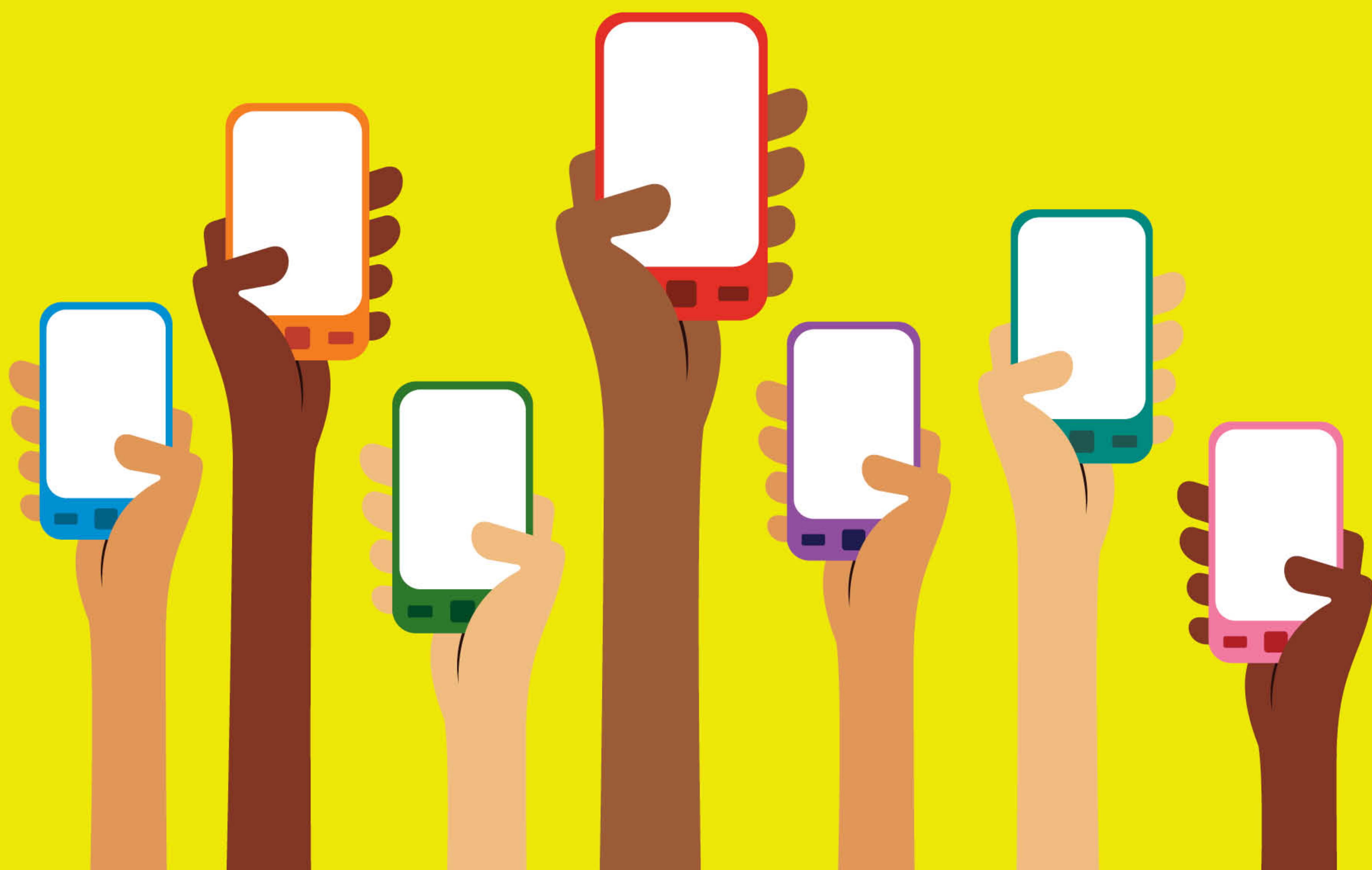KEITH A. QUESENBERRY

SOCIAL MEDIA STRATEGY

MARKETING, ADVERTISING AND PUBLIC RELATIONS IN THE CONSUMER REVOLUTION

SOCIAL MEDIA
STRATEGY

MARKETING, ADVERTISING, AND PUBLIC RELATIONS IN THE CONSUMER REVOLUTION

SECOND EDITION

Keith A. Quesenberry
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Brief Contents

PART I: An Overview of Social Media

PART II: A Strategic Framework That Works

PART III: Choose Social Options for Target, Message, and Idea

PART IV: Integrating Social Media across Organizations

PART V: Pulling It All Together

Detailed Contents

PART I: An Overview of Social Media

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PART IV: Integrating Social Media across Organizations

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Foreword

Are you going to read this?

Really, it's a foreword. Does anyone read forewords?

What if I write in short sentences?

What if I give you the "Top Five Really Awesome Reasons to Read My Foreword"?

What if I include a picture of a cat riding a surfboard?

Robert Dollwet of Malibu Dog Training has attracted 13.6 million views of his "HAPPY DOGS & CAT in Australia" video.

Source: Robert Dollwet, "HAPPY DOGS & CAT in Australia," CATMANTOO, May 1, 2014, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DePFiF-nNoE&spfreload=1. © Malibu Dog Training.

Or, what if I put myself in your shoes, as a professor, professional, or student, and create content that actually adds value to your decision about buying this book?

Good idea.

When I met Keith, I had just made the leap from the advertising agency world, where I'd happily dwelled for fifteen years, to the academic world, where I still felt a bit like a tourist. Keith had successfully made that jump years earlier, and his perspective as a professional and a professor is the core of what makes this book great.

As professors, we want theory, but we also want practice. We want real-world examples to make theory come alive to students; we want compelling questions to challenge them

to think critically; we want hands-on activities to engage them in constructing their own knowledge. This book has all of that.

I think Keith wrote the book he wished he had when he was at his ad agency, trying to figure out this social media stuff. He brings the professional and academic worlds together (which is surprisingly rare), blending theory and scholarly research with practice and contemporary application, resulting in a book that's thoughtful, powerful, practical, and (bonus!) fun to read.

We live in a world of Twitter-sized attention spans, tempted by tantalizing listicles promising quick returns at every turn. But despite that "Top Five Foolproof Steps to Super Duper Fast Social Media Success" online article, social media is a long game. We've moved, as Alex Bogusky has noted, from an advertising paradigm of pay-to-play to play-to-play, where you get back what you authentically put in. And there's a lot of strategy behind those decisions about what to put into social media. This book provides an engaging blueprint for building an effective social media framework, from helping audiences understand the context for social media, to analyzing the myriad opportunities, to developing an integrated plan that can actually improve a brand's business (in case a picture of a surfboard-riding cat doesn't do it).

This updated version goes even further, with new content to engage audiences in vital topics such as measurement and budgets, law and ethical considerations, and practical checklists to help us navigate tricky territory. And to ensure that the book remains a valuable resource, there's even a regularly updated website that addresses the latest developments in the social media space.

As advertising innovator Howard Gossage said, "Nobody reads ads. People read what interests them. Sometimes it's an ad." And sometimes it's a book.

—Valerie K. Jones, University of Nebraska–Lincoln

Preface

I first began teaching a dedicated social media strategy college course in 2012. This was after seventeen years of working in the marketing communications industry where the second half of that career was spent figuring out ways to integrate social media into traditional marketing, advertising, and public relations strategy. At the same time that I started a career as a professor, I began researching social media, looking at the scholarship and theories around this topic. Those years researching social media, years in the industry using social media in plans and campaigns, and years of teaching cross-discipline undergraduate and graduate courses in social media in multiple business and communications schools informed and guided the first edition of this book.

The goal of the first edition was to develop a broad-based strategic approach to social media that went well beyond the up-to-the-minute social media networks, features, and tips reported in the trade press or professional blogs. These are excellent resources for latest developments but never provide enough guidance for putting together a long and lasting strategic social media plan. I also wanted to create more than a typical business book, which can be very valuable but is often narrow in subject or only represents one business person's perspective or path to success. All businesses and organizations are different and need a guide to carve their own path. At the same time, I knew of valuable research on social media that, unfortunately, rarely makes it out of academic journals into a form the business professional or even the student can use in a more practical sense. I wanted to bridge the gap between scholarly research and professional practice.

