some people think that it's no big deal that they are sharing things like this.

Well the guy gets to the FedEx offices, and somebody there was on Twitter, and they saw his tweet and they basically let him do his presentation, but they just treated him with disdain. It was very embarrassing for him. It was all over Twitter, all over the media.

On the positive side, when the plane went down in the Hudson River, someone immediately took a photo with his cell phone, uploaded it to Twitter, and ended up all over the international media on the front page.

Planned Legacy: What about companies or organizations like Zappos.com, which allow their employees to use Twitter as part of their culture? Isn't it kind of a double-edged sword? How do they make sure they are managing their reputations properly?

Mari Smith: In my opinion, Zappos is like the poster child for social media. You can see an aggregation of all their employee's tweets at <http://twitter.zappos.com/>. I believe there are 438 Zappos employees on Twitter. I recently had the great fortune to share the stage twice actually with Tony Hsieh, the CEO of Zappos, in Washington D.C. and then again in Las Vegas. Tony is also on Twitter at <http://twitter.com/zappos>.

I think Zappos actually reached a billion dollars in sales in seven to nine years. They started out selling shoes online and they've grown now into selling clothing. Tony's role model is Richard Branson of Virgin fame. People joke about it, saying he's about to have his own airline, but how he utilizes Twitter is fascinating. And this is literally fresh from the horse's mouth from a couple of conferences last week - Tony talked about how they provide Twitter training for all employees.

The instructions that Zappos gives their employees is to use their best judgment. They literally give their employees free reign. They might be tweeting about going down to the pub and having a drink with some friends or whatever they're doing, but nothing ever grossly inappropriate. You just won't find that, because of the company culture. This is what's so beautiful about how Zappos runs as a company. They have these 10 core values, they have their unique company culture and everything else just works for them as a result.

Planned Legacy: There's no doubt that Zappos is an amazing company, and in a class of its own when it comes to social media, but what about organizations that are just getting started with social media? Where do they start? Using Facebook as an example, how would new people go about making friends?

Mari Smith: Well first of all, they can upload their e-mail address book. Whether they're using Outlook or any other Web-based e-mail systems, that will get them started. Groups are also a great place where they can find good people to add as friends. And also by just doing a direct search for old friends and some of the top people they admire. These people could be from within their industry, they could be bloggers, book authors, seminar speakers they've seen. On Facebook you have to be somewhat cautious about how fast you build your friend list. You can't grow your network too fast or they clamp down on you or ensure a countdown or give you a spam warning.

Twitter is different. On Twitter you can follow up to 2000 people without them batting an eyelid. I do not recommend that you go out tonight and follow 2000 people though. If you're following 2000 people and nobody is following you back, it looks very spammy. You probably want to grow your Twitter following fairly organically, maybe in chunks of a few hundred.

There are sites that you can search for people specifically and you can also use the Twitter search engine at <http://search.twitter.com/>. You can find out what people are saying in real time and reach out and connect - Twitter is very instantaneous. You can actually see some results on Twitter much much faster that you can on some other sites.

Planned Legacy: Are there any restriction on the types of media and content you can post on Facebook?

Mari Smith: Well, Facebook content is a touchy subject for a lot people, especially the likes of artists, because basically what happens when you sign up for a Facebook account, is that you grant them a license to use your content, whether it be text, images, photos, videos, you name it.

People misunderstand and they get very territorial in saying that now Facebook owns their content. No, they don't own it. You grant them a license and the reason you want to grant them that license is because of the feeds and their ability to propagate your information all over the site. Otherwise you would just have a profile that nobody could see and nobody could interact with. You wouldn't have anything going in the feeds.

I think people just misunderstand the power of what it means to grant this license. I'm like, "Okay, yes please," I want people to see my content all over Facebook. I'm glad that they have that feature.

Planned Legacy: Do you know of any examples of Facebook applications that might be of good use for nonprofit organizations?

Mari Smith: Facebook has recently resurrected a feature called marketplace and given it a new look. They have also partnered it with a site called <http://www.oodle.com/>, which allows you to sell items and donate the profits to various causes, charities and non-profit organizations. As you feature the items you are selling, you can donate them all to organizations such as UNICEF, the Sierra Club, the Boys and Girls Club, you name it. You get to choose.

Planned Legacy: I think you have covered almost everything here but we need to get into a little bit about training. Is there anything you have not mentioned about social marketing etiquette? Have we discussed everything that needed to be talked about?

