

TECHNOLOGY TIMES

“Insider Tips To Make Your Business Run Faster, Easier And More Profitably”

10 Easy Ways To Eliminate E-mail Overload

E-mail driving you crazy? Every time you delete one, do five more show up? Are you finding it impossible to answer every e-mail you receive? If you answered “yes” to any of these questions, you’re not alone! Some people are even declaring e-mail bankruptcy – they dump every e-mail in their inbox and start over. If that’s not an option for you, then here are 10 tips to reduce e-mail overload.

1. **Get a good spam filter.** Even if it saves you just 10 minutes a day, that adds up to over 59 hours a year!
2. **Cancel subscriptions to unwanted mailing lists, and opt-out of LEGITIMATE e-zines.** But be careful! Trying to opt-out of spam e-mails will only alert the sender that they have a LIVE address. Also make sure you are careful to check the “unsubscribe” or “opt-out” box when purchasing items online.
3. **Ask your friends to remove you from joke groups or chain messages.** Simply explain your situation and, if they are good friends, they’ll take you out of their message group.
4. **Don’t post or publish your e-mail on websites.** Spammers will steal it and put it on their lists.
5. **Don’t respond to every e-mail you receive.** Yes, it’s okay NOT to respond to some e-mails. If it’s a group e-mail, don’t respond with ‘okay’ or “:)” – it’s not necessary unless the sender is specifically asking you a question or requesting a response.
6. **Be Succinct.** Restrict your messages to a few sentences. If you can’t, pick up the phone or talk in person. This will avoid the back and forth of e-mail conversation.
7. **Take advantage of subject lines.** If possible, put your question in the subject line, or your message. If that’s not possible, make your subject line very descriptive so the recipient knows what your message is about. Here’s another tip; create a set of codes with your coworkers and place them in the subject line to help them process and prioritize messages. For example, use “FYI” for informational messages. Use “AR” for action requires and “URG” for urgent messages.
8. **Block time to answer your e-mail and fight the temptation to check your e-mail every few minutes.** You will save yourself a lot of time and be far more productive.
9. **Respond to messages when you open them so you can only read them once.** If the e-mail requires an action step, schedule the action step and delete it from your inbox.
10. **Set time aside in the morning and the evening to process your inbox.** Shoot for a completely empty inbox. File messages you need to keep and set reminder for messages that require you to follow up.



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Brian Curtis
President

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Williston, VT

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Are You Using Social Media To Market Your Business? Here's Why You're Likely To Be Wasting Time And Money On False Marketing Metrics

John Wanamaker is famous for saying, "Half of the money I spend on advertising is wasted; the trouble is, I don't know which half!" With an ever-growing number of sophisticated online tracking tools, you'd think that wasting advertising dollars would be a thing of the past. But, in fact, companies are wasting just as much (if not more!) on online media and advertising due to a number of factors, but mostly because they're confusing *activity* with *results*.

In business, the only thing we can take to the bank is money – checks, credit card payments, cash and any other forms of monetary deposits. Leading indicators to revenue, as we all know, are paying clients (orders, contracts, sales) and actual leads from qualified, genuinely interested prospects. However, much of the social media marketing I see is a heck of a lot of activity metrics (clicks, followers, open rates of e-mail, visitors to a site, etc.) that cannot be directly tied to generating a qualified lead, much less cash in the bank; so, unless someone can directly show me how an increase in Twitter followers turns into more profit for a company, I'm not impressed. In fact, I believe management of all the social media sites ends up taking an enormous amount of time away from more productive lead generation and marketing activities and opens the door for customer service and PR failures.

For example, if you have a Facebook fan page, you now need to monitor it daily – even hourly – for negative client comments, which are now public for the world to see, unfiltered and out of context, instead of a client simply e-mailing you their complaint, where it can be addressed privately. Further, clients will assume they can message and/or post their requests to your Facebook page instead of going through the proper channels; if you fail to address their request in a timely manner because it didn't go through your normal process of handling such requests, you've just created a customer service failure that is open for the public to see.

To be clear, I'm not suggesting that you should shut down all social media sites and marketing; there are situations where it's a very smart and strategic part of a business strategy. But, as my mother would say, "Don't jump off a cliff just because everyone else is." Be sure that whatever you're doing online in social media can be measured and quantified to tie in to key sales, service and growth goals you have for your organization, and do not accept "getting our name out there" as a sufficient result for your marketing efforts.

Shiny New Gadget Of The Month:



THE AMAZON ECHO: LIKE SIRI FOR YOUR HOME

It's not Rosie the Robot, but your first voice request to Amazon's new Echo moves you one step closer to living like the Jetsons... Think of it as a plugged-in version of Apple's Siri or Microsoft's Cortana.

This "smart" speaker in a 9¼ x 3¼-inch cylinder can order products, turn off lights, set a timer, look up and give you sports scores, read you a book from Audible and more.

You might even get it to tell you terrible jokes...

It won't replace a high-end stereo, but its sound quality compares with any Bluetooth speaker, and it can fill a good-sized room in your home.

Bottom line: Echo offers hands-free, at-home audio access to just about anything on the web, with better sound than a smartphone or tablet.

All in all, it can make your life easier. And maybe just a little more fun.

