

# Social Media & The CEO

By Simon Erskine Locke, Founder & CEO, [CommunicationsMatch™](#)

I recently wrote on Twitter that the leaders of companies need to engage when it comes to [social media](#). In my post I noted: It's that important. And in the next post I added – carefully.

Before going any further, let me make one very important point. I'm not urging every CEO to start tweeting. The risks are significant, for listed companies, in particular, and blowback hard when you get it wrong.



At a minimum, CEOs should be having an ongoing dialog with their Chief Communication s Officers and marketing leaders about social media and how it's being leveraged by

their firms.

As we are all aware, social media is a powerful, direct communications channel with audiences. This is one of the reasons why The Pope, The Queen and President-elect Donald Trump are tweeting.

If you are a CEO, here are a few things to think about:

1) Many of your peers are posting on social media – if

you are not, you may want to have a conversation about the risks vs. rewards of engagement as they relate to your company and business objectives

2) If you do post, it is important to have a clear sense of purpose – are you, for example, looking to build visibility, be a thought leader or engage with clients? Having measurable goals moves social media engagement from nice to do to a strategic imperative

3) As CEO you can have an out-sized role (both good and bad) in shaping your company's brand through social media – it is important to get expert advice before engaging

4) If you delegate social media to other executives – you will want to engage them to understand if and how your firm is leveraging its social media opportunity

5) You need metrics to understand the ROI or other measures of the impact of your social media program

6) If you are not Tweeting yourself, you should know what is being said about your firm on social media and know what your team is saying

Social media has matured greatly over the last three to five years. Its value as a business tool is underscored by the millions of businesses, communicators and consultants engaging every day.

By thinking strategically, engaging social media professionals and ensuring your organization is resourced to leverage social media – it can be a source of leads, visibility, client engagement and competitive advantage. Yes, it's that important.

*About the Author: Simon Erskine Locke is Founder & CEO of [CommunicationsMatch™](#) a global communications-focused*

*matching search engine. With more than 4,500 U.S. and International agencies and professionals listed, it is a go-to resource for businesses seeking communications services providers with expertise in areas including: public relations, internal communications, government affairs, investor relations, content marketing, social media, SEO, website development, photography and video. Prior to founding CommunicationsMatch, Locke held senior Corporate Communications roles at Prudential Financial, Morgan Stanley and Deutsche Bank and founded communications consultancies.*