



FINANCIAL STANDARD
SMILEYS
Q&A

2013 SOCIAL
MEDIA INFLUENCE,
LEADERSHIP +
EXCELLENCE
SCHOLARSHIP

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Jenny Brown

Director, JBS Financial Strategists

Entrant in last year's Smiley's and part of the "Digital Dozen" talks to *Financial Standard* about how social media can improve your relationship with current clients, and help you find new ones.

Why did you decide to enter the Smileys?

I entered the Smileys as I love social media. I thought it would be a bit of fun and would help showcase to other advisers how social media can make a difference in communicating a message to the wider community and your clients.

Tell me a little about your application

The application really just detailed what we did on what platforms and the results as a business we have gained. We are very conversational with our social media and like to engage our audience, therefore we tried to show this in our application.

What affect did entering/winning the Smileys have on your business?

Being part of the "Digital Dozen" provided us with the ability to publicise this via our social media platforms. It all helps with showing clients and the industry that we are different and progressive. It also helped to lift my profile within the industry and also show our clients that we are not your "boring" financial advisers.

Has your social media strategy/ presence changed over the past year?

We have tightened up exactly what platforms we use for what purpose and have a plan for how we disseminate information rather than ad hoc. All the team bar 1 are on Facebook and the same with Twitter. I have always encouraged the team to participate in group discussions on LinkedIn, being part of the Smileys helped them understand that social media is a great medium to connect with people.

How as social media impacted your business?

We have gained a good following of both clients and advisers. I have also found that through this I have been asked to contribute to press articles. I have been asked to speak at numerous events both on how to effectively use social media within our business and also what we do in regards to client engagement as I believe that social media plays a huge part in client engagement. I have received referrals from other advisers and industry people purely due to my involvement in social media and

it's helped us get our brand and message out there. Digital media certainly helped make FoFA easier for us.

What are your latest discoveries on social media, any new favourite things?

I love the interaction with my peers and clients

What role does social media play in the financial services industry?

Social media helps with client engagement, shows the fun side of us as advisers. It helps us reach thousands of people effectively and efficiently and it's a great communications tool.

What do you think the future of social media will look like?

Social media or on-line media will help to cement relationships and help us as advisers find new COI's and clients. It is here to stay and will only get stronger. My advice to those sitting on the side lines, is jump in and try it – it works! **FS**