



*Ok, today I've got a guest and we're going to be talking about social media. My guest has been in this social media realm for a long time and very experienced with it. And I want to find out what's new and exciting and things that we can practically apply in our business. So, I'd like to welcome Michelle MacPhearson.*

**Michelle:** Hey, James. How you doing today?

**James:** Doing well. Thanks. It's been a busy day here in the middle of winter in Sydney but it's quite sunny. It's shorts and T-shirt weather.

**Michelle:** I know. I see the pictures you put up on Facebook. I'm a little jealous.

**James:** Aww, don't be jealous. We all get to choose. Now, speaking of pictures. My impression of social media is that it's really lends itself towards pictures and the use of pictures and I'd love to find out your thoughts on that.

**Michelle:** Yeah, I think that we've seen a big transition. I mean, for better or worse, people used to read books and then they started reading articles online and then it became tweets and now it's like pictures with the quote.

So people are consuming a lot more visual imagery or information than they used to and we've seen that transition as sites like Instagram, as sites like Pinterest have become so popular. So I think that visual marketing or picture image marketing is an important part of one's strategy today.

**James:** OK so how do we use image marketing? Let's talk about who should be using it and how we should use it.

**Michelle:** I think that, you know., you kind of have to look at your target market is before you can figure out exactly where you should be placing your images. You know, there's always going to be a portion of your market that prefers to consume information visually. Just like we do stuff with video, we do stuff with podcast; do stuff with written blog posts.

There's always going to be people who like imagery so that's just one of the different ways that people learn so it's good to consider for that alone. Then, in terms of distributing your content, there are sites out there like Pinterest, like Instagram. They are visual mediums so those are going to require you to have something visually appealing for you to even tap into that marketplace.

And if you got you know, for example, a retail business, e-commerce kind of thing then like it's a no-brainer. You've got to be on Pinterest. If you've got an audience that's primarily a younger market that you're going after, then Instagram is a really great place for you to be because that is who is on that site and that's who's making up those demographic.

So you know, you got to consider who your audience is as far as where you're going to go to siphon traffic away.

**James:** OK, so I get it. If I was selling handbags or bicycles or running shoes, I can understand it would be super easy to take pictures of those physical items. What about if you've got a mastermind or Internet information products which a lot of my audience would have. How could they use image marketing?

**Michelle:** Well I mean, here's an example that I saw last week that I thought was super interesting. The Pottstown Pennsylvania Police Department started using Pinterest to put pictures of the most wanted criminals in their area and they used it just

like, here in the U.S. we used to put pictures of the most wanted up at the Post Office. Well, they don't do that anymore.

So now we're doing it on Pinterest. At least this police department is. They actually were able to measure and saw an increase of I believe it was 57% of folks calling their tip line and saying "Hey you know, I know where that guy is! You should come and get him." So I was like, number 1, super impressed that the police department knew their numbers like that, like good on them.

Then also, it was just a good example of how one can use these kinds of sites in ways that we don't necessarily think of. Of course if you sell handbags, yeah go get a Pinterest account, like duh. But here's a police department. If you're in the Internet marketing space, what can you put on those kinds of sites that could appeal to people?

Quotes. Inspirational Quotes are really, really, really big on Pinterest and actually on Instagram as well. People love sharing that stuff. Statistics. Infographics. And then if you're kind of branding yourself as a personality too, I mean a big part of social media is just that whole sharing you as a person, not just as that business person but your life as a whole.

So you can use these image based sites to share other aspects of your life. You know, pictures of your cat, pictures of the coffee of you in the morning. That kind of stuff and people actually really do respond positively to it. I think that you do some of that yourself. Don't you, James?

**James:** Oh yeah. A lot of people, like Bob the Cockatoo that comes to visit me and...

**Michelle:** Yeah, I love Bob!



**James:** And there are like Burger Fridays I caught off and post a picture on Friday. Sometimes I sort of cheat, it might be a steak but I call it a burger with no bun and then if I put something vegetarian or hippy then I get ridiculed by the men.

So, I've noticed that whole personality around pictures and it's also really useful to put a picture of you with somebody else and it seems to get shared across that person's audience and people can start connecting the dots of which circles you move in and who you know and start leveraging your relationships that way as well.

**Michelle:** Yeah, I'm here. I'm doing this. I'm hanging out with these people and then it becomes that social proof, too of "Oh if you're hanging out with those people, then you must be an authority because they're an authority," absolutely.

**James:** How do you do it in a way that's not braggy? I noticed that some people, the only stuff that they put is sort of... I'd say, a little bit over the top on the aspirational front. They start dropping all the text callouts or they're posting results shots of all the sales they made or all of the sales their student made. You know, I put them into the brag category. Can you go overboard with it?

**Michelle:** Yeah! It is a fine line because everybody's tolerance for that will be different. I suspect that you and I may have a lower tolerance for something like that than some people...

