

# Internet Marketing 101: Part 1



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Facebook. Pinterest. Tumblr. Twitter. A lot of different social media outlets. Do you know which ones will benefit you? Will *any* of them benefit you?

This is part 1 of my interview with Steve Wolgemuth of [YDOP](#), an Internet marketing firm in Lancaster, Pennsylvania. When a company is looking to up their Internet marketing game, I refer them to Wolgemuth and his team to help them with their website and online presence.

Recently, Wolgemuth wrote a blog on his site called [“The Way You Think About Social Media Marketing Should Change in 2015. Here’s Why”](#). That blog post inspired me to interview him for *Turf* magazine.

**Q: A lot of lawn care and landscape businesses use Facebook. Some of these companies use that platform over maintaining a website. Is this a good idea? Why or why not?**

**A:** I believe that having a website as a central platform is a better idea than just using a Facebook page. A website is typically the “hub” of an overall online presence. In the long run, having a good website and continually developing it is the best decision for a business. Facebook’s recent decision to give businesses virtually no “reach” to consumers without paying for it is an example of the vulnerability a business is creating with not having their own online assets. Even more important, having a business website aligns with a local search engine optimization strategy. This strong “share of voice” on search engines is a powerful way to get new customers at the most important time possible; when they’re looking for lawn care/landscape services.

**Q: I read on another social media blog that buying advertising on social media is going to be a trend in 2015. Do you agree or disagree? More importantly is this a good strategy for lawn and landscape businesses? Why or why not?**

**A:** I agree that we'll likely see an uptick in buying advertising on social media in 2015. That's partly because a lot of small businesses haven't tried it yet and this will be the year for them to experiment. Of course, the other reason is because social media platforms like Facebook are making it difficult for businesses to have any "reach" to audiences without paying for that visibility.

One reason businesses in the green industry should consider this marketing method is because of the unprecedented capabilities for targeting. For example, a business that has the email addresses of potential clients could use those email addresses to create a custom audience (of Facebook users with those email addresses). They then could pay to have their message reach that precise group of people. These same businesses can target very specific geographic areas, and other specific demographics. The targeting capabilities on social platforms are amazing.

I also predict that, like Google AdWords, a lot of businesses will try this form of advertising, fail at it, then quit. Fact is, it isn't unlike any other type of interruptive advertising. People ignore it. Success is found only in creating messages that resonate with the intended audience and great user experiences that are just one click away. Advertising on social platforms isn't the answer. Good advertising might be in a variety of places.

**[Read Baffled By Social Media? Get Help here.](#)**

**Q: How do lawn and landscape companies determine the purpose of their social media strategy?**

**A:** What's a social media strategy? I don't think we would ask, "How would a business determine the purpose of their telephone strategy?"

Let's not get hung up on the tools. There are many businesses that should not be using social media. That flies in the face of what many Internet marketing companies would tell you. I'm here to say that I've seen many more businesses waste time and money and getting nowhere in their marketing because they believed the lie that using social media has significant intrinsic value. It doesn't.

One of the questions any local business should ask is, "Is anyone in our company savvy enough to champion this marketing effort?" If the answer is "no," then there are probably some other local Internet marketing companies that might bring better returns. Local search engine optimization, website conversion optimization and reputation management (garnering positive online reviews) are three things that come to mind.

Another question a local business might ask is whether or not it has an attribute that might unite or resonate with its community. The **[PA Dutch Visitors Bureau](#)** used YDOP's social media strategist, Paul Anater, to create a public relations campaign with Instagram. He started an online photography contest using the hashtag **[#lancastergram](#)**. With a goal of 800 entries, the campaign exceeded 6,800 and became a story worthy of a 20-minute spot on public radio and an article in the local newspaper. Paul recognized that many

of Lancaster's residents shared a love of the county's landscape and landmarks; that, and an interest in photography. The campaign connected a community, all united around a common passion: Lancaster County. The social media platform wasn't why it worked, and use of a hashtag wasn't either. And this wasn't a social media strategy. It was a photography contest that leveraged a fast-emerging social channel.

Read Part 2 [here](#) where Steve shares how investing in a website is sometimes smarter than solely focusing on social media channels.

[Read Anatomy of a Blog here.](#)