



## **SCORE column: Business builds with social media**

George Street Café in De Pere is a case study in using social media to brand a [business](#). With general manager Amy Dunbar at the helm, the café is becoming well known as a place to network and have fun.

"Our original goal was to give people a reason to be here and then once they're here, to give them a reason to stay," Dunbar explained.

As a graduate of Rasmussen College with a degree in [marketing](#) and emphasis in e-marketing, Dunbar put the marketing plan she developed in school to use. She says that she has enjoyed the restaurant business for as long as she can remember, and that the George Street Café just got under her skin. When she was given the opportunity to manage the business, she was thrilled.

"The partners and I met through networking and we all saw the [value](#) of creating a place where business people can meet and conduct business," she said. "A place where you can write a contract with someone and celebrate afterwards."

Her starting place was to create a community where relationships could be forged. Instead of using a typical Facebook page, Dunbar created a group with its own identity and named it "The Lantern." By utilizing a group, she can add people to the group without them opting in first. Friends can add friends, and [events](#) can be promoted.

So that Dunbar has something to post about, she has an impressive schedule of events. There is live music, themed movie nights, vinyl night where [customers](#) can bring and play old records, and numerous charity events.

"We're finding unique avenues to reach out to people," Dunbar said. "Part of our business plan was to promote local artists and do charity events. We showcase one a month."

The artists display their work in the restaurant, and pieces are available for sale. For charities, there are fundraising nights with guest bartenders, raffles, give-a-ways and creative menus. With these and other events, Dunbar strives to build a sense of community. She wants the café to be a meeting place for business people and a place that is family friendly.

There are bulletin boards for community events and business card postings. The menu is comfortable with the café being known for its gourmet burgers. When a [customer](#) visits for the first time, he or she gets an optional tour and sees the various opportunities available. Dunbar has developed a phone message program and texts specials. She gives copies of fliers to friends of the café, and they hand them out at meetings and on campus. Employees are all provided with business cards that feature free offers. It is all about getting the word out to as many people as possible.

"Going forward, I want to streamline everything we're doing and create a place that's the hub for business and community," Dunbar said. "There is so much [opportunity](#), and with social media, so many avenues we can take."

**Tina Dettman-Bielefeldt is co-owner of DB Commercial Real Estate in Green Bay and assistant district director for SCORE, Wisconsin.**