

Published March 13th, 2024

Moraga's Chamber of Commerce sponsors 'Business in the Digital Age' presentation

By Vera Kochan



Amplified Digital Agency Advertising Executive Casey Weider Photo Vera Kochan

Several business members of the town's Chamber of Commerce attended the "Business in the Digital Age: Growing Your Business Through Digital Solutions" presentation, held at the Moraga Library, with the intent to improve or start their social media visibility. "We felt that our local organizations were interested in learning to navigate the sometimes confusing world of digital marketing," stated Executive Director Katie Bidstrup. "We had a wide variety of businesses in the 20 plus sign-ups, and you can see from the diverse businesses in attendance that this type of professional support is important across many industries." Bidstrup acknowledged the businesses that attended, such as: Saklan School, Mark Hoogs State Farm Insurance, Neptune Maps, Lamorinda Arts Council, Springbook, Moraga Hardware and Lumber, Loads Ice Cream - Moraga, Be The Star you Are, a commercial realty company, performing arts groups, and a budding animation business owner. The March 6 event was guided by Amplified Digital Agency Advertising Executive Casey Weider, who typically provides custom digital solutions for all sizes and industries. The evening's goal was to help business owners understand, execute, and evaluate a digital strategy that would be a right fit for them. Weider explained that Facebook has the largest social media platform with 3 billion users. Its demographic is 25 - 34 years old, and is the preferred social media platform for people over 45. Its business page is created and managed by personal profiles. Instagram is the second largest social media platform with 2 billion users, and 85% of its audience is younger than 45. It is the preferred platform for the 18 - 34 year old demographic, and its structure covers independent accounts that are classified as personal or business. LinkedIn, explained Weider, is a primary social media tool for B2B (business to business) industries where 60% of users are between 25 and 34 years old. Typically, over 100 job applications are submitted every second on LinkedIn, and its business page is created and managed by personal profiles. Weider also discussed how to get visibility. With regards to Facebook, encourage page check-ins (activity); utilize Facebook Groups; view page analytics to determine the best time to post content; and video as much as possible (it has changed how people look at social media). For visibility through Instagram, Weider recommended the power of Reels (a short-form video); SEO (Search Engine Optimization) plus your profile; Highlights; post engagement such as Like comments, Share, and Save; use Hashtags; and implement co-sponsored posts. "It's a great way for people to find you," he added. With LinkedIn, use thought leadership (popular content); collaborative articles; and strategic engagement with other businesses that may have commonalities with yours. Weider also discussed the "Do's and Don't's" of converting an audience to your site. "Do" call to action; respond to messages; re-share your content in stories, groups, etc; add links to stories whenever possible; and utilize creative strategies to draw engagement by having contests, give-aways, or special offers. "Don't" direct-message individuals who did not engage beyond a Like; don't rely on your social media platform as your primary selling tool; and don't wait and assume customers will magically appear. The importance of social media ads was Weider's next topic, and he recommended a Facebook and Instagram business page; a Meta Ads Manager; photo/video content; a landing page/lead form; and targeting geography, demographics, interests, and custom audience. With LinkedIn, businesses should run ads on the LinkedIn page, as well as follow the model set for Facebook and Instagram. Weider also touched on a Google business profile and how to use it. A business's Google ranking is based on how much activity is on its Google profile. As such, it is important to ask customers to leave a review, which these days rank higher in importance than Yelp. PPC (Pay Per Click) ads, their cost and factors to consider (audience behavior, goals, and your return on investment); and Google Local Services Ads were also mentioned. "In our role as the Chamber of Commerce, we advocate for all types of organizations, and it's important to the Chamber that we help them spread the word about their organizations, facilitate their branding needs, and, most importantly, help them communicate with their clientele and one another," said Bidstrup. "If we can get more organizations up and proficient on social media, dialed in to the (free and paid) specifics of what Google can do for them, and understanding the digital marketing tools that might work for their specific organizations, it will be easier for people to find resources in our community, hear about interesting events and opportunities, and really share in the richness of Moraga and Lamorinda as a whole."

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