

## **Social Networking for Small Towns**

By Becky McCray

Small Town Conference

Crystal Mountain Resort

April 23, 2009

Download the PDF version with links at <http://vault.smallbizsurvival.com>

## **It's all about the people.**

Social networking is a way to connect with other people. Fight small town isolation!

- Expand your perspective
- Connect with vendors and partners
- Learn from other small town businesses
- Feel connected

## **Become a “Small Town Global Microbrand”**

By Hugh MacLeod, [gapingvoid.com](http://gapingvoid.com)

[www.gapingvoid.com/Moveable\\_Type/archives/001976.html](http://www.gapingvoid.com/Moveable_Type/archives/001976.html)

## **Listen**

### **Search once and subscribe**

By Mike Sansone, [converstations.com](http://converstations.com)

[www.converstations.com/2006/03/search\\_once\\_and.html](http://www.converstations.com/2006/03/search_once_and.html)

Search for your company and your name. For bonus points, also search for your competition, your clients, your industry, and your prospects.

## **Save-able Searches**

- <http://news.google.com>
- <http://blogsearch.google.com>
- <http://yahoo.com>

## **Know Your Keywords and Use them Everywhere**

Your keywords are your name, your business name, your line of work or brands you carry, and your hometown or service area. Think of the words a customer would be thinking right before they search for a business or solution like yours. Use them on your own site and in your profile when you join other sites.

## **Build a Home Base**

Checklist for your website:

[www.smallbizsurvival.com/2009/01/checklist-for-your-business-website.html](http://www.smallbizsurvival.com/2009/01/checklist-for-your-business-website.html)

## Build Outposts

**People outposts.** Places you can connect with other people.

- [Facebook.com](https://www.facebook.com) – a social gathering, like a backyard cookout: friendly and family oriented. You'll find your residents, alumni, customers, and friends. Businesses can build their own groups or pages. You can also run very targeted local ads.
- [Flickr.com](https://www.flickr.com) – a photo sharing site. You'll find local photo fans, people who visited your town, and groups who love to travel. Add photos of your area or your brand in action.
- [TripAdvisor.com](https://www.tripadvisor.com) – a review site for tourism businesses. People who visited your area post their reviews and photos. Some good, some bad.
- [Yelp.com](https://www.yelp.com) – a review site for most any business listed in the yellow pages. People who have used the business are invited to review it. Owners can add additional information.
- [LinkedIn.com](https://www.linkedin.com) – a business-like networking site. Has many alumni and regional groups. Useful for connecting with young professionals in or from your area.
- [Twitter.com](https://www.twitter.com) – a social gathering, like a cocktail party. Short bits of conversation, limited to 140 characters at a time.

**Information outposts.** Places you can share information about your business or area. Once you upload your media at these sites, you can share or “embed” it in your own website.

- [YouTube.com](https://www.youtube.com) – a good place to look for or share videos of your area attractions. Give a video tour. Shoot short, exciting action clips of outdoor recreation.
- [Utterli.com](https://www.utterli.com) – an audio sharing site. You record by calling their number from any phone. Best for short, on the spot reports and interviews.
- [BlogTalkRadio.com](https://www.blogtalkradio.com) – like having your own radio show. You and guests can call in from anywhere, do longer shows and interviews.

## Next steps

- Pick one thing.
- Learn to use your cell phone to connect in new ways.