I knew there was value in having a deeper dive into the background and context of social media that explained how we got here, why it is so troublesome to many professionals, and where we are headed. Social media is too complicated of a subject and too disruptive to traditional marketing communications methods to not explore and understand core differences, such as the shift in mindset from control to engagement. The first edition was written to provide a strategic approach that would be relevant beyond this month's hyped-up new social media platform or feature. A social media strategy isn't built on Meerkat and Vine or even Facebook and Instagram. Social media platforms can come and go or change their rules of engagement, and target audiences can become more or less active on different social platforms as they come in and out of vogue. What makes a social media plan strategic is that it can be effective no matter the social platform. The first edition outlined a strategic process with these goals in mind that was based on business objectives, target audiences, big ideas, and social media channel categories that can last.

Why then this second edition? Through the teaching of the course, consulting, and feedback, I discovered additional related topics and resources that are not only valuable but also help to create a fuller and more complete look at social media strategy and the strategic process. Of course, the second edition takes the opportunity to update statistics, social media features, and tactics, and the latest social media platform options have been added as well. Yet the core strategic process from the first edition remains the same, with key pieces being added and other areas simplified. For a further look at that process, please see the introduction.

Despite the fact that social media platform statistics and features are being updated in this second edition, I recognize that tomorrow Facebook will have more monthly users and Instagram will add a new feature. That is why a checklist has been added to the end of every chapter. Each "Chapter Checklist" acknowledges the fact that social media specifics change quickly and provides a checklist directing readers to find the latest developments in important areas from that chapter. It also reminds readers to check the website PostControlMarketing.com where significant developments are added on a regular basis, such as updates on the top social media platforms by category or insights into key new developments such as live video. Each chapter also has enhanced previews to relate core concepts to the readers' personal lives.

Numerous topics and sections have been added to many chapters. Chapter 1 now includes information on the rise in social media skills as a core requirement for all marketing, advertising, and public relations professionals. It also presents the growth in social media careers with examples of social media professional job titles. In chapter 5 a new section has been added discussing the importance of storytelling in social media. After developing a strategy, most social media professionals spend the majority of their time on content creation. Having a good brand story integrated into the social media strategy can help inspire long-lasting social media campaigns. A social media storytelling template was developed and added for this purpose.

In chapter 6 the topic of paid social media and native advertising is expanded. Most plans today need a paid component. This is addressed in chapter 6 and social media platforms with paid options are now discussed at the end of each social media platform's section in chapters 7 through 10. In these chapters, new social media category options are addressed. Snapchat, BuzzFeed, TripAdvisor, and Amazon have gone from mentions to new significant sections in chapters 8, 9, and 10. The changes in Google+ and Google My Business are addressed along with new strategic options for geosocial networking in multiple platforms. Chapter 9 now also addresses geofencing for hyperlocal strategies. A new section on live video has been added along with top platforms such as Periscope, Facebook Live, and Instagram Live. A section on social messaging apps including WhatsApp, Facebook Messenger, WeChat, Kik, Viber, and Line is presented under social networks.

Chapter 11 has been updated to include the latest in social media insights, research, and crowdsourcing. A growing field called social conversation analysis is also discussed. Chapter 12 has added sections on the rise of influencer and micro-influencer marketing and the increased importance of content marketing. Chapter 13 discusses customer service in social media provided by a cross-discipline social care team including how to integrate social media into crisis communication plans. Business-to-business (B2B) marketing is still

addressed in several areas throughout the book, but chapter 13 now has an added section dedicated to the importance of social selling in the B2B sales process. In chapter 14 a content calendar template and the concept of mobile micro-moments have been added for consideration in social media strategy execution. This chapter also includes new sections and templates to follow that help navigate social media metrics for measurement and guide the calculation of a social media budget.

Chapter 15 is a new chapter that addresses important considerations in the area of social media law, ethics, and etiquette from a brand, professional, and personal perspective. A new section addresses consumer data privacy and security. Important considerations for privacy policies, data brokers, behavioral targeting, and data security in relation to social media are discussed. There is a new case study looking at the ethical considerations in "Wal-Marting Across America," and the Elaboration Likelihood Model (ELM) theory is introduced in regard to social media strategy messages. Chapter 15 also now addresses the importance of personal branding in the context of a social media presence and online reputation for career management.

The "Social Plan" section, presented at the end of every chapter, now has an added part 15 where social media plans are considered for legal and ethical issues as they are implemented. Appendix A has been streamlined to provide a condensed "Three-Part Social Plan" process with the key steps in "Social Plan, Parts 1–15" further simplified to a three-step process plus important templates and guides. This three-step model can serve as a workbook or assignment to apply the concepts, strategies, and processes to completing a social media strategy or campaign for any business or organization. Appendix B has been updated with links to the latest online social media tools and resources to help complete the plan. Finally, a helpful alphabetical glossary has been added with over two hundred key terms and definitions related to social media strategy.

Lastly, in recognition of the increased blurring of lines between the traditional disciplines of marketing, advertising, and public relations, the second edition is written with greater intention to include all of these professions and perspectives. Significant public relations insights and sections have been added throughout to further represent a public relations professional perspective. Social media crosses all of these academic and professional disciplines and the best social media plans or campaigns come from an integrated mindset. I also intentionally added more statistics, examples, and case studies from different countries for a more global perspective. The core of the first edition remains, but these new additions present a fuller and more integrated look at social media strategy. For a complete look at the book, what it covers, and how it is structured, please see the introduction.

Acknowledgments

Introduction

It is hard being a marketer, advertiser, or public relations professional these days. Just when you think you have the game figured out, someone goes and changes the rules. You like the idea of digital media. Who doesn't like everything being measurable? But there is something unique about social media. It is much harder to figure out. The old strategies and methods just don't seem to apply. You can't simply add it to the communications mix as another channel or outlet for your brand message. Yet you can't ignore it. Every year there is greater pressure to integrate social media and to do it well. So you search. You open up Google and look for the top ten social media tips for success. We like lists because they make us feel that social media can be a simple quick fix or add-on: just follow these ten steps and you will succeed!

Yet a Google search of "social media tips" returns 146 million results.[1] Start reading these lists and you find that very few tell you to do the same things. Tomorrow hundreds more social media tips will be published. Now suddenly all those simple tips are no longer so simple. On top of that it feels like there are new social media platforms that everyone must be on every year or even every couple of months. In social media we don't have an information problem. We have an information overload problem.

The truth is there is no one-list-fits–all social media strategy. No matter how hard we search for that ultimate top-ten list, we will never find it. The issue with articles like "The Best Social Media Tells a Story,"[2] "Top 6 Social Media Marketing Tips,"[3] or "Social Media Marketing: How Do Top Brands Use Social Platforms?"[4] is that you can't build a social media plan out of them. The fact that over half of the top brands are using Pinterest or Snapchat does not mean it's appropriate for your organization. Even if you did use Snapchat, how would you use it? What would you post there? How would that tie into what you're doing on Facebook? Is it a good idea to tell a story in social media? Sure. But what story do you tell and where? These are answers that cannot be found in a blog post or news article about the latest social media platform, technique, tool, or case study.

What worked for Verizon, Best Buy, or the American Red Cross will probably not work the same for a regional bank, tech startup, or packaged good. Perhaps this explains why a 2016 *Wall Street Journal* article titled "CMO Survey: Why Is Social Falling Short?" found only 20 percent of marketers say they have quantitatively proven the impact of social media on their business and roughly half feel they are not effectively integrating social media into their overall marketing strategies. Despite that finding, spending on social media has increased over 230 percent in seven years and is expected to double in the next five years.[5] Marketers and their advertising and public relations partners may be struggling to

prove social media effectiveness and are not confident in their strategies, but they still know that it is important. You would think that with the publication of new insight would come better understanding. Yet an IBM study of global chief marketing officers (CMOs) revealed that the feeling of unpreparedness has become worse over time. Seventy-one percent of CMOs said their organizations were underprepared to capitalize on the data explosion back in 2011. Three years later this feeling of unpreparedness actually increased to 82 percent.[6]

What can we do? One day I was working in my home office contemplating this situation, feeling overwhelmed, when a FedEx delivery person pulled up. I noticed a box of Milk-Bone dog biscuits on his dashboard. Seeing that he did not have a dog in the truck, I asked him about the dog treats. He said he keeps them in case of a rogue dog. I thought this was a very smart strategy that is probably not in the official FedEx employee manual. It was a back-to-basics approach that he learned from his unique experiences with customers in the field.