**James:** I have a very low tolerance. I try to work out how to deny that from my feed but not necessarily unfriend someone who I would still want to be, you know, friends with on Facebook. I just don't want all the braggy. It sort of makes me want a little bit of vomit come in the corner of my mouth.

**Michelle:** Oh yeah. So let me tell you what we do for our clients because this is what we recommend. On one's Facebook page, let's say you've got five updates a day, just as a number. One of those might point back to something that is like your website, your article that was really good. Your, you know, accolades from so and so in the marketplace, that kind of thing.

So basically, one bragging post per day. And then the rest, let people get to know you. Doesn't mean that it's not about you the rest of those posts. But let people get to know you in that social aspect because it is social media after all and people aren't there to be sold to all the time and they aren't there just to hear about how wonderful you are even if you are super awesome. But you know, you got to break it up a little bit.

**James:** Yeah, so mix it up. And I found also using a sort of two-step strategy seems

to work well where, let's say we do a podcast like this. We'll have this broadcast as an interview on my site. Then we have a custom made picture of you and I podcasting. And we use that as our thumbnail and that's what I'll syndicate on social media when I say that, I'm talking about Facebook and Google Plus and then I'll re-tweet that. People will see the picture.

And then of course I broadcast an email. That picture, I've found, really helps engagement and people come to the post and they'll see the same picture and it's all very consistent. It's like the promise is there and it is made good. But when I put those little thumbnails on my site, I noticed half the bounce rate which tells me clearly that people are making their choices to what content they want to view based on that image.

**Michelle:** Yeah, you know, we've seen, I think most of your listeners will be able to identify with this, that when you post an image on Facebook, it's generally going to get more feedback than say, a link post or just a text alone. So people are responding to images even outside of say, the Pinterest or Instagram, the image-only sites. You've got to be using them on the other social media sites too because people's response will positively to them.

**James:** Yeah, that is quite interesting. I think when I think about my own Facebook use, it's 99% picture driven. Whether it's a screenshot of something I think could be interesting or... and I also categorize them into sub-folders like action, people, food, coffee and I think by, or scenic. Those are sort of sub-categories and I noticed that some of them get a lot of good response.

If I can somehow pull off an amazing sunset or cloud picture or whatever, a lot of people, I guess it's a humanize sort of thing. People can relate to or put themselves in that moment. So have you got any tips or advice on how we can use, you know how can we create our own pictures or have pictures created for us. What sort of tools are available for us?

**Michelle:** Actually I've got a couple of really good ones bookmarked, that my team has been using. Let me pull one or two of these up for you guys. So, I've been using Photoshop, of course, to do your basic, like text over an image or a colour or something like that so you know just a quote or a stat, we do that.

I do a lot of stuff with my iPhone, take pictures, put a filter in it on Instagram to make it look maybe a little bit more interesting and then put that on my Facebook fanpage with a caption and to let people know what my thought process was when I did that.

Also, there's a lot of really cool little apps on Android and iPhone that will let you add text over your images so that your caption doesn't become that important. So one of those that I've been using a lot of is called Over.

**James:** Yeah I've got that one and also my favourite app is called Camera Plus. It's got some really cool filters in there.

**Michelle:** That's a very good one. I like that one too.

**James:** And Pic Stitch.

**Michelle:** Oh yeah, to make the little photo collages?

**James:** Yeah, to put up those little collages. So my process is take a picture, play with it in one of those apps and save it to my camera roll and then I Facebook it with into their own album. Now I might be doing it all wrong but it's sort of my main process for social media engagement in between syndicating my blog posts which is the real reason I want people there.

**Michelle:** Yeah I think that you said something a minute ago that was key. You said that you divide pictures into scenic and interesting, I think that when people are trying to not be braggy, but they want to say something about an accomplishment, making it interesting is a great way to put a twist on that.

Instead of saying, “Oh wow! I’m awesome and I’ve 75% opt-in rate and don’t you wish you were me,” you could say, “Isn’t it interesting that this converted at 75% whereas this only converted at 55?” The same message is coming across but you’re teaching a little bit and you’re kind of not being so douchy.

**James:** Yeah it’s like if you, I mean, quite often I’ll take a screenshot of a split test and I’ll say, you know it looks like the “confirmed” button beat the “send my training” button seeing a 15% improvement. It’s really offering something very valuable to others who don’t have to run the same test anymore. They could immediately model from that.

So, I’m a big fan of putting out useful content. Now, let’s move on to the next thing. Something that I’m not really familiar with is Pinterest. I do have an account, I have posted pictures there. I haven’t felt that it’s relevant to me because... and I might be wrong with this, I’ve got a mostly male audience and I have a less tangible product but you did tell me at some point that Pinterest gets a very fast result for your customers.

**Michelle:** Yeah, Pinterest is actually, if people are looking for traffic quickly, if it is a niche that we can work with at all in terms of the Pinterest audience, which most we can, but not all, we direct them to Pinterest over the other social media sites.

