

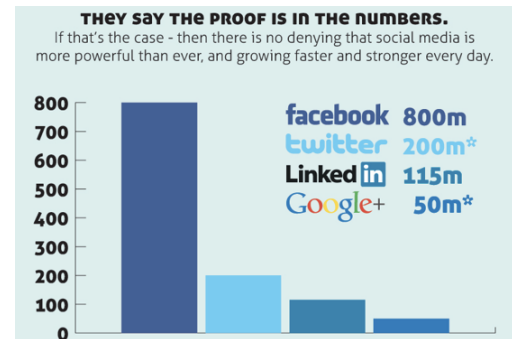


where great minds come to play

3 steps to harnessing social media for training. Lights, camera, action!©

When was the last time you had the luxury of loads of training development time? With time at an increasing premium & clients wanting more training content delivered in less time, as trainers we're in danger of doing the same ol' same ol'.

Like the poor kid in this [hilarious video prank](#), who repeatedly does the very thing that's not working, if you're in danger of doing more of the same even though it's not working for you, take a breath, a really deep one, & let's dive into 3 steps for harnessing social media for the purposes of training.



First you need some light – aka an awareness of the power of & reasons for using social media in training. Second you need the equivalent of a camera – aka social media tools. Thirdly you need action – aka a plan for how to use social media in your training. Put all 3 together & they'll bring you some ease & your participants better retention & transfer of learning. Ready? Lights, camera, action!

1. Lights

Let's shed some light on why you should be using social media in your training preparation, delivery & follow-up. In the words of [Jeff Bulla, getting a handle on social media is essential](#) because social media **lasts, it spreads & it lets you be found**. For a trainer, social media allows learning to do the same (last, spread & be found).

Social media also fits with great **pedagogies** or philosophies of teaching, specifically a combination of brain-based, experiential, adult & popular education. Allison King speaks about social media as a way of [helping us move from a sage from the stage to a guide from the side](#).

Not using social media will soon be like insisting on using dad's old 8track or worse, using a horse & buggy to get around. Check out the **astounding social media participation numbers** in the chart above from [Media Bistro](#).

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Social media allows learners to **choose how to participate**. Li & Berhnhoff do a great job categorizing [types of usage](#) in the chart below. Encouraging flexibility & choice in learning is like the best hot ice cream fudge sundae in terms of increasing both motivation for learning & likelihood for retention & transfer of learning.

Category of User	Type of Use	2. Camera (the tools)
Creators	<i>Publish content</i>	The amount of information available to us (both on & offline) is growing more than 65% each year. In an IDC survey sponsored by Xerox, respondents said they spent up to 26% of their time dealing with the consequences of info overload. Before you throw up your hands in despair, make sure you take
Critics	<i>Comment on content</i>	
Collectors	<i>Vote on or rate critics' opinions</i>	
Joiners	<i>Sign up to a particular site and read content</i>	
Spectators	<i>Don't sign up but will access the websites to gather information</i>	
Inactives	<i>Don't participate in any Social Media activity</i>	

advantage of tools that can help ease your load instead of adding to it.

There are a plethora of tools that easily work with training & development. If you're not already familiar with the big 6 (blogs, facebook, twitter, linkedin, youtube, flickr) pick 1 & give yourself 30 minutes to play around & explore.

Social Media is all about finding information & getting found. Not sure how to organize your learning material? Use tools like [Delicious](#) to organize & tag the resources you like online. Try a tool like [netvibes](#) to help you research your next workshop – it efficiently pulls in a ton of links on any topic of your choice & organizes them beautifully. (Can we all say 'ahhhh – the ease!')

Not sure if you &/or your content is getting found? Use google key words to see what specific terms people are looking for online. If you're a communication subject matter expert, you need to know what kinds of words people are actually using in search engines. I like Google's [adwords site](#), which costs about \$10 (1 time fee). Not sure how your website stacks up in terms of findability? Or how your website is for SEO (search engine optimization)? [Search grader](#) & [marketing grader](#), are 2 tools that will give you an instant report for free. All you have to do is enter your URL. It's so easy it seems like magic.

Take advantage of tools that are designed to help you manage your online accounts, like [Hootsuite](#). I rarely actually go to the Twitter site because all of my Twitter information, along with Facebook is all in my Hootsuite account. Easy peasy.

3. Action (getting started)

Now that you've shed some light (have an increased awareness of the power of social media for use in training), have thought about the equivalent of your camera (specific social media tools), it's time for action.

Give some thought to where the people you want to reach are hanging out. Do they love Twitter but despise Facebook? Have a hankering for LinkedIn but avoid

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Youtube? Get yee to the corresponding social media tool & get active. Find out who the influences are in your subject matter area & engage with them. Make a plan for how you can specifically incorporate social media into your training. Check out my google doc for a [matrix for how to incorporate specific social media tools](#) to help you prepare for training, conduct a training & follow-up a training.

And if you didn't already realize it, if you clicked on the Google doc above you've already started using Social Media in training. Kudos & congratulations.

Special note: I'm coming back to Vancouver from Kenya for a limited time to teach some courses, including a Social Media course. If you're in the 'hood, please join me! See below for more information.

Lee-Anne Ragan, MEd, BSW, ITC, is President of Rock.Paper.Scissors Inc. (RPS), an internationally renowned, award winning corporate training & entertainment company. Email us to enquire about scheduling your own workshop (laragan@rpsinc.ca) or take one of the public workshops below.

New! Transforming Workplace Learning through Social Media, June 21-22, Justice Institute, New Westminster or July 12-13, Saltspring Island. For more info or to register:

- contact Allison Felker: afelker@jibc.ca
- [see a short vide of the course here](#)
[see a course outline here](#)

Facilitating Participation, July 9th, 2012, Langara College, Vancouver. For more info or to register: [See the facebook link](#) or call Sarah St. John 604-323-5193 or [sstjohn@langara.bc.ca](mailto:ssstjohn@langara.bc.ca)

One Size Doesn't Fit All: Conflict Resolution, July 10th, 2012, Langara College, Vancouver. For more info or to register: [See the facebook link](#) or call Sarah St. John 604-323-5193 or [sstjohn@langara.bc.ca](mailto:ssstjohn@langara.bc.ca)

Other resources:

- Sign up to receive Lee-Anne's training focused blog at <http://www.rpsinc.ca/blog>
- Check out her recommended reads: <http://www.rpsinc.ca/resources/astore.html>
- Follow her on Twitter: @LeeAnneRagan
- Connect with her on LinkedIn: Lee-Anne Ragan
- Are you ready to see clearly? Check out Life Lenses,™ our interactive, online self-assessment tool: www.life-lenses.com & our Life Lenses™ blog at www.life-lenses.com/blog