Like my FedEx delivery person, a successful social media strategy needs to take a step back and lay out a basic framework that is unique to the brand, its products, services, and customers. For marketers, advertisers, and public relations professionals to succeed at social media integration, they must first start in a place rooted in their distinct situation and drive a strategy of choosing social platforms and creating content based on their business objectives, marketing strategy, and target audience. Otherwise they are simply chasing 146 million different people's top social media tips that may or may not work for their organization and situation. Only when a unique plan is developed from the beginning will those tips and lists become useful because there will be a way to cut through the clutter and focus only on the advice and insight that applies.[7]

This is not a textbook written from a theoretical ivory tower or a business book chronicling one person's success. It is a roll-up-your-sleeves field guide to sound social media strategy that draws from the best in academic research and professional business practice. It lays out a method that cuts through the hype and sets a strategic mindset to take advantage of the exciting opportunities of social media. Whether you are a marketing manager, advertising executive, public relations pro, entrepreneur, or student, this text provides the context, process, and tools needed to create a comprehensive, unique, and practical social media strategy.

Social Media Strategy: Marketing, Advertising, and Public Relations in the Consumer Revolution is a blueprint for the practice of marketing communications, advertising, and public relations in a digital world where the consumer has taken control. The game has changed and you need a new plan. The consumer revolution is not about giving up or giving in; it is about adjusting methods to effect change, support traditional efforts, and leverage consumer influence for the good of the brand whether it's a small business, large corporation, or nonprofit organization. Are you ready to reset your mindset about social media?

How to Use This Book

This book consists of fifteen chapters divided into five parts. Part I (chapters 1–3) provides an overview of social media. It defines the topic, looks at its scale, and covers the background and context for how we arrived at our current situation. Part I also explores the overall

shift in communications and technology that has caused a rise in consumer influence and how marketers, advertisers, and public relations professionals must respond with a shift in perspective from control to engagement.

Part II (chapters 4–6) then explains a systematic process for creating a social media strategy and integrating it into traditional marketing, advertising, and public relations practice. This part covers business objectives, target audience, social media audits, big ideas, and storytelling. It also explains the role of paid social media and integration across communication disciplines in integrated marketing communications or IMC.

Part III (chapters 7–10) explores eight categories of social media: social networks and social messaging; blogs and forums; microblogging and media sharing; geosocial; live video; ratings and reviews; social bookmarking; and social knowledge. Within each category the top two or three social platforms are defined and explained, including users, content, and possible strategies. The objective is to select the right social media channels for objectives, strategy, and target audience.

Part IV (chapters 11–13) looks at how social media is affecting and influencing multiple areas of business outside of the marketing and communications silos. It explains five strategies for the marketing, advertising, and public relations functions to integrate with other organizational departments for social media success. This includes social media insights, crowdsourcing, content marketing, influencer marketing, social care, and social selling.

Part V (chapters 14–15) pulls every concept and process together to create and implement a complete social media plan or campaign for a business or organization. Chapter 14 provides a sample format for writing a comprehensive social media strategy plan and explains the importance of selling the plan to key stakeholders through a presentation. This part also adds key elements for strategy execution such as a content calendar, social media metrics, and social media budgeting. The final chapter adds key implementation considerations in the area of social media law and ethics including consumer data privacy and security while also addressing personal branding and social media etiquette.

Individual chapters follow a similar format with a chapter opener "Preview" that provides personal context and strategic insight to introduce the topic, "Theoretically Speaking" sections that dig deeper into the theory behind the practice, and "Mini Cases" that show theory and strategy in practice with brand case studies. Graphs, tables, charts, and photos throughout bring examples and research to life while providing valuable templates and guides for practical application. Each chapter ends with a "Chapter Checklist" to guide updates into how stats, strategies, or options may have changed since publication. Questions for discussion and exercises are also provided to help explore topics further that can serve as weekly discussion prompts or weekly written assignments.

The Social Plan (parts 1–15) functions as a built-in workbook that provides a consistent overall assignment throughout the book applying key concepts to current professional situations as they are learned. The Social Plan pulls all theories, concepts, strategies, and examples together into a unified step-by-step process to develop a social media strategy plan and presentation for a brand, product, service, or organization. Each step can serve as weekly assignments or be combined into a smaller number of main reports leading up to a final plan or social media campaign for any marketing, advertising, or public relations professional or undergraduate and graduate course in these disciplines.

Appendix A presents a quick three-part method to developing, presenting, and executing a complete social media strategy plan or campaign. It serves as a condensed version of the individual chapter plan sections organized into an easy-to-follow three-step process. Appendix B concludes with a list of online social media tools and resources to be used in the planning process and for social media implementation. Finally, an alphabetical listing and definition of key social media related terms is provided in a glossary and the index provides an easy guide to find where keywords are located in the chapters.

For more resources related to the book including downloadable templates and guides plus updates on current social media stats, strategies, platforms, and resources, visit the website PostControlMarketing at http://www.postcontrolmarketing.com.

Notes

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PART

I
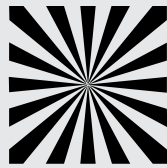
An Overview
of Social Media
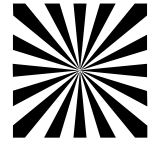
The Scale and Scope of Social Media

The old paradigm was pay to play. Now you get back what you authentically put in. You've got to be willing to play to play.[1]

—Alex Bogusky

PREVIEW

Think about how often you access Wikipedia. How many articles did you view this week? Take a quick look at your web history and see the number of Wikipedia pages you have visited in the past month. Wikipedia is one of the most popular websites on the internet whether accessed through desktop or mobile. Many of us today simply take access to this information for granted, not even thinking about how that information is created and by whom. The truth is Wikipedia is both social media sourced and a social media channel. Thus, it is appropriate to start a book on social media with mention of Wikipedia. This social encyclopedia is an enormous tool for students and professionals alike, yet professor William Badke appropriately summed up the often-contradicting opinions about the resource saying, "Often banned by professors, panned by traditional reference book publishers and embraced by just about everyone else, Wikipedia marches on like a great beast."[2]

Wikipedia can be controversial because it somewhat replaces formal, professionally written, "for pay" encyclopedia publications. Some see it as a group of amateurs writing whatever they

want, while others see it as an amazing collection of the wisdom of the crowd that is constantly fact-checked and continually changing to remain current. The truth is most likely somewhere in between. Ultimately, there needs to be a balance in use of Wikipedia. A total ban ignores reality and a valuable source of information. Yet everyone, professional, professor, or student, should also be mindful about an over-reliance on any single reference source.

The American Library Association expressed concern about this over-reliance after the Wikipedia Black Out Day in 2012 when a student was quoted as saying, "If Wikipedia is gone, I don't even know how to research anymore." Over the years various governments have also perceived Wikipedia to be a threat. In 2017 Turkey's communications ministry blocked access to Wikipedia citing a law for protection of public order, national security, and the well-being of the public.[3] While some seek to ban or limit Wikipedia, others see great potential. Many publishers can now imagine the upside of Wikipedia linking to their content as an opportunity to reach greater audiences.[4] Whatever a person's opinion about Wikipedia and social media in general, one thing is certain: social media is here to stay and will only grow in scale and scope.

The Rise of Social Media

There is something uniquely different about social media. Alex Bogusky of the Crispin Porter + Bogusky advertising agency described it as playing versus paying for attention and reach. What is social media? Wikipedia explains that **social media** is computer-mediated technologies that allow creation and sharing of information, ideas, and other forms of expression via virtual communities and networks. As noted, Wikipedia is social media itself and can change over time as people add, subtract, correct, and generally debate over entries. Click on the "Talk" button next to "Article" in the top left of a Wikipedia entry and you will find discussion about the entry. For example, on March 6, 2012, one contributor said that the social media entry was "in a *dreadful* state. It is pretty much unreadable at the moment." The social media Wikipedia entry has had more than five thousand individual edits made by more than two thousand editors since it first appeared on July 9, 2006. Click on the "View History" tab (at the top right of the page next to search) to view a comprehensive list of revisions and dates.[5]

As the definition states, social media is all about creating and sharing information and ideas, whether it's Wikipedia entries or Facebook updates about favorite football teams, fabulous cheesecakes, and what famous people wore to an awards show. As more and more people created their own personal and professional content online, it began to grow in amount and importance comparable to corporate- or organization-produced content. As views of amateur content have increased over time, a transfer of power has occurred. Social media has risen in both amount and attention, shifting content from a conventional publisher-centric model to a more user-centric one.[6] **User-centric** means having more control, choices, or flexibility where the needs, wants, and limitations of the end user are taken into consideration.[7] This is a term that can apply to many industries and disciplines from media to marketing.

