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Tips for Integrating Social Media and E-Commerce

by Susan Johnston on August 16, 2013

When Jessica Klein, director of e-commerce at [Carol's Daughter](#), sought to grow the company's social media presence, she didn't have many internal resources to devote to the job. So



Carol's Daughter, a seller of beauty products, partnered with [ShopSocially](#), a cloud-based service that helps retailers add "social commerce" features to their own websites.

In October 2012, Carol's Daughter rolled out ShopSocially's [Get-a-Fan app](#), first on an affiliate, pay-per-sale basis, then on a fixed-price basis. The app, which appeared in a slide-out box on the product and category pages of the retailer's website, asked customers, "Would you like to become our fan on Facebook? If yes, we'll give you 10 percent off," Klein says.

The goal was to build the company's Facebook fan base and to generate sales. Done and done. ShopSocially's social modules account for 8 percent of the retailer's online revenue, and Carol's Daughter has seen its fan base grow by 15 percent since it implemented ShopSocially, according to Klein.

Klein also says the Carol's Daughter is now testing the [Share-a-Purchase app](#), which encourages customers to share through incentives such as online promo codes and converts each share into a testimonial. So far, Klein says the app is averaging about a 20 percent share rate, and "we're getting an excellent conversion rate on the shares."

Social Commerce in Action

Social commerce is a hot trend for online retailers.

ShopSocially recently released an [infographic](#) showing that, from January to June, e-commerce sales from social media traffic have increased by 357 percent compared with the same period in 2012.

Want to get in on the action? The Intuit Small Business Blog asked Klein and Jai Rawat, CEO of ShopSocially, for some tips on using social commerce tools to boost a company's online presence.

- **Get proof of concept.** Klein says testing the Get-a-Fan app on an affiliate basis before switching to a fixed price model allowed her to “prove out the ROI before we were too deep in.” Knowing that the app had worked on a smaller scale gave her a level of comfort as the program rolled out broadly, she says.
- **Offer an incentive.** Encouraging customers to “like” you on Facebook or share their purchases with their friends and followers on social media is nothing new, but incentives give people a more compelling reason to follow through. “Offer them something for participation,” Rawat advises. “Give them a token of appreciation for doing so.”
- **Bring social to e-commerce.** Rawat says many retailers mistakenly try to push products through Twitter or Facebook rather than adding those social elements to their own website. “People are not necessarily looking to buy when they’re on social media, so it goes nowhere,” he says. “They were trying to push commerce on the social channels, but our strategy is to bring social to the e-commerce site.”
- **Don’t interrupt the flow.** When implementing apps such as Share-Your-Purchase or Get-a-Fan, make sure they don’t disrupt the customer experience. “You don’t want it to interfere with the flow from research to browsing to checkout,” Klein says. “The fact that we’re able to do that easily without distracting the customers is key to our success.”

About [Susan Johnston](#)

Susan Johnston is a [freelance writer and blogger](#) who specializes in writing about business and personal finance. Her articles have appeared in or on The Boston Globe, Dance Retailer News, GetCurrency.com, Mint.com, PARADE Magazine, WomenEntrepreneur.com, and other places.

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Good insights. Small businesses always have multiple demands on their resources. Looks like these social modules are both easy to add and effective. Worth checking it out.

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