

Prioritizing Social Media
By Dustin Anderson
June 26, 2017

It's 10 a.m., and I'm walking through my shop. I have two employees fabricating flat glass for installs that day. I'm so busy that it is hard to take a moment to even say hi, but I am about to do something that is as important to my business as anything else I will do all day. I take out my phone, log into Instagram and take a quick picture of the fabrication process. I promptly add some of my favorite hashtags and post.

Wait, did I just say that Instagram posts are as important as any other aspect of business? If you want to be relevant in the market, absolutely.

Social media has become an aspect of business that you cannot afford to ignore. Ten years ago, I spent money with all the yellow page books in my market. I had the sharpest advertisement, but every year one of my competitors beat me with a bigger ad or advertising on the cover of the book. If my potential clients were looking for me in the yellow pages, that's where I was.

Today, my potential clients don't use the yellow pages. Instead, I find my clients on their phones and computers. 95 percent of my clients have a social media account on at least one platform, but most are active on more than one. I can post pictures, comments, stories and videos right in front of my clients. For free.

If I was willing to pay for my advertisements in the yellow pages ten years ago, why wouldn't I want to advertise in front of my clients for free?

To be successful, post across multiple platforms. The key is not to post the same thing on every platform at the same time.

For instance, Instagram is a platform built around photos, so you don't want to write a "how to" blog under a photo. The typical Instagram user is going to scroll through and stop on pictures that pique their interest. You have to grab their attention. Instagram has also added "My Story." This is a great way to engage followers with a sneak peak of your day.

Facebook, on the other hand, allows users to blog, insert photos or videos, or even post links to relevant articles for potential clients. I love the look of a time-lapse video of fabrication or installation, and this works well on Facebook. Videos not only show off the finished product but gives clients insight into the process. This platform lends the opportunity to speak to your clients about who you are as a glass industry company.

Twitter is a place where I engage clients with links, pictures and short blurbs about my day. This platform requires consistent use, but overall it has been a great place to build awareness of what I do as a glazier. I also pick up on topics from around the industry, which helps give feedback to others in our industry.

Posting differently across these platforms allows you to be relevant to one client on all platforms while appealing to multiple clients on single platforms. Get active and make social media a daily habit.

Improve and Promote the Glass Industry to Fill Jobs
September 26, 2017
By Dustin Anderson

“Great, he’s late again. What am I going to do about this? If I don’t do something quickly he will think this is ok, not to mention the other employees. On the other hand, if I am too stern with him he’ll quit. I’m already struggling to keep up and it took me forever to find and train him.”

If this isn’t a conversation that has played out in your mind as a manager, leader or owner in the glass business, then consider yourself fortunate.

The ongoing struggle to find quality employees is an issue that is plaguing trade services across the board, and the glazing industry is no exception. So, how do we offset this issue and make the glass and glazing industry appealing? This is a question I’ve asked glaziers, company owners and association board members. The answers are rarely consistent, except that no one has this figured out.

I don’t either, but here are three simple changes that helped me recruit and retain employees.

1. It is incredibly important to start by improving the culture of the business. You want to have a culture of positive vibes and a fun atmosphere. The reality is, no one wants to work in a negative, dreadful work environment, and if they do, you probably don’t want them working for you.
2. After you have established the culture, rolling out an employee-referral program works. Where better for people to hear about how amazing it is to work at your company than from the current employees? Be smart about this and add stipulations that include requiring the new hire to work for three or six months before the referral payment is made.
3. Another option that can have an immediate impact industry-wide is to encourage your employees to post work-related photos on their social media accounts. Once you have permission from your clients, showing off the pride of the finished product is an amazing thing, whether it’s a finished shower enclosure, commercial storefront, or a crew in a bucket 10 stories up. This can immediately spark interest in the social circles of your employees, likely creating a broader hiring pool for your company as well as the entire industry.