This shift in power is especially evident in journalism. In the past, the main form of communication with a journalistic publication from consumer to publisher occurred

through letters to the editor. Of those submitted letters, only a few would have been published. Now most publications enable blog-style commenting on their articles and enlist many more contributors to their publications through blog articles and commentary. Many personal blogs have risen to professional publication status and more and more people are getting their news from social media platforms. News reporting and news dissemination have both shifted over time from traditional print, radio, and television.

In 2017, Pew Research Center reported that nearly two-thirds of adults in the US (67 percent) got their news from social media channels such as Facebook, YouTube, and Twitter. This was up from 62 percent in 2016.[8] In a Reuters Institute survey of thirty-six countries across the globe, more than half (54 percent) of online adults use social media as a news source each week. This ranges from 29 percent in Germany and Japan to as high as 76 percent in Chile. More than one in ten people around the world (14 percent) indicate social media is their main news source.[9] In the United Kingdom, social media has surpassed television as the main source for news for young people aged eighteen to twenty-four.[10] For marketers, advertisers, and public relations professionals, this means fewer opportunities for traditional public relations media outreach and traditional advertising placement. While consumers worldwide increasingly turn to social media for news, nearly a quarter are also using ad-blocking software on websites.[11]

Beyond news we also have turned our attention to social media as direct sources of information. We already discussed the influence of Wikipedia and how it is sourced, monitored, and edited by the crowd. WikiLeaks is another example of the rising influence of social media. **WikiLeaks** is an international nonprofit that collects news leaks and classified media by anonymous sources and publishes them on its website. WikiLeaks has been very controversial but has influenced major events and situations around the world. For example, WikiLeaks obtained and published information that had significant implications with regard to the 2016 US presidential election campaign, impacting candidates Bernie Sanders, Hillary Clinton, Donald Trump, and others.[12]

In early 2017 WikiLeaks published files revealing the CIA's secret cyber hacking tools, causing possible threats to national and global security.[13] By late spring 2017 a huge cyber attack occurred in the United Kingdom, Spain, and other European countries that spread globally. "WannaCrypt" blocked people from their data unless they paid a ransom and seriously hit the UK's National Health Service. It is believed that the malicious software was developed from emails stolen from the US National Security Agency and reportedly released on WikiLeaks.[14] WikiLeaks claims its own influence as being cited in over twenty-eight thousand academic papers and US court filings, formal UN documents, the European Court of Human Rights, and UK courts.[15]

From social network use and social news to social information sourcing, it appears that we have become a more social society. Yet it is important to note that the rise in new technology didn't create a rise in our desire for social interaction. Social interactions have always occurred. In the past, humans did not need social networks to be social. We always found ways to socialize in community without technology. What makes social media different are the software applications that have built communities and networks so that social interactions can now occur virtually and in real time.[16] Some research has even indicated that we may prefer "virtual" communication through social media because it requires less emotional

involvement, cognitive effort, and brain activation.[17] However this shift did take time and an evolution of technology. The big rise in social commentary online did not occur with the invention of the internet or even the first version of the World Wide Web. It happened specifically with the advancement in features and capabilities called Web 2.0.

Early internet communication was limited to passive viewing of content on static pages. Companies and organizations created web pages, but they were more like digital brochures. Marketers and advertisers wrote and designed corporate websites that they planned would remain the same for the next several years. Interactivity was limited to email on a contact page. However, a shift in capability happened in the first few years of the twenty-first century that changed everything. This shift was so dramatic it was called Web 2.0, a term popularized in 2004 by open-source software advocate Tim O'Reilly and implying a comprehensive new software release of the World Wide Web, taking it from version 1.0 to version 2.0.

Yet the web's inventor, Tim Berners-Lee, says there was no technical update to the web. He argues that he always envisioned the web as "a collaborative media, a place where we could all meet and read and write." What did change was the development of web browser technologies such as Ajax and JavaScript that enabled live two-way communication, plus Flash, which brought multimedia audio and video content to websites. Whether a person sides with O'Reilly or Berners-Lee, **Web 2.0** is the common term used to designate the collective technology changes in the way web pages were made and used that took them beyond the static pages of earlier websites.[18]

Web 2.0 takes on many forms such as social networking sites, blogs, wikis, forums, photo- and video-sharing sites, collaborative tagging, social bookmarking, ratings, and reviews. Today Web 2.0 has even grown to include live streaming video on channels like Periscope, Facebook, and Instagram plus augmented reality experiences with Pokémon GO and 3D lenses developed for Snapchat.[19] For Tim O'Reilly's early list of Web 1.0 versus Web 2.0 examples, see table 1.1.[20] Please note that his list today has been revised and can be viewed on the O'Reilly Media website.

Social media depends on web-based technologies and now mobile technology to create highly interactive platforms for co-creating, sharing, discussing, and modifying user-generated content. These universal changes have significantly affected the way individuals, communities, and organizations communicate.[21] The old model of larger organizations communicating to a mass number of individuals started to break down with Web 2.0. Suddenly individuals had a way to communicate directly to other individuals. They also had the potential to skip traditional gatekeepers to reach a mass audience. For businesses and organizations this change was disruptive. As Web 2.0 expanded consumer influence, the communication power of enterprise and traditional publications diminished. This raised great concerns for marketing communications professionals. Erich Joachimsthaler and David Aaker foresaw the problem in a 1997 *Harvard Business Review* article titled "Building Brands Without Mass Media." Even before social media, the authors were concerned with rising media fragmentation and increased communication channels that enabled consumers to bypass advertising for entertainment and news. They sought alternative methods to brand building beyond mass-media advertising.[22] With the rise of social media, Joachimsthaler's and Aaker's concerns have come true.

Table 1.1. Tim O'Reilly's List of Web 1.0 vs. Web 2.0 Examples

Web 1.0		Web 2.0
DoubleClick	vs.	Google AdSense
Ofoto	vs.	Flickr
Akamai	vs.	BitTorrent
mp3.com	vs.	Napster
Britannica Online	vs.	Wikipedia
personal websites	vs.	blogging
evite	vs.	upcoming.org and EVDB
domain name speculation	vs.	search engine optimization
page views	vs.	cost per click
screen scraping	vs.	web services
publishing	vs.	participation
content management systems	vs.	wikis
directories (taxonomy)	vs.	tagging ("folksonomy")
stickiness	vs.	syndication

Source: James Governor, Duane Nickull, and Dion Hinchcliffe, "Chapter 3—Web 2.0 Architectures," *Web 2.0 Architectures* (Sebastopol: O'Reilly Media, 2009), accessed February 16, 2015, http://oreilly.com/web2/excerpts/web2-architectures/chapter-3.html#tim_apostrophy_s_list_of_web_1.0_vs._web.

As Alex Bogusky indicates in his quote at the beginning of the chapter, marketers and advertisers cannot buy attention in a social media channel as they can for a traditional advertising channel. Even with the paid social media options available today, marketers, advertisers, and public relations professionals can only buy "reach" into some social media channels—they cannot buy attention. The content still has to be valuable or good enough to draw consumers' engagement and to generate further reach through additional sharing. An uninteresting social media post boosted or paid to appear in someone's newsfeed scrolls by faster than a 30-second TV commercial. Only brand content of value, whether marketer- or consumer-generated, is effective in gaining attention in social media. As Bogusky said, "You get back what you authentically put in."[23]

The Size of Social Influence

As people's attention and time has shifted to online activity, marketers have been able to monitor their actions and decisions. The increase in digital activity has increased a marketer's ability to collect consumer data. **Big data** refers to massive amounts of data so large or complex they are difficult to process using traditional data processing applications. It includes data such as transactions, email, messages, activity logs, and social media text.[24] Big data has become a buzzword in recent years for good reason. According to industry reports, by 2013 90 percent of all of the world's data was created in the previous two years and of that, 80 percent was content created from social media sources like Facebook, Instagram, and You-Tube.[25] Today the world produces 16.3 zettabytes (or 16.3 trillion gigabytes) of data a day.[26]

