

	Blogging	Microblogging	Social Networking	Social Bookmarking	Multimedia	Reviews and Opinions	Wikis
What is it?	An informal conversational medium for writing and publishing content about your business and industry online on a regular basis	Short-form blogging where posts are usually limited in length and format	A way to engage and interact with a specific online community by way of a fan or profile page	A central location for posting links to useful resources which can be seen and shared by other users	Sharing rich media such as video, images, and presentations online	A way for customers to share opinions and reviews of your products and services online	A central repository designed to be edited by a group rather than one person
Examples	Blogger, TypePad, WordPress	Twitter, FriendFeed	Facebook, MySpace	Digg, StumbleUpon, Delicious	YouTube, SlideShare, Flickr	Yahoo! Answers, Epinions, eHow	Wikipedia, Wikia
Best suited to your business if	You want to establish yourself as an industry expert and encourage a conversation with your target audience	You want an immediate way to interact with your consumer base	You want to build a fan base where current and potential customers can interact in one central location	You want to share useful resources relating to your industry with your target audience	Your business lends itself to how-to or viral videos or rich content such as images and presentations	You have high-value products or services and have traditionally relied on referrals for new business	You want consumer input on product development, you want group collaboration and internal exposure for company projects, or you want to share your industry knowledge
Key advantage	Comprehensive	Immediate and mobile	Large associated community	Traffic driver	Cuts through the noise of text marketing	Objective recommendations of your product or service	Allows group collaboration
Strengths	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Simple to start Convenient way of providing useful resources to your target audience Potential to share detailed information Potential to earn money based on the amount of traffic you receive 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Quick and easy to post updates Can grow exposure to a large group of influential online users in a short span of time Good way of finding out news on a particular topic as it happens Effective way to dissipate negative brand sentiment from customers Easy to update from mobile devices 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lets users interact with each other in a central location Effective medium for conversation with your customers or target audience Increases your brand's exposure through the public broadcast "feed" system Can tap into specific community types 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Allows quick spread of your content Useful place to read news, insights, and updates about your industry, partners, and competitors Drives external traffic to your Web properties Bookmarks are stored remotely so they can be accessed from anywhere 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> More engaging and interesting than text-based media More likely to be shared than other forms of media Allows you to create a stronger call to action to your target audience Compact way to communicate a large amount of information 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reaches users in the impressionable "research" phase of the buying cycle Objective word-of-mouth recommendations that are more likely to be trusted by your target audience Can establish yourself as an expert knowledge provider in your industry Allows you to quickly dissipate negative brand sentiment in a public forum 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Effective platform for group collaboration, idea generation, and problem solving Useful central repository of information to be shared internally, externally, or both Easy way for consumers to make themselves heard by a business Allows you to establish yourself as an industry expert through contributions to public wikis
Weaknesses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Requires a time commitment to set up and maintain Requires regular production of unique, useful, interesting content 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Requires a time commitment to post regular updates Not built for sharing in-depth information 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Target audience is there to socialize, not conduct business Can be ineffective if the network contains the wrong demographic for your product or service Needs to be active regularly—so a need to produce regular content that is engaging to your audience 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Seen as self-promotion if you submit your own links Strong competition with other content being submitted Resulting traffic is a short burst rather than a steady increase over time 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Labor-intensive to produce rich media content on a regular basis Requires a certain level of technical expertise to produce Can appear amateurish if not done properly, which can be damaging to your brand 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Negative reviews need to be handled in a specific way to contain damage What's said about your brand is out of your control 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Requires knowledge of wiki syntax to edit Hard to contain negative feedback from consumers if used as an external channel Multiple editing capabilities means it potentially lacks ownership and attention within a business
Opportunities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Build up loyal readership Generate income 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Build up loyal followers Drive traffic to specific blog posts or website content Cover live events 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Build a community around your brand Spread your brand to your community's network of influence 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Spread interesting and useful content Monitor your competitors Generate brand buzz 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reach consumers who prefer visual media over text Engage more effectively as a result of richer media Educate over geographical distances 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish credibility for your brand via objective sources Extend your brand reach to your customers' own circle of influence 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Effective bridging tool between your business and your customer Save time in internal processes Promote team building and pride within your business Drive traffic to your website through information about your brand on public wikis