

Dharma Marketing

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Social Media Marketing - Beyond fancy Asana pictures

When we think of social media profiles of yogis, most of us imagine young, beautiful bodies photographed in the most athletic Asanas. No wonder so many yoga teachers turn away stating: “Facebook, Instagram and Co are all about the ego and do not match my yogic ideals.” In addition, we observe in ourselves and in our students that

social media ties us to our smartphones and prevents us from living mindfully.

I am here to suggest another perspective on social media as a marketing platform: social media marketing can be the most yogic of all forms of marketing. Why? Because it allows us to reach our students exactly where they are: on their smartphones. Social media is therefore the ideal platform to help our students in their real lives beyond the yoga mat. We can share with them the things that are important for us on our path or fit the heart theme of the yoga class. We can inspire the students to deepen their knowledge and integrate yoga in their daily lives. Also, those students who follow their yoga teachers on Instagram, Facebook etc. and see regular posts that are of value to them, will not mind when the teacher introduces their next workshop on the platform as well – and instead welcome more opportunities for the teacher to add value to their lives.

In addition, yoga teachers on social networks can show themselves authentically and genuinely. The traditional high-praise advertising language, which we know from TV and flyers is not valued in social media. We as teachers can show our personality with strengths and flaws, use our unique language to spread our perspective and message and this way attract exactly the students who would benefit from our classes. I can't imagine any form of advertising that does more justice to “Satya” – one of the basic yogic principles - than an honest social media profile. If we as yoga teachers use social media this way instead of only trying to pose in the most difficult Asanas, we will realize that many yogis can relate to us and that we can be of service to them through our real and honest posts.

Finally, social media is one way to live the yogic community, our “Kula”. People with similar interests, difficulties and stories reach out to us on social

platforms. People don't hang out on social media because they want to buy something, but instead because they want to communicate - we are social beings after all. Most of them are eager to help. Not convinced? Try asking for advice or tips on Facebook or Instagram – lean back and be amazed!

My firm conviction that social media can be used as a dharmic marketing tool is countered by the fact that social networks are highly addictive. They deliberately use our need for surprise and reward to tie us to the digital world. There is a great danger that we will overlook what is happening right around us. We can and should be a role model for our students in the use of social media by clearly limiting the time we spend there and communicating that we are not always available. An editorial plan is also a great help. You can plan your weekly posts in advance and also include some fixed times for socializing, i.e. sharing and commenting on other people's posts.

I look forward to your authentic, valuable contributions on social media that will help us grow and share the benefits of a yoga practice.

Namasté,

Bianca Fritz