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## [How Marketing & Consumers Have Fueled the Need for an Honest Product: A Social Media Story](#)

Posted on June 9, 2011 by [Laura Gutierrez](#)

Another day, another social media scandal. By now, I'm sure you've heard of "Weiner-gate," referring to the incident of [Congressman Anthony Weiner sending an unsavory photo via Twitter](#). This incident is one of several high-profile fiascos that have played out over the last year, and I can guarantee there will be many more.

Of course, one of the many things you should get out of this is that you shouldn't send dirty photos via social networks (um, duh). My aim here is not to point on the obvious or dwell on mistakes, but to point out that social marketing—really, per the consumers—has fueled the need for a *good* product, service and brand (personal or otherwise). And by good, I mean actually good. Not fake good. Not a product that breaks 10 minutes after you buy it. Not a personality you wear because it suits your audience. *Transparency good*. Something honest.

[Peter Shankman](#), a well-known marketing/social media guy, said it best:



**petershankman** Peter Shankman

There is NO TECHNOLOGY OUT THERE to protect you from STUPID. End of story.

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The more connected we become—through news outlets, social media platforms, text messages—the smaller the world gets. In many ways, we've become a small town. And in these small towns, we become carriers of information—reporters—so that our daily history becomes recorded. What that means: all of our mistakes are discovered. Our flaws become apparent. Our differences among others are called out. We need to be prepared. As humans, we are fallible, and do not always see the end of the tunnel clearly enough to make the best decision.



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The technology is the vehicle, not the message. And sometimes technology, social networks, for example, can take the blame. But that's not the problem. We need to become responsible for our actions, and take more pride in what we produce and how we present it.

Here's my advice to you who want to join and market through a social network:

- Make sure you have a solid, tested product/service. Something honest that you stand behind, not something to make a quick buck.
- If you're an entity or product/service, choose your social platform writers wisely—make sure they have integrity and understand your mission and product/service. It's not just a job; they become the "voice" of your product.
- If you're an individual, make sure you're doing this for the right reasons. Don't be quick to react. And if you're doing or saying things that you typically don't say out in public, then you shouldn't be using these platforms in real-time. Social platforms are not for everyone. Choose your brand champions wisely!
- Get a marketer's opinion—someone who will be honest with you on what is and is not appropriate. Get some additional information or training so you'll be prepared. It's good to get another perspective—you're not always aware of how you or your product come across to a general audience.
- Actually *think* about it. I mean, take 10 minutes and devote time to strategize. Take it seriously. It's not a joke and can have serious repercussions.

What steps have you taken to err on the side of caution? And what did you learn from this recent scandal?