Not only has the amount of information collected been dramatic but this data has also dramatically impacted business. A *Forbes* global survey titled "Data Driven and Digitally Savvy: The Rise of the New Marketing Organization" found organizations that are leaders in data-driven marketing are almost three times more likely to have increased revenues (55 percent versus 20 percent) than their laggard counterparts. The authors of the study argue that increased data and analysis is creating a growing advantage gap between data-driven and traditional marketing approaches.[27]

The amount of digital data is growing fast, and so are the social media channels that are creating much of it. One illustration of the pace of growth is to compare how long different media took to reach 50 million users. For example, it took radio thirty-eight years to reach 50 million users. The pace quickened with television. After TV was introduced in the 1950s, it took thirteen years to reach 50 million users. Yet today the pace of adoption in social media is tremendous. After Facebook's introduction, it only took the social network three-and-a-half years for 50 million users to open accounts.[28] Now Facebook has more than two billion monthly active users, a number they reached in just thirteen years.[29] But this amazing growth is not limited to Facebook alone. Twitter has more than 328 million users,[30] Instagram has reached more than 800 million users,[31] and more than one billion unique users visit YouTube each month. LinkedIn has over 500 million users, provides access to over 9 million companies, and lists over 10 million active jobs,[32] and Snapchat grew to over 300 million users in under five years.[33] These numbers are sure to be significantly higher within the coming year.

The enormous size of social media and the data it generates present an immense opportunity. A study conducted by Forbes Insights and Turn (see figure 1.1) found that social media data is an important part of data-driven marketing campaigns. Demographic data drives most marketing efforts (62 percent), but social metrics (34 percent) are now
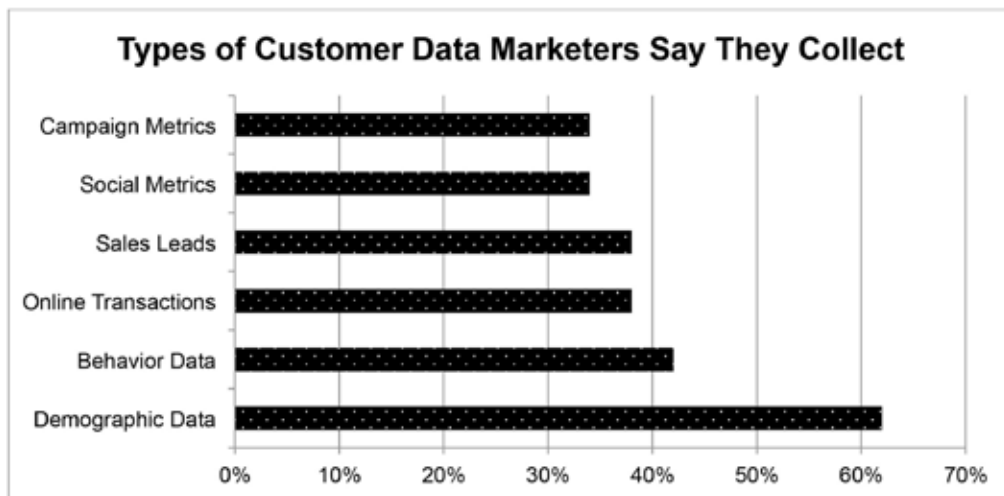
Figure 1.1. Types of Data Collected for Data-Driven Marketing

Source: Paul Alfieri, "Data Driven And Digitally Savvy: The Rise of The New Marketing Organization," Forbes Insights and Turn, 2015, https://images.forbes.com/forbesinsights/StudyPDFs/Turn-The_Rise_of_the_New_Marketing_Organization-REPORT.pdf.

being collected ahead of traditional brand surveys (31 percent) and even **customer relationship management** data (31 percent),[34] which uses systems to better manage data and interactions with customers and potential customers with a focus on long-term relationships.[35] Social media is integral to big data business practice. As indicated in the Forbes report, the companies who are taking advantage of social media research are gaining a competitive advantage for their actions.

Obviously, social media is not a fad and is becoming mainstream. Of the world's 7.4 billion people, 50 percent are on the internet and 37 percent of those are active social media users, a number that grew 21 percent in 2016.[36] In the US, 69 percent of adults use social networking sites, up from just 5 percent in 2005.[37] These numbers will most likely continue to grow. As an article in *Psychology Today* by Liraz Margalit indicates, "digital communication is so often easier than communicating face-to-face."[38] Social media is becoming ubiquitous and reaching mass appeal. To many marketers, advertisers, and public relations professors, this is still a very scary thought because social media strategy is so very different from traditional communication in marketing. Social media cannot simply be added as another marketing communications outlet. Integrating social media requires an entire shift in mindset—one that is more oriented around the consumer or user. Yet marketing, advertising, and public relations practitioners can and should be excited about increased capabilities and untapped opportunities. The shift to a user-centric model represents a huge opportunity for organizations that have struggled to buy awareness in the old, expensive, publisher-centric mass media model.

In the past, budgets have been an overwhelming deciding factor in a brand's share of voice. A large advertising budget bought increased brand awareness. Today, big brands with small budgets, small businesses, startups, and nonprofits can use social media to help level the awareness playing field. Social media strategy can make a difference at almost any budget level. The viral spread via consumer views and shares plus the earned media opportunities that spread views and shares even further are what make a difference in driving visibility to reach mass audiences.[39]

Social media also makes traditional marketing, advertising, and public relations efforts more effective. Integration is key and running a marketing, advertising, or public relations plan with social media pays off in real business results. A study published in the *Journal of Marketing Research* found that electronic word-of-mouth by customers delivers nearly twice as much customer acquisition compared to traditional marketing.[40] Other research has proven social media's positive effect on sales through a synergistic effect when combined with traditional marketing actions. A study of a large, US consumer packaged-goods food company found that social media was especially effective in increasing sales when combined with in-store promotions and product sampling. Increased brand exposure and brand engagement with social media users helped to make consumers more responsive to timely marketing actions.[41] Integration of social media also helps improve business-to-business sales. A study in *Industrial Marketing Management* found that a salesperson's use of social media improved their communication and responsiveness leading to improved customer satisfaction.[42]

How do marketers, advertisers, and public relations professionals take advantage of social media's powerful benefits? All organizations, big brands, small startups, or nonprofits

must learn to play a new game with new rules. Alex Bogusky reminds us that social media doesn't allow brands to buy their way in. Buying reach for a paid social media post is still a one-way conversation, which drops the word "social" from social media. Everyone must play the social media game by following a very different set of marketing rules. What are those rules? That is what this book will lay out—a systematic process for ensuring strategic action in social media.

With millions of Google search results, there is no one "Top 10 Best Social Media Marketing Rules." Yet there is a shift in mindset and a strategic framework that can be followed to integrate social media into organizations to supercharge marketing, advertising, and public relations efforts and meet organizational goals. Success takes more than opening a lot of social media accounts. It is very tempting for marketers to jump into social media by opening accounts in every new social network and app, but even the largest enterprises don't have enough time and resources to win at every social media platform or channel. Like all marketing, strategy is needed to focus limited resources. Researching and developing a solid game plan is the only way to win. Take the time now to take a step back and see the strategic forest for the social media trees. Build a solid framework with a well-researched and thought-out social media plan. Don't head into this new marketing communications game without a new playbook. Play the right way and the rewards can be immense.

Research into electronic word-of-mouth (eWOM) suggests that it is seen as a reliable source of information, significantly affects the perceived value of a firm's offering, and has a direct relationship with loyalty intentions.[43] In other words, social media supercharges the potential of word-of-mouth and word-of-mouth is one of the most effective business tools. Marketers have always known this, but up until the creation of social media, word-of-mouth simply did not scale. Today we have seen consumer-produced YouTube videos garner views once only obtainable through a TV media buy, and some consumer-created blogs have monthly subscriptions larger than top publications such as *Time* magazine and the *New York Times*. Word-of-mouth on Web 2.0 scales.

This is an exciting time to be a marketer, advertiser, public relations professional, or entrepreneur. Best-selling business-book author Seth Godin captured this excitement well when he said, "If you can make it clear to consumers that you have a better offer, it's infinitely easier to acquire a million customers than ever before."[44] Big data is a big opportunity. The scale and scope of social media are enormous, and it will only continue to grow. If marketing communications professionals learn to think differently and utilize social media correctly, they can exploit this scale and scope for the benefit of their organizations.

