

THE *Current*

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Navigating the Social Media Jungle

LinkedIn, Facebook, Twitter. Connections, likes, retweets. In the hyper-connected world of today, no business venture is complete without a social media element. The ability to tap into a global network of billions, or reach a small niche audience with just a few clicks of a mouse, is part of the power that social media offers to business.

However, handled carelessly or without a strategy, social media can also be ineffectual, or worse — a waste of time and resources. With new platforms and apps rolling out to the public on a regular basis, and the mercurial tastes and preferences of cyber-consumers who are bombarded every day with ads and content, how can a business navigate the myriad options and create an effective social media presence?

This, and other topics crucial to businesses and consumers, are up for discussion at the 34th Annual Santa Barbara County Economic Summit, the yearly update of UC Santa Barbara's [Economic Forecast Project](#) (EFP). The half-daylong South County summit takes place on Thursday, April 30, 2015, at the Granada Theatre in downtown Santa Barbara. A 7:30 a.m. reception kicks off the event, with breakfast on the 1200 block of State Street, directly in front of the theater.

At 8:30 a.m. EFP Board President Mike Pfau and UCSB Executive Vice Chancellor David Marshall take the stage to make opening remarks, followed by a welcome from Peter Rupert, executive director of the UCSB Economic Forecast Project.

This year's keynote address will be delivered by Mark J. Flannery, chief economist and director of economic and risk analysis at the U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission. He will be discussing issues related to capital formation for small enterprises. His address begins at 8:45 a.m.

At 9:30 a.m. a panel discussion brings the world of social media into focus. Titled "Business in the Social Media Age," the panel will provide an insider's tour of the social media landscape and provide practical strategies for businesses.

Speakers on the panel include:

- **Megan McArdle (moderator)** is a Bloomberg View columnist who writes on economics, business and public policy. She recently authored "The Up Side of Down," a book about the power of failure. She previously wrote for The Atlantic, The Economist and Newsweek and appears regularly on MSNBC, Fox News and NPR.
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- **Lisa Jenkins** is the vice president of marketing and client services at The Marketing Distillery, a Los Angeles-based social media and online agency. She has experience in entertainment, e-commerce, advertising and online reputation management. Her clients include AOL, the LA Philharmonic and The Hollywood Bowl, The Los Angeles Film Festival and Warner Brothers.
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- **Matt Kautz** is the director of social media and analytics at Walt Disney Studios. Before joining Disney, he was part of Facebook's preferred marketing developer community at a startup specializing in audience insights. He also launched the digital marketing services division of a Comcast subsidiary focused on college athletics and performing arts ticketing.

Peter Rupert takes the stage again at 10:25 a.m. to deliver the summit's staple local and regional forecasts, a look into the trends and forces that influence business, industry and households in the south county of Santa Barbara. Rupert is chair of the Department of Economics at UCSB and associate director of the campus's Laboratory for Aggregate Economics and Finance with Finn Kydland, 2004 Nobel Prize winner in Economics. Rupert served as senior research advisor for the Federal Reserve Bank of Cleveland for 13 years.

The forecast closes at 11:25 a.m. with brief remarks by Mike Pfau.

The UCSB Economic Forecast Project was established in 1981 by the Department of Economics at UCSB to provide the community with information on economic, demographic and regional business trends. Sponsors for this year's event include Union Bank, Montecito Bank & Trust and G.L. Bruno Associates.

The summit is open to the public; admission is \$200 per person. Cost for UCSB students is \$25. For tickets and information, go to www.artsandlectures.ucsb.edu; or call the [Arts & Lectures](#) box office at (805) 893-3535, or call (805) 893-5148 for event information.

About UC Santa Barbara

The University of California, Santa Barbara is a leading research institution that also provides a comprehensive liberal arts learning experience. Our academic community of faculty, students, and staff is characterized by a culture of interdisciplinary collaboration that is responsive to the needs of our multicultural and global society. All of this takes place within a living and learning environment like no other, as we draw inspiration from the beauty and resources of our extraordinary location at the edge of the Pacific Ocean.