

**Welcome to Passport to Trade 2.0 Project Newsletter.**

*This third newsletter provides a short report on the results of the Social Media Etiquette and Work Placements Survey. It also presents the workshop held in Thessaloniki on the use and value of social media in growing a business. The last article discusses the benefits of the collaboration with other Lifelong Learning Programme project teams.*

**Social Media etiquette and work placement Survey.**

During the last few months an online survey of European SMEs and Students has been developed and distributed in 31 European countries. The results will be used to update existing information about these countries on the Passport to Trade 2.0 website.

The questionnaire targeted to SMEs had 248 respondents: 66.2% were SMEs owners or employees; almost 19% were non commercial educational or training organisations, and marketing or business development agencies. In order to analyse responses on placements, previous experience, such as past offering of a working placement for domestic or international students, was considered. The findings were that universities themselves as well as the internet are considered as the most popular sources of information regarding placements (81%), while student organisations and public agencies have been rated as less significant.

SMEs would be strongly interested in acquiring information on placement options available in each country, associated practicalities (e.g. salary, banking, visa requirements etc) as well as sources of funding for international students who are willing to undertake a placement in their company.

Facebook and LinkedIn are seen as the two most popular social networks among SMEs; however many variations among countries were noted. The main purposes of using social media are overwhelmingly to increase exposure of the business (more than 80%), generate leads and develop partnerships etc. More than 80% of the respondents stated that they would like to be informed on: guidelines on how to get the best out of using the main social media networks, legal aspects on the usage in different countries, an on line do's and don'ts and the cultural differences in the use of social media.

1.347 students responded to the survey: 54% are at the moment studying or working abroad and have studied/worked abroad in the past; 34.3% would like to study/work abroad. The majority of them would appreciate the existence of a single source of information on student placements abroad.

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Internet and websites specializing on international studies/placements are the most significant sources of information.

Other useful sources of information are universities and friends, however events organized at 'home' university are not considered to be of particular help.

Facebook is the most popular social network followed by YouTube; others such as Google+, LinkedIn, Twitter and Xing are still limited. For students, acceptable on line behaviours included the use of a real picture and of the real first and last names for users' avatar. Unacceptable behaviours constituted criticism of others in abusive terms, posting pictures of other people without permission, swearing and using foul language etc. Students considered significant for training regarding social media, the following aspects: the legal aspects for different European countries, the guidelines to main networks' use, the social media used in different countries and the do's and don'ts in social media use. In particular, the main cultural differences in the use of social media across Europe depend on:

- the political environment, the lack of freedom of expression and censorship etc.
- the legal environment, such as the existence of regulations for the removal of material with abusive and violent actions, the removal of material which is protected by copyright etc.
- language and the different meanings of specific words in different countries
- the religious beliefs of the majority of people in a country
- the openness of a culture and the degree of morality of a society etc.

### **The use of social media to grow your business.**

On the 4<sup>th</sup> of October, during the 3<sup>rd</sup> meeting in Thessaloniki, Passport to Trade 2.0 partners organises a workshop with Greek students, companies and other stakeholders.

**Social media in business?**

- Growth through "Effectiveness" – improved value and impact:
  - **Marketing** development e.g.: source of communications and engagement with customers about new products and services development
  - **Sales** leads generation e.g.: engagement of happy vocal customers to help with your sales
  - Creating better value for the customers
  - Making wider impact compared to conventional methods of communications

Image Source: [http://www.flickr.com/photos/learnmedia\\_official/](http://www.flickr.com/photos/learnmedia_official/)

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**"Use of Social Media to grow your business" [workshop](#) is available on [SlideShare.net](#).**

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The workshop focussed on the use of social media as a potential new avenue in identifying new leads and in particular looked at internet penetration in Greece as well as social media networks profiles.

### **Does social media work for all businesses?**

Social media works only for those businesses where the target audience is connected to the internet and actively engages with social networks. If you are a business that targets remote villages in rural Greece that are looking to purchase a tractor – an area where we are certain that there is neither internet connection nor access to social media channels - engaging in social media won't help your business.

### **How do you keep up all the publishing?**

The best content comes from customers - empower them and reward their behaviour for engaging with it. If you are selling cakes and want to gather on line customer reviews, you might want to have a completion on your Facebook page where customers refer their friends to take part and through this action you can generate further content from them and gain valuable feedback on their interests and tastes. (read more on [Creative contest ideas for Facebook.](#))

### **How is social media marketing monitored?**

In finding, creating, and delivering social media content it's important to create a permanent mechanism that will monitor:

- frequency of content delivery & response to social engagement;
- types and specific topics for content creation;
- ways to increase audience engagement;
- events that can drive social media marketing;
- social success metrics (number of followers, of fans, volume of traffic back to site, number of tweets, etc.)
- the specific Social media etiquette rules

We are looking forward to the next workshop in Romania and hope that you will be able to share your questions with us.

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### The benefit of collaboration: P2T2.0 met EVOKE and WEB2llp projects.

The best way to optimise the value of Passport to Trade 2.0, to strengthen its impact and to exploit its outcomes to other contexts, is to create a pro-active valorisation strategy.

This strategy consists of planning and implementing concrete dissemination and exploitation actions, from the outset of the project, interacting with potential beneficiaries, exchanging good practices and learning from other LLP project experiences along the way.

As part of this pro-active strategy, P2T2.0 partners use the main Social Networks in order to promote the project, its objectives and the mid-term results. Through these channels interesting contacts, such as SMEs, students, VET organisations, institutions and various stakeholders have been found. Partners have reached these potential beneficiaries of the project by starting to interact with them during the project's lifetime.

In the meanwhile, interesting collaborations have been established with two LLP projects: **Web2LLP** and **Evoke**.



The **Web2LLP** project aims to boost the dissemination strategies of LLP projects resulting in more coherent, participatory and sustainable project activities in the European lifelong learning area.

<http://www.web2llp.eu/>



The EVOKE project aims to prevent student drop outs in Vocational Training by improving career guidance; through transferring and adapting the methodology for evaluating the effectiveness of services; and by transferring of the method of social return on investment.

<http://www.projectevoke.org/>

The collaboration promotes and sustains the respective projects' activities, and in particular, supports the evaluation of the training material, and the exploitation of project outcomes. It is also effective for sharing knowledge, exchange good practices and learning from other LLP project experiences.

Read more on

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[www.businessculture.org](http://www.businessculture.org)

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