Theoretically Speaking: Interactivity and Two-Way Communication

Professor John Deighton of Harvard Business School defines **interactive marketing** as the ability to address the customer, remember what the customer said, and then address the customer in a way that illustrates that the organization remembers what the customer told them.[45] Deighton's definition comes from the marketer's perspective, but what do consumers view as interactive? Researchers Sally McMillan and Jang-Sun Hwang tell us that study into interactivity has been defined by using multiple processes, but three elements tend

MINI CASE

KONY 2012

to lớn/khổng lồ = large

Perhaps no other case study demonstrates both the enormous potential and possible pitfalls of social media success better than what happened to the organization Invisible Children upon releasing their video KONY 2012 on YouTube. In only six days it reached 100 million views and more than fifty thousand comments to become the most viral video in history.[a]

The thirty-minute documentary told the story of Joseph Kony, an African warlord who has been kidnapping and killing citizens in his country for more than two decades. The film urged people to support the nonprofit and help the cause. A big response would seem like a blessing; however, the response was so enormous that the organization's email system broke and the computer system crashed, locking its sales force out of the online store. Also, due to the tremendous rise in buzz, Invisible Children cofounder Jason Russell flew nonstop between media appearances, managing only two hours of sleep in four days.

The organization did benefit with more than triple its previous year's revenue, but the instantaneous fame and pressure ended up being too much to bear for Russell.[b] The same buzz that can spread a message so quickly can also draw harsh and very public criticism. In less than two weeks, Russell had a highly publicized mental breakdown that took a toll on him and his family personally as well as the professional image of the entire organization. In the short term, the nonprofit greatly increased its efforts in Africa, but by 2014 the charity found itself in debt and struggling to survive.[c] By December of that year they officially announced that most of its staff and Jason Russell would stop working for the organization. The challenge of having an enormous viral hit is surviving the mass attention and then following up with something just as captivating to keep the momentum going.

[a] Todd Wasserman, "'KONY 2012' Tops 100 Million Views, Becomes the Most Viral Video in History [STUDY]," Mashable.com, March 12, 2012, http://mashable.com/2012/03/12/kony-most-viral.

[b] Claire Suddath, "'Kony 2012': Guerrilla Marketing," BusinessWeek.com, August 30, 2012, http://www.businessweek.com/articles/2012-08-30/kony-2012-guerrilla-marketing.

[c] Kristof Titeca and Matthew Sebastian, "Why Did Invisible Children Dissolve?" WashingtonPost.com, December 30, 2014, https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/monkey-cage/wp/2014/12/30/why-did-invisible-children-dissolve/?utm_term=.a73ed779c430.

to appear as the basis of a consumer's perceived interactivity of marketing and advertising communication: direction of communication, user control, and time.[46]

First, interactivity must enable two-way communication that provides mutual conversation and the ability to offer feedback. Other researchers, Brian Massey and Mark Levy, take this notion further, stating that interactivity provides interpersonal communication and friendly interface that leads to positive word-of-mouth for companies.[47] Second, user control is also seen as a key characteristic of interactivity. In general, the web has given users this control through more content and navigation options than traditional media. Third, the perception of interactivity is important to consider. This perception is impacted by the time or the speed at which messages can be delivered. The longer a consumer waits for a response the less interactive the communication is perceived to be. In *The Art of Human-Computer Interface Design*, Chris Crawford captures this thought, stating that interactivity means the

computer does not inhibit the user by slowing communication.[48] Today this also means that the marketer is not slow to respond to the consumer.

As marketers integrate social media channels and strategy into traditional marketing, these three elements of interactivity should be considered. When comparing and analyzing marketing, advertising, and public relations strategies and options, consider how the decision will increase or decrease consumer perception in: two-way communication, user control through options, and response time.

Chapter 1 Checklist

Social media can change quickly. Visit PostControlMarketing (http://www.postcontrolmar keting.com) for updates, but also use this chapter checklist to briefly check how social media statistics in this chapter have changed since publication.

- ✓ What is the current percentage of global social media users? Has growth slowed?
- ✓ What is the current percentage of social media users in the US or in other countries? Is growth evening out?
- ✓ What percentage of marketers now monitor social media content? Is social listening and engagement becoming a more mainstream marketing practice?

SOCIAL PLAN PART 1
Discover and Explore

The first part of the social media plan is to become familiar with the types of social media and various social media features. Based on the definition of social media given in this chapter, search and identify various social media channels. Go beyond the well-known networks such as Face-book, YouTube, and Twitter. After identifying several digital social channels, explore the features unique to each and use those features to determine social media categories. In other words, what is the main activity on the channel? Why does it exist? Finally, provide examples of how marketers could take advantage of each channel. The best way to learn the most about a social media channel is to open an account and become a user. After exploration report the following:

1. Based on the definition of social media, list five different websites or apps that you feel are social media channels. Explain why each one was chosen.
2. Explore each channel and explain the features, capabilities, and user characteristics of each.
3. Look at each channel's features, determine the main differences between each, and place the channels into categories such as photo sharing or news aggregation.
4. Explain three ways an organization could use each channel for marketing communication.

For a condensed version of the social plan see appendix A: Three-Part Social Plan.

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

1. Going back to the *KONY 2012* case study, what do you think Jason Russell and Invisible Children could have done differently to avoid the problems they had? What could they have done to ensure a better future for the organization?
2. Find a startup that has achieved enormous success. What role did social media play in the organization's rise?
3. Research a company that has gone out of business or is struggling. How did the organization's lack of social media integration or adaptation to changing technology contribute to their demise?
4. Write your own definition of social media. What is missing from the Wikipedia version? If you feel your definition is better, go onto Wikipedia and change it.

ADDITIONAL EXERCISES

1. Visit the Wikipedia page "List of Social Networking Websites" (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_social_networking_websites). Scroll down the list. How many have you heard of? Start to think about which of these social networks would attract the potential customers of a specific brand, and where those potential customers may be most active. Are there social sites where customers are active, yet the brand is not?
2. How big is social media? Research the number of subscribers or viewers of traditional media such as top newspapers, magazines, and TV shows. Now look up the number of active users of the top social networking sites. How do the numbers compare? To take this analysis one step further, look up the cost of an advertisement to reach those viewers or readers in traditional media advertising. Compare that to the cost of social media to reach a similar number of viewers or users.

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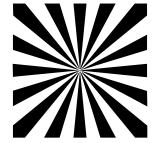
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Shifting Influences and the Decline of Push Marketing

The buying of time or space is not the taking out of a hunting license on someone else's private preserve, but is the renting of a stage on which we may perform.[1]

—Howard Gossage

PREVIEW

If I gave you a pen and paper and asked, "What's your story?," what would you write? What would your father or mother write? How about your grandmother or brother, best friend, teacher, boss, favorite celebrity, or the neighbor you've never met? In 2009, Brandon Doman starting doing just this in a coffee shop to help us explore the universal truths, desires, and experiences that make us all human. "The Strangers Project" continues today with over twenty-five thousand true stories being shared online at stangersproject.com.[2] When someone says, "I have a story," we all lean in. Everyone has a story and we all have a desire to know each other's stories through social interaction.

Social interaction is the process of reciprocal stimulation or response between two people.[3] Interaction or being social is central to being human. Even our understanding, meaning, and memory of the world is centered on human interaction and story. Psychology researchers Stephen Read and Lynn Miller remind us of this insight in "Stories Are Fundamental to Meaning

and Memory: For Social Creatures Could It Be Otherwise?"[4] Story is a powerful device for marketing communication that many in business often overlook.

Researchers have argued that stories are central to human interaction because they provide useful memory structures.[5] Yet Read and Miller take this thought further, saying that stories serve as important social goals that help enable successful social interaction. British anthropologist and evolutionary psychologist Robin Dunbar found that stories are powerful enablers for group identity and social cohesiveness.[6] Researchers John Tooby and Leda Cosmides have established that stories help with conformity to group norms and values, which in turn enables greater cooperation.[7] In other words, humans are social, just all want to get along, and stories help us make sense of the world, remember what we learned, and feel like part of the crowd.

Social media is an excellent platform to tell stories and provides an ideal space to fulfill the human need for interaction. It is a powerful tool that serves to bring groups of people together for conformity, cooperation, memory, and meaning. Over time social media posts and comments end up telling group and individual stories. A marketer who understands this can bring people together for conversation within their brand story. Thus, brand participation in social media can provide a powerful tool for marketing, advertising, and public relations. The rise of social media is the story of the rise of a powerful new persuasive and pervasive communications medium.