Branding the glazing industry as exciting and fun helps everyone. There’s really not a downside to creating a positive buzz around our trade. Taking ownership of this task can change your business and our industry for the better.

Employee Recruitment through Facebook, at Anderson Glass
By Dustin Anderson
November 2, 2017

In the past, finding an employee meant placing an ad in the newspaper classifieds. But, as job recruitment and advertising has evolved, finding qualified workers, particularly those who are newer to the labor force, may mean expanding job searches to new technologies. To find the next generation of employees, Dustin Anderson, owner of Anderson Glass, has met them where they are, with Facebook advertising.

Anderson started using Facebook a few years ago for both advertising and recruitment, and has found success with both, calling it “the most underrated, underused advertising tool.” Anderson says he has seen the recruitment functionality of the platform change over time to become a flexible interface that allows employers to target potential hires with demographic and geographic specificity.

After creating a job post on Facebook, Anderson is able to “boost” the post to specific users. A “geo fence” allows him to limit the reach of the post to a specific geographic region. Facebook also allows employers to specify demographic markers such as age and gender, behaviors and currently listed occupation. For this last category, Anderson usually inputs terms like “glazier,” “glass” or “construction.”

The platform’s analytics immediately calculate how many people the posting will reach, based on budget and length, in days, of the campaign. The platform will also record the posting’s page views and engagements (number of people who have clicked on the post, as well as how many times it was shared on other pages).

Interested users can directly message Anderson if they’re interested in the job. In a recent job posting campaign, Anderson noted that potential jobseekers were being tagged by friends—users typed their name in the comments section, alerting them to the opportunity. “It’s opening the door for people who are looking out for a job,” he says.

Though turnover is still a problem, Anderson has hired several employees from Facebook postings in the past, including his current residential supervisor and new driver. He has also already found several job candidates for the recent posting and advises that Facebook posts attract potential hires faster than other methods.

“People are on Facebook every day,” he says. “If I want to be in front of people, this is how I get there.”

Is “Loyalty” Smart in Business?

By Dustin Anderson

May 28, 2018

I was brought up learning that loyalty is a character trait that builds strong and lasting relationships. It's one of those traits that has been a building block for my life personally and in business. What does that even mean? It's simple: I think there is loyalty from glazing contractors to suppliers, from glazing contractors to their clients, and from glazing contractors to their employees. Now of course, loyalty is a two-way street. But we can't very well control how loyal our suppliers or our clients are other than by treating them with respect and showing them loyalty.

Some of my suppliers may not be the cheapest nor the quickest. That being said, if something is wrong with an order or there is a job that needs to be rushed, those suppliers make those corrections happen 99 percent of the time. In addition, the quality that we look for is consistent to our needs and we rarely have issues with orders being wrong. For our company, that customer service, or “loyalty,” is completely worth waiting a day or two more or paying a little bit more money.

The question becomes: is that smart for business? Or is it better for glazing contractors to find the best price and the fastest supplier in order to compete with other glass companies serving the same geographical area? I think the answer is yes for some companies. That business model works, and not only does it meet their needs, but they are essentially building the same loyalty with their suppliers based on their business needs. On a B2B level, it's easy to see that loyalty is a smart piece of the business model.

Regarding the B2C side, we might not all agree that loyalty is smart. It's safe to say that most glazing contractors have a handful of clients that they will run through brick walls for and loyalty is very much a part of that relationship. This idea of loyalty isn't always a real thing with customers or clients. I've lost clients due to price and lead times on multiple occasions during my career. Losing those clients or “being fired” as I like to put it, hurts. In some cases, you might be treating that client as one of your loyal clientele only to find out that you've lost them to a competitor over a cheaper price.

It's not easy to identify when this will happen. For the most part, in the B2C world of glazing contractors, loyalty can cause heartache. But our goal should remain the same: treat every customer with the same standard. At least this does lend itself to a certain level of “loyalty” in return.

I almost forgot, loyalty with employees. Well, that's a topic for an entirely different blog.