Over your Facebooks, over your Google Plus, your Twitter, all that stuff because people are going to see actual click throughs and then those actual click throughs become sales at a higher rate than they do on the other social networks.

Statistically, of course not in every case but over the grand majority that’s what we found. Some things, some of the stats that are really interesting is that 70% of Pinterest users agree or 70% of surveyed Pinterest users agree that it is a place to get inspiration on what to buy. So people are literally collecting stuff that they want to buy later. Like...

**James:** Like a vision wall.

**Michelle:** Yeah! Whereas on Facebook they're checking in with their mom. So it's a completely different mindset when people are on Pinterest and what we found, is that we get a lot more click throughs so people see our stuff on Pinterest but then they actually click through and come to our site and then people are actually buying the products because that's what they're doing. That's what they're there for is to collect stuff that they want. So it's huge for people who are retailing.

**James:** Right. So if you're not a retailer, should we be thinking about Pinterest?

**Michelle:** The other thing that is very interesting about Pinterest when I have run some test is that it does have some SEO value alone and let's just say that you never picked up an actual Pinterest buyer from using Pinterest.

The caption on your Pinterest images, they kind of serves as your anchor text and so having a pin on Pinterest with your caption that is your keyword phrase or related to it can boost your rankings and we have been able to prove that in tests that we've run. So it is still valuable for one's SEO.

**James:** Right. That was going to be a question in mind because I'm interested in that. I think a few months ago I took the Pinterest sharing button off my post. However, as a result of this call, my action step is to add that back on and to start syndicating again to Pinterest because I do know some Google webmaster tools. I'm getting a link to each of my new posts because every post has a picture as part of our standard operating procedure.

**Michelle:** And one of the things I really like about Pinterest above say, your Facebook or whatever it is, that the content that you put on it, it lives forever. You know, you put something up on your Facebook page, it's going to be gone in a week, buried in other posts and pretty much no one's ever going to see it again.

But when you put something up on Pinterest, the way that people share things, the way that the site search works, the way that you know, people browse the content means that, whatever you put up, someone is probably going to come across it in the future. It doesn't just get buried like your Twitter or your Facebook does.

So while right now at this moment, Pinterest is not a waterfall of traffic in let's say the B to B world. Although you can leverage it for that with a concentrated effort but it isn't

the same as it is for say, somebody in a retail. But it is growing in those areas. I'm seeing a lot more people talking about, you know, how to get traffic to your blog and that kind of stuff on Pinterest.

And if you are a part of it, now, you're getting the SEO benefit from it now and then as its audience broadens; I think that you will see that click through in real person benefit as time goes on.

**James:** That is a sweet tip. I definitely got a takeaway from that. So, as someone who's operating the space everyday, you've got your own business that provides a done-for-you service especially with the Pinterest stuff but also you do Facebook updates. Who is going to get the most value from focusing on the sort of things that you do?

**Michelle:** I think that, again, retailers need to be on Pinterest and if you're not then that absolutely needs to be your first move over anything else. And then for people who are not retailing consumer goods, we really like leveraging our social media and advice our clients to leverage the social media in the Facebook, Twitter, Google Plus, LinkedIn areas for that brand building, for that market authority, to create that relationship with that audience overtime.

Because it does make such a difference when they know something about you. They know that Bob visits James' balcony and that makes James a little bit more human that he was...

**James:** Some people think it makes me a bit weird.

**Michelle:** No! They're wrong! But you know, hey, they're thinking about you right?

**James:** Exactly.

**Michelle:** The weirdo with the bird. You know, he's that really nice guy. He gives marketing advice... but they're thinking about you.

**James:** It is like the perfect pet. You don't have to keep the cage or whatever. It just comes occasionally and you get to feed it. If I can get it to talk, that would be something pretty cool.

**Michelle:** I think that there's an info product out there that teaches you how to get your bird to talk right?

**James:** Yeah, it's probably legit. OK so, Michelle this has been really useful. If a listener wants to find out more, they can go along to [michellemacpherson.com](http://michellemacpherson.com). I'm

going to spell that because you've got a special extended advanced version of that.

It's Michelle, then M-a-c-P-h-e-a-r-s-o-n dot com. We'll put a link to that in the show notes. I want to thank you for coming on to SuperFastBusiness.com and sharing this stuff. And I do have one favor to ask.

**Michelle:** Yeah, sure.

**James:** If our listeners have questions about this and they post a comment right below this podcast on SuperFastBusiness.com, would you be able to pop along and answer a couple of questions in the comments?

**Michelle:** Oh yeah, absolutely. No problem.

**James:** That'll be sweet and I hope we get you back and answer a few more questions if we get some decent questions to come back for round two and again, thanks for sharing your time with us today, Michelle.

**Michelle:** Sounds good. Thank you, James. Have a good one!

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