When Push Comes to Shove

Howard Gossage was an innovative copywriter active during the Creative Age of advertising in the 1950s and 1960s and is credited with many innovations in industry practice. He was honored by trade publication *Advertising Age* as the twenty-third-most-influential advertising person of the twentieth century behind Dan Wieden and David Kennedy of Nike "Just Do It" fame. Gossage understood the human need for interaction and story a half-century before social media was even conceived. Gossage was said to have started his advertising agency to create riveting conversations with consumers.[8]

What is conversation exactly? **Conversation** is defined as an informal talk involving two people or a small group of people. How could Gossage create conversations with consumers through the one-way communication of ads? A conversational style can be created with writing that is similar to an oral discussion.[9] In his day, Gossage was talking about creating a conversation with customers in print and television advertising with perhaps radio, outdoor, and direct mail. Gossage and other great copywriters knew that good advertising copy was written like a spoken conversation. Now many marketers have the opposite approach in that they are often writing in styles and tones that are not conversational within the two-way medium of social media.

The problem today with the Gossage quote that opens this chapter is that it has become harder and harder to buy people's time and space. No matter how much a marketer or advertiser talks, it is not much of a conversation if no one reads or hears the message. Marketers and advertisers may still rent the stage to present their messages, but when they look out into the crowd, there are a lot fewer people in the audience. The advertising stage has traditionally been mass media print publications and television shows, but the number of readers and viewers has been dropping. This declining audience also applies to public

relations practice where getting that big news story about a brand isn't as big when fewer people are reading or viewing the news publication or news show.

Pew's Project for Excellence in Journalism reports that single-copy sales of magazines fell for four consecutive years starting in 2007 and dropped a staggering 9 percent in 2011. Paid subscriptions also dropped 2.5 percent during that same period. Newspapers did not fare much better. The number of newspapers in the US fell 16 percent from 1,611 in 1990 to 1,350 in 2012. Daily and Sunday circulation dropped 30 percent from 1990 to 2010.[10] The news for newspapers hasn't gotten any better in recent years. US newspapers continue to suffer from steep declines in circulation. More recent statistics include a 10 percent decrease in US daily newspaper circulation and a 9 percent decrease in US Sunday newspaper circulation from 2015 to 2016, resulting in a similar decrease in advertising revenue of 10 percent during the same time period.[11]

TV media is losing advertising audience at an even more alarming rate. Research by Morgan Stanley reports there was a 50 percent collapse in average broadcast network TV audience ratings from 2002 to 2012. The story gets worse when advertisers realize that they were paying over 50 percent more in terms of average cost per million (CPM) during the same period.[12] Not only are marketers losing audience, they are also paying more for fewer viewers. Some may call this insanity—doing the same thing over and over yet expecting different results. More recent statistics show this decline continues and could get worse with younger audiences. In the 2015 to 2016 TV season, all four major broadcast networks—CBS, FOX, NBC, and ABC—saw total viewers drop anywhere from 2 percent to 14 percent with even higher declines among eighteen- to forty-nine-year-olds. The average rating for new TV shows in 2016 was only 1.2, which translates into roughly a mere 1.2 million adults aged eighteen to forty-nine out of a total 126.8 million population.[13]

The story in cable doesn't get much better for traditional advertising placement or earned media opportunities. Increased bandwidth in cable has led to further segmentation of mass audiences. Specialized channels have increased dramatically. Just looking at the "Cs" on a typical cable channel listing illustrates the depth and specialization of this expansion with genres such as the Cartoon Network, Church Channel, Comedy Central, Cooking Channel, and Crime & Investigation Network.[14] By 2014 the average US TV home received 189 channels and tuned in to 17 of those channels per week.[15] Outside of the Super Bowl, mass audience rarely exists in television anymore. By 2016 the problem had become so apparent that one advertising TV buyer was quoted in *Advertising Age* as saying, "The numbers have shrunk so much in the last 10 years that you almost have to put the 'broad' in 'broadcast' in air quotes. Between the fragmentation and all the time-shifting, there are almost no big-reach vehicles left, unless you have the money to spend on football."[16]

As if these trends were not challenging enough for marketing communications practice, another development has further deteriorated audience attention. When marketers look out at these diminished audiences, they see a third screen distracting them. Illuminated smartphones and tablets are constantly spewing news updates, posts, tweets, check-ins, messages, or simply funny cat videos that divide attention. A survey of worldwide internet users found that one-third (31 percent) are browsing the internet while watching TV and nearly one-fifth (19 percent) are participating in online discussions. Another fifth of respondents are actually using smartphones or tablets with TV to watch two or more programs at the same

Table 2.1. Time Spent per Day with Major Media by US Adults from 2010 to 2013

	2010	2011	2012	2013
Digital	*3:11*	*3:49*	*4:33*	*5:16*
–Online	2:22	2:33	2:27	2:19
–Mobile (nonvoice)	0:24	0:48	1:35	2:21
–Other	0:26	0:28	0:31	0:36
TV	*4:24*	*4:34*	*4:38*	*4:31*
Radio	*1:36*	*1:34*	*1:32*	*1:26*
Print	*0:50*	*0:44*	*0:38*	*0:32*
–Newspapers	0:30	0:26	0:22	0:18
–Magazines	0:20	0:18	0:16	0:14
Other	*0:45*	*0:37*	*0:28*	*0:20*
Total	10:46	11:18	11:49	12:05

Source: "Digital Set to Surpass TV in Time Spent with U.S. Media," eMarketer.com, August 1, 2013, http://www.emarketer.com/Article/Digital-Set-Surpass-TV-Time-Spent-with-US-Media/1010096.

Note: Hours and minutes spent with each medium regardless of multitasking.

time. These multitasking, attention-grabbing activities all increased from 2 percent to 8 percent from 2014 to 2016.[17] By definition, **attention** is the selective narrowing or focusing of consciousness and observance on something.[18] Attention is becoming a rare commodity today. Divided attention has simply become a normal state of mind for most people.

Overall, people's attention is shifting from traditional to digital media. For the first time, in 2013 time spent per day with online and mobile media surpassed time spent with traditional media such as television, radio, and print (see table 2.1).[19] According to eMarketer, by 2016 average daily time spent with all forms of digital media increased to 5.3 hours per day compared to just 4 hours for traditional TV viewing. In 2018 it is predicted that TV viewing time will be two hours less than time spent with digital.[20] Even if marketers manage to find a small portion of their target audience through traditional media, messages are not guaranteed to reach them because their heads are turned down toward their mobile devices.

Digital media started with desktop and laptop computers, but more and more activity is shifting to mobile. What defines mobile? **Mobile media** is a personal, interactive, internet-enabled, and user-controlled portable platform for the exchange of information.[21] As technology continues to change, scholars will most likely debate what constitutes mobile media. However, all agree that mobile has helped contribute to the end of traditional mass communication. An eMarketer report, "US Time Spent with Media," says, "Digital will account for nearly half of US adults' total time spent with media in 2016. Mobile will be responsible for the majority of these digital minutes."[22] Consumer time and attention is increasingly moving to mobile and advertisers' budgets are following. Zenith Media predicts that by 2019 global advertising spending on mobile internet (27 percent) will surpass desktop internet spending (15 percent), with mobile spending nearly surpassing television spending (33 percent) on its own.[23]

Traditional one-way "push marketing" channels are disappearing or dividing, mass audiences are dwindling, and consumers are tuning out with ever-increasing digital distraction. Yet marketers continue with more effort to push more messages through. The increased

growth and segmentation of media combined with the increase of new forms of advertising has created an enormous amount of media clutter.

In the 1970s, it is said that the average person saw roughly five hundred advertising messages a day.[24] Some forty years later, this has increased ten times to the mind–numbing average of up to five thousand ads a day.[25] It is important to note that some have questioned the accuracy of these numbers. They are rough estimates, but the overall problem still remains that the number of advertisements and marketing messages we are exposed to is increasing as more of the empty space around us is being crowded with more ads.[26] When push comes to shove, perhaps it is time that marketers need to stop shoving so much. How? The opposite of push is pull. For further insights into the concept of push versus pull marketing, see the "Push versus Pull" box below.