Mari Smith: Pretty much, I think I will just say a couple of more things about Twitter in particular because it is interesting. Twitter seems at first glance to be so much simpler than Facebook, which has many different compliance features and a lot of layers that you can really drill deep into and get more mileage out of. With Twitter, you sign up and you've got this one box that gives you 140 characters and asks you, "What are you doing?"

But Twitter is infinitely more complex than Facebook because there are a lot of different unspoken rules, etiquette and conduct, one of them being whether to follow people back or not.

You will invariably see more women than men who will follow everybody back. Men for some reason, don't follow people back as much. I was just looking at somebody's account. He has 30,000 followers and he only follows 600 back. I am saying "only" but there are different schools of thought. Frankly, I choose to follow everybody back. If they are spammers they are going to get shut down anyway. I'm not worried about that, but when you follow someone back you're basically telling them that that, "Hey, thank you for being interested in what I have to say. I too, am interested in what you have to say."

Following someone back on Ttitter also allows you to send each other direct (private) messages. If someone is trying to reach you privately (they do not want to tweet you in public), as long as you are following each other, they can do so.

Planned Legacy: What about someone who wants to promote their cause, products or services on Twitter? Some people have said they might do self promotion in one out of 10 or 20 tweets. Are there any unwritten rules with regards to this?

Mari Smith: Who I am online, offline, in person, over the phone, over the Internet or over the Web cam is one and the same. I am completely congruent and that is one of the greatest compliments that people can give me. So in my case there is no difference as to whether I am chit-chatting with somebody and I am tweeting you know, with some tweets going back and forth, and when I am promoting something.

If I am actually forwarding a link or having people go over and look at my program, or I'm promoting other programs, nine times out of ten that will be an affiliate link and I have no qualms about doing that because the way that I do it is so natural.

It's not like, "Oh, here is Mari in her chit chat mode," and "Oh, there is Mari in her marketing mode." Because here is the thing, a saying I heard. On the social networks, when the marketers move in the members move out. Therefore, the secret is to become a member. On Twitter, you want to be one of the "peeps" as they call it.

Sometimes you literally have to set a timer and say "Okay, I'm going to participate for 10 minutes in the morning and 10 minutes in the afternoon and maybe 10 minutes in the evening." Just try to make the time to interact, converse and show that you care. Remember the saying, "People don't care how much you know until they know how much you care."

Planned Legacy: So as long as you are genuine you will do just fine on the social networks?

Mari Smith: Yes, precisely.

Planned Legacy: It seems that if you are genuine and you get along with people, you attract like-minded individuals, often of similar intelligence and with similar interests.

Mari Smith: That's very true. There is this wonderful book by Seth Godin called Tribes, and you're probably familiar with it. It's a short read but packs a punch, and he talks about being a leader and the fact that people can smell or sense or feel when the leader has an agenda. And so, one school of thought is to go out there and look for your tribe to lead.

Another school of thought utilized by a colleague of mine who has done very well online, The Barefoot Executive, Carrie Wilkerson, says that if you are a leader, just go out and lead. Your following will build themselves. Your tribe will show up just by you being a leader. Often the leader will be the first person to do something, but also by just out carving their niche, really focusing and owning it, by providing a ton of value.

A leader can't always be all over the place and all scattered. I have so many people in my periphery awareness, I'll call it, where I like the person and could send them some business, but I have no idea what they do.

Planned Legacy: If someone wanted to learn more about Facebook and how to set up their personal page they could look at your profile as an example, but isn't your full profile limited to only your friends? And you're already at your 5000 friend limit. Where else would you recommend a person go to learn more about Facebook, Twitter, social and relationship marketing? Where would they start?

Mari Smith: Well, people can see quite a bit of my Facebook profile without being a friend of mine at <http://www.mari-smith.com/facebook/>. I currently have 5,000 friends, which is the maximum, and 1600 pending friend requests. So it gets a little crazy, but the good news I've heard from a reliable source is that Facebook is going to be lifting the friend limit this year. People can certainly see my fan page at <http://www.marismith.com/fanpage> and I also have my blog at <http://www.whyfacebook.com>.

For Facebook and Social Marketing programs, I have a light introductory version at <http://www.socialmarketingmethod.com> and my new quick start program, which is at <http://www.quickstartsocialmedia.com>. The latter provides live virtual training on the Web and it's great for people who don't do too well with self study.

Planned Legacy: What if someone is looking for more advanced training or consulting with regards to social marketing? Do you have a coaching program? Do you offer consulting services?

