

Wealth: Engaging Potential Clients Online

Most Wealth Managers Miss Out on Opportunities of Interactive Internet

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Wealth Managers do not use interactive tools sufficiently on their websites. In our recent study "[How Wealth Managers can Win Clients Online](#)" we analyzed the web presence of the 20 largest wealth managers worldwide and only five of the providers had suitable interactive tools integrated into their websites. The majority of the websites, however, displayed an outdated internet functionality from back in 2000. This can be seen as a failure to engage the client on the website and learn about his needs and preferences.

Most wealth managers have not yet caught up with the new interactive opportunities of the Internet. Basic contact options such as the e-mail addresses or contact forms are usually offered, but we find little customization and personalization to the needs of the wealthy client. In most cases, the potential client can send the information only to an anonymous recipient. As shown in an [earlier study](#) conducted by MyPrivateBanking.com, many banks do not respond to such requests or do so only after a long time, even if it is a request for an appointment.

But today, the Internet has already reached a point where it enables a company (including financial service providers) to actively communicate with clients, engage them and solicit rich feedback. It has reached a stage that only a few prophets of technology used to dream about some 10 years ago.

Wealth Managers urgently need a strategy for defining how they should respond in this phase of interactive development of the Internet. This is necessary because today, the Internet as a channel of communication is rapidly overtaking conventional media such as print, TV or radio, with its fast increasing user statistics and interactive possibilities.

We recommend wealth managers to promptly implement the following measures to utilize the interactive opportunities the internet offers:

- Observing social networks as a first and most important step: Every day, customers and other stakeholders express their opinions a thousand times over about companies and their products or services. Comments in web publications, articles in forums and groups, pin-board entries in Facebook or Twitter-tweets are the vehicles. These statements must be identified and analyzed in a proactive manner. Trends and campaigns in social networks are built up with the speed of light and hence require real-time monitoring.

- Feedback is essential: Monitoring of social networks should be followed by clearly defined processes for ensuring a prompt and adequate reaction to possible statements (such as critical blog entries) concerning the bank and its services.
- Social networking requires a new dimension of openness: Through social media clients find entirely new channels to voice their opinions spontaneously, quickly and with potentially considerable consequences. The Madoff case provides a good example of how Twitter enabled the rapid communication of many details but also unsubstantiated rumors which found their way to the public. This quickly became a problem for some banks and even led in individual cases customers to withdraw their assets. Another example is the case of UBS, whose public relations were targeted by bloggers and Twitter members with unfounded allegations.
- The new dimension of the Internet is mirrored by the usage of new channels and types of information exchange: This includes the usage of social networks like Facebook and LinkedIn (see our case studies in the study) but also blogs, micro blogs and video blogs. All these possible new means of corporate communication have to be part of an overall strategy to conquer web 2.0. This should also include pro-active measures like viral marketing campaigns.