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Excel - Working with Zip Codes

With data like zip codes or social security numbers Excel will drop the leading zero (e.g. 06460 – would become 6460). There are a couple of ways to counter this challenge, some work better than others depending on how you will use the data.

The general cell format in Excel does not acknowledge leading zeros when entered. Yes, it will show them, but to Excel it's a number and the zeros mean nothing. This can cause problems when exporting or sorting these numbers.

When you enter a number with a leading zero (zip codes or social security numbers are a good example) Excel's number format. The number format removes leading zeros by default and depending on the length of the number might reveal a scientific notation (e.g. 1.4E+10). This can be very frustrating!

So, here's a couple of ways to trick Excel into keeping the leading zero:

Set the cell format to a special format: Highlight the cells you need set – go to Format on the Menu (in 2007 click on the lower right corner of Number tab on the Ribbon), Cell, Number tab, Special (under Category) and choose Zip Code or Social Security Number under Type.

Use the apostrophe (') character to set the number to text: This is the solution I use most often because it gives me the best results and keeps the number as text no matter where I move it or export it to. It also has benefits when sorting (if you do this to all the numbers - whether it has leading zeros or not) because all the numbers are now text you will get your data in the right order when you do a sort. Here's how to set a group of numbers to keep the leading zero using an apostrophe, a quick formula, and paste special (don't worry, this is really not as scary as it seems).

- In a column create the following formula (assuming your data begins in column A, row 5)
="'"&A5.
- Copy that formula and paste it into each row that contains the data you need. Now you will have a column that shows your number with the leading zeros.
- Next highlight and copy the cells with the formulas. Go to another column and in row 5 use Paste Special – and choose Value.
- Now try sorting this new column and see the results!

Try these tricks out for yourself and if you have questions or projects you need assistance with, contact us at info@aapk.com.

Steps to Social Marketing - Step 3 - Where is Your Audience?

Previous Steps: [1](#) [2](#)

The next step to social media marketing is to determine where in the social realm your audience hangs out. Depending on your business, this might be obvious or it might take some testing to determine the best channels

Here are some key questions to ponder that will help determine which vehicles of social marketing will be most effective:

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- **Who are you trying to reach?**
 - Who's your customer?
 - How computer savvy are they?
 - Do they use mobile devices?
 - What are their ages (are they young or old)?
 - What's their income level (if lower income understand that this group may not have as much access to computers as those in higher brackets)?
 - Where do they live (is your market regional, US or international)?
- **What's your product or service?**
 - What are you promoting?
 - Are you a brick and mortar business or are you virtual?
 - What do you want the viewer to do; go to your web site, like you, enter a contest, offer coupons, watch a video, contact you, etc.
 - Is your product/service regulated by any government entity such as FDA, Gaming council, or OSAH? What are your limitations?
 - Does your product or service lend itself to be presented in a video?
- **What do your customers need from you?**
 - Answers to questions?
 - Find information about your product?
 - See and submit reviews about your product or service?
 - Find coupons and offers?

Once you've answered those questions it will more apparent which venues will work best to reach your audience. Here are some examples, based on business type, of social outlets that would work well together:

- Store front/brick mortar – FourSquare, Facebook, local Facebook groups, Patch.com (if it's in your community), and Twitter
- Product – Facebook, LinkedIn, Pinterest, YouTube, Google +
- Artisans – Pinterest, Clipboard, Google +, YouTube
- Service – Facebook, LinkedIn, Patch, Twitter, YouTube
- Celebrity (or wanna be) – Twitter, Facebook, Google +, YouTube

I have covered most of the above mentioned social outlets in [previous newsletters](#). If you don't recognize one of them, contact me for an explanation.

At AAPK we can help you navigate the social market for your business. Contact us to find out more at info@aapk.com.

You Have To Laugh

Video (this is more touching than funny): Seattle Children's Hospital hemoncology floor singing "Stronger" http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ihGCj5mfCk8&feature=player_embedded#!

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