Passion Is Powerful

A few months ago I had the pleasure of working with Germania Insurance at their annual sales conference. The night before, at dinner, I was fortunate to sit at the table with Matt Sodalak. I use the word "fortunate" because I was about to witness what I would best describe as TRUE PASSION for your profession.

I asked a question of Matt that I have asked countless times, "How do you like being in the insurance business?" His response surprised me. Without any hesitation he said, "I love it. It's my job for life."

In all my years of interviewing people, I have never had anyone say, "This is my job for life." The passion, sincerity and conviction in his voice just knocked me over. He sat forward in his chair and followed his statement with, "I love helping people, and I get to do it every day."

There was NO DOUBT in my mind the passion Matt felt for his job, career and the company he worked for. I felt that anyone who had Matt as their agent was so fortunate. He never mentioned commissions ... he talked the whole time about protecting his clients and how people counted on him to make sure they had the proper coverage in case something disastrous happened.

Unfortunately, something disastrous did happen; Texas has been slammed this year with enormous floods destroying millions of dollars in property and causing havoc to people's lives. I heard from Matt last week and he shared a quick story about one of the people who works in their claims department. She said,

"Being in the insurance business, all of our customers' problems become our problems and we have to be here to help them through it... that's why they do business with us and that's what keeps our lights on; you gotta love it or you are at the wrong place!"

It doesn't surprise me that anyone who works with Matt would also have a passion for their job; he would attract other people who would want to do, help and care for others. Let me share a few anonymous quotes with you about the Power of Passion:

Maybe the one thing that is keeping your career from taking off ... is that you aren't looking at it as a career; it is simply a job to you; and your customers, associates, managers and boss can sense that.

There is always going to be frustration, toil, hassles, problems, glitches, hitches and difficulties in any job (that is why they call it work). But, if you look at it from a different perspective ... that what you are doing is helping people in some way ... then it all becomes worthwhile.

Galileo, the great Italian astronomer, physicist, engineer, philosopher and mathematician, once said: "Passion is the genesis of genius." So, let your passion become the start of something great for your career.



Robert Stevenson is a highly sought after, internationally known speaker. He is the author of the best-selling books *How to Soar Like An Eagle in a World Full of Turkeys* and *52 Essential Habits For Success*. Robert is a graduate of the Georgia Institute of Technology (Georgia Tech) and is a former All-American Athlete. He started his first business at 24 and has owned several companies. Robert has international sales experience dealing in over 20 countries, and his client list reads like a Who's Who in Business. He has shared the podium with such renowned names as Generals Colin Powell and Norman Schwarzkopf, Former President George H.W. Bush, Anthony Robbins and Steven Covey. www.robertstevenson.org/

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Emergency Support 24/7/365

Google Plus: For Geeks Only? What You Need To Know Now

Is Google Plus a bust? Or is it still a channel to be reckoned with if you don't want to lose touch with your customers?

Google Plus – aka “Google+” – is a social network built by Google. It's been connected to other Google products. It was the birthplace of Hangouts, for instance, now a standalone product.

But things are changing. Google is dismantling Google+ for parts. What will remain may be just a stream, yet it will likely endure due to its die-hard fan base.

So how relevant is Google+ to your business?

The answer is, it depends on your customer base. Are your ideal customers using it? If not, perhaps you can safely ignore it.

However, if you already have a following on Google+, or if you are targeting new customers who use it, here are three ways you can leverage it for your business:

Get Found Fast

It's no surprise that Google Search favors Google+ posts. With a little reader engagement, your post can show up on page one in just a few days.

Give to Gain

Content that helps you target prospects with a simple “thank you” to folks who engage can work wonders.

Build Micro-Lists with Circles

Here's a little-known secret: For circles up to 100, Google+ allows you to “Also send e-mail.” This can be a great way to build tightly segmented lists.

Depending on your audience, Google+ may still be the best way to connect with your customers.

Who Else Wants To Win A \$25 Gift Card?

The Grand Prize Winner of last month's Trivia Challenge Quiz is Lisa Cummings of Middlebury, VT! She was the first person to correctly answer my quiz question from last month: **What were the first featured menu items at McDonald's? a) Hamburgers b) Hot Dogs c) Grilled Cheese Sandwiches d) Tacos**

The correct answer was **b) Hot Dogs**

Now, here's this month's trivia question. The winner will receive a \$25 Gift Card to Majestic 10 Cinema .

At the end of the Pixar Movie Toy Story 3, who owns Woody?

- a) Hannah b) Sid
C) Andy d) Bonnie

*E-mail me with your answer!
Misty@DominionTech.com*

On A Side Note... Could Your Laptop Battery Revolutionize The Way We Drive?



If you like hot cars and green tech, you may have started hankering for a Tesla as far back as 2008...

Yet, aside from cool looks and speed, did you know the simple design edge that's putting Tesla in the spotlight?

Other car builders, like Nissan, GM and even Mercedes, have electric cars on the road. But they all use costly, high-tech lithium ion batteries.

Tesla, on the other hand, simply uses the type of batteries you have in your laptop – thousands of them...

With over a billion of these cells made every year, their design and pricing is driven by the same fierce competition that drives the consumer market.

And if Tesla Motors can put a car on the road with enough battery life, they may just revolutionize the way we drive – like Henry Ford's Model T did over a century ago.