Mari Smith: Yes, actually I do. I have advanced programs, one-on-one programs and coaching classes and I also offer private consulting. People can learn more about these programs and consulting services at: <http://www.marismith.com/coaching-consulting-services/>. I also just recently launched a new program at <http://www.MentorWithMari.com>, where we do protégé training for people who would like to become a Certified Social Media Specialist.

Planned Legacy: Do you have any predictions or comments on the future of social marketing or Internet marketing in general?

Mari Smith: Yes, well I think social networking sites in niche markets, like we talked about with realtors, will continue to evolve. And women are really doing well on social networks and will continue to flourish on these sites.

And right now there is nothing out there that can compare with Twitter. A year ago their site was down 30% of the time, more than any other social network. They had the most downtime and yet they had the most loyal following. People just kept coming back and coming back. There are other sites that are trying to emulate Twitter, but people are very loyal to Twitter.

I think we will continue to see massive uptake of social networks and social media in general. Companies, businesses large and small, nonprofits, politicians, celebrities, news anchors, they are all figuring out that social marketing is the hottest phenomenon on the planet.

Twitter is the fastest growing social network right now, but Facebook is determined to dominate the whole niche and they are doing a great job of it. Facebook has over 200 million members and they are headed heartily towards half a billion. Their number one focus is growth and they just recently released an unprecedented announcement about inviting and including their members in the development of their terms of use policies.

People will actually have a voice and vote on certain terms of use - very smart move. I just have huge admiration for Facebook Founder Mark Zuckerberg for doing something like that. He receives a lot of flak from the industry or media but I like what he has done. Mark has a Facebook fan page at <http://www.facebook.com/markzuckerberg> and you can also follow him on Twitter at <http://twitter.com/finkd>.

There are going to be more and more social networking and social media tools. I think this is very good news for application developers. We're also going to see more people like Joel Comm (also on Twitter at <http://twitter.com/joelcomm>), somebody I follow closely and who I've worked with on different projects. He's a great marketer, very creative and he's working on texting and mobile applications – the next big thing. You can see some of what he is doing at <http://textcastlive.com>.

Social networks aren't going anywhere, they're here to stay, but being able to deliver your content via iPhones and other mobile devices is huge. Mobile marketing is going to be absolutely monstrous. We're just on the cusp of it right now. And text messages have a 99% open rate, you can't say that for e-mail.

Planned Legacy: So Mari, tell us, really, how do you have time for all of this? How do you do it?

Mari Smith: It's with great stress sometimes, but always with great joy. My husband is very patient and I'm blessed with a lot of great personal friends and family. I feel very fortunate and the opportunities that are flying in are just absolutely tremendous and very, very high level. But I'm still getting a lot of other opportunities and I want to be able to refer those, so that's one of the reasons we started the mentoring program. And, I do have a business support team. I have eight people on my team and I recently hired a process manager who specializes in making businesses into fully processed and systematized structures.

Planned Legacy: Well, I think we have covered just about everything Mari, so I guess we can wrap it up now. Your time has been much appreciated! You're just full of knowledge!

Mari Smith: Thank you!

About Mari Smith:

Dubbed the “Pied Piper of Facebook” by FastCompany.com, Mari Smith is a Relationship Marketing Specialist and Social Media Business Coach.

Through her consulting and training business, Mari helps independent professionals, entrepreneurs and business owners to accelerate their business profits using an integrated social marketing strategy, with particular focus on Facebook and Twitter.

Mari has a strong background in the world of relationships and Internet technology, making social media her ideal arena. She is passionate about showing fellow professionals how to develop powerful profitable relationships using social media. Mari currently has well over 7,000 friends and fans on Facebook and a loyal following of over 18,000 members on Twitter.

After applying Mari’s proven social marketing methods, her clients typically experience a significant increase in traffic, subscribers, clients, affiliates, lucrative strategic alliances and targeted media attention. Mari and her clients have been known to land \$30,000 single contracts and earn as much as \$40,000 in one week, even \$16,000 in one hour, directly from Facebook and Twitter.

Mari is an in-demand speaker and travels the United States and internationally to provide social media keynotes and in-depth training.

Canadian by birth, Scottish by heritage, Mari currently lives in San Diego, California.

Connect with Mari Online:

On Twitter: <http://twitter.com/marismith>

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On Facebook: <http://www.facebook.com/people/Mari-Smith/566610867>

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We look forward to hearing from you!