Howard Gossage was said to be ahead of his time. Eerily, he may have been further ahead than people thought. It is hard to believe that this 1960s advertising copywriter could have seen the future of social media. Yet there is something to learn from his desire to have conversations with consumers. Perhaps he knew that at heart, we are all social creatures prone to distraction, and we were like this even before the current glut of media and marketing clutter. Gossage is also the one who said, "Nobody reads ads. People read what interests them. Sometimes it's an ad." For those who want to master social media marketing, this sentiment is truer now than ever.

▨ Push versus Pull

What are push and pull marketing? The American Marketing Association describes the traditional **push strategy** as a manufacturer enticing other channel members to carry a product, versus a **pull strategy** that aims marketing efforts at the end consumer to persuade the consumer to request the products from retail channels.[a] In this sense the difference is really between trade (business to business) or consumer (business to consumer) communication.

However, a push strategy is not to be confused with **push marketing**, which is focused on interrupting potential customers, usually through the purchase of ads. In contrast, **pull marketing** attempts to attract the customer to brand communication by providing valuable content, which is usually delivered via social media.[b] In social media, pull marketing can be used for both consumer (business to consumer) and trade (business to business) communication. With the ever-increasing problem of ad clutter, pull marketing through social media offers an antidote to the annoyance of more ads showing up in unexpected places that people eventually get used to and ignore or find ways to block over time.

[a] American Marketing Association, "Dictionary," accessed February 16, 2015, https://www.ama .org/resources/Pages/Dictionary.aspx?dLetter=P.

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Mass Media to Consumer Communication

Seth Godin, marketer, entrepreneur, and author of *Idea Virus, Purple Cow*, and other influential marketing books, said, "Conversations among the members of your marketplace happen whether you like it or not."[27] Here he captures a key truth about consumers—they like to talk. **Word-of-mouth** communication is when people share information about products or promotions with friends and is one of the oldest forms of marketing.[28] Deliver a good product or service, and the customer talks to his or her friends and family, generating awareness for the brand and delivering increased sales for free. Of course, this same personal communication system also works in reverse. If the customer had a bad experience, they are likely to tell friends and family not to buy. In the past, this was not a huge problem because the delivery system was small. People only had so many friends and they had to make an effort to visit, run into them by the watercooler, or call them to pass on the information one or a few at a time.

Today, the definition of "friend" has changed and the delivery system has enlarged. Of the more than two billion people on Facebook, each has an average of 338 "friends," and they can communicate with those friends quickly and easily from most anywhere in the world.[29] The rise of social media networks, mass adoption by the general public, and portability of access through expanding Wi-Fi and cellular broadband have dramatically increased the influence of consumer word-of-mouth.

The startling growth of social media has been fueled through mobile devices. A full 91 percent of US smartphone owners eighteen to twenty-nine years old use social-networking services on their phone, with 55 percent of people fifty and older doing the same.[30] The power of consumer voice has grown so quickly through social media that in 2004, a new trade group was launched to establish standards and best practices. The **Word-of-Mouth Marketing Association (WOMMA)** is the official trade association dedicated to word-of-mouth and social media marketing.[31] WOMMA research reports that 81 percent of consumers are influenced by a friend's social media posts.[32] The McKinsey Institute has found that word-of-mouth is the primary factor behind 20 to 50 percent of all purchase decisions.[33]

This spread of consumer influence is shifting power from institutions to individuals. One example is twenty-three-year-old Molly Katchpole. In 2011, she led a consumer revolt against Bank of America's new five-dollar monthly debit card fee. From links on Facebook and Twitter she garnered more than ten thousand signatures for her Change.org online petition. ABC News and other media outlets picked up the story and pushed signatures up to thirty thousand. After weeks of bad publicity, Bank of America gave in and revoked the fee. Verizon also bowed to social media–empowered consumers when it decided to revoke its new two-dollar convenience charge for debit card payments.[34]

Consumer social media activism is still going strong and by 2016 the public had turned their concerns to food policies at companies like Gatorade, Taco Bell, Trader Joe's, McDonald's, and Starbucks. For example, New York mom Renee Shutters used social media to raise awareness about artificial dyes in M&M's, which can cause hyperactivity in kids. After 217,000 consumers shared her protest, Mars listened and responded with the President and CEO of Mars saying, "Our consumers are the boss and we hear them."[35]

Using social media as an outlet to rant or rave about a product, service, or organization is growing. Yet people are not just complaining—42 percent of consumers who complain on social media say they expect a reply. This may require more resources, but brands that simply reply can increase customer advocacy by 20 percent. No response is a negative response. Social media expert Jay Baer says, "Ignoring your customers only tells them that you don't care."[36] And ignoring consumers in social media has become a big deal because so many current and potential customers are active on social media.

How big is this consumer voice? As of 2017, 86 percent of US online adults aged eighteen to twenty-nine used social network sites, with 80 percent of thirty- to forty-nine-year-olds active there as well. But these users are not just young adults. People older than sixty-five have quadrupled their presence on social networks from 7 percent in 2010 to 34 percent by 2017. Plus, this increased social activity spreads beyond Facebook to multiple social networks and apps. Over 20 percent of US adults now also use Twitter, Instagram, LinkedIn, and Pinterest.[37] In 2017 there were 2.7 billion active social media users globally or 37 percent of the total world population.[38]

What are these socially active consumers talking about? On social networking websites they are just as likely to share their opinion (26 percent), what and how they are doing (26 percent), and links to articles (26 percent) as they are to share products and services they like (25 percent) (see figure 2.1).[39]

WOMMA reports that the average American mentions a brand some sixty times a week in online and offline conversation.[40] Forrester Research further reports that these consumers create 500 billion social media product and service influence impressions on one another annually.[41] Through social media posts, blog posts, comments, ratings, and reviews, consumers command a powerful voice in brand communication.

This increased consumer voice through social networks is very influential. A Nielsen study reveals that eight-in-ten (83 percent) of global consumers trust recommendations

What People Say They Share in Social Media Updates

Category	Percent
Pictures	~43%
Their opinion	~26%
What They are doing	~26%
Links to articles	~26%
Products they like	~25%
News items	~22%
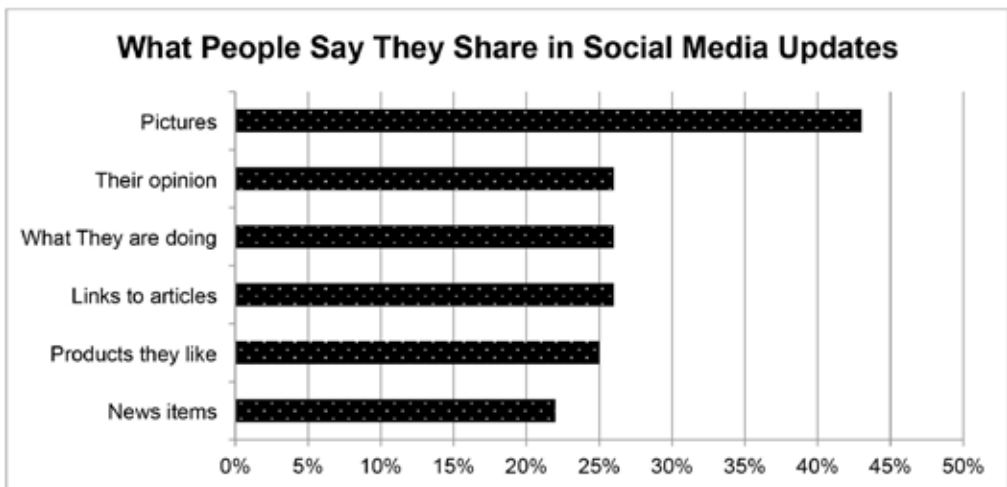
Figure 2.1. What People Share in Social Media Updates

MINI CASE
Sony Europe

As a demonstration of how opposite social media thinking can be from traditional marketing, this case shows how Sony Europe succeeded by leveraging an online community through social media instead of simply pushing advertising content through the new channel. As more and more consumers were asking customer service questions via social media, Sony faced an enormous challenge, considering they have thousands of different products.

In response, Sony Europe created an online community of Sony users and began to identify and reward the most valuable super-fans. **Super-fans** are a company's most active online consumers who answer forum questions, write in-depth blog posts, and provide valuable feedback without collecting a fee. Sony's fifty super-fans were invited to product launches, offered new products, and given all-expenses-paid trips to biannual super-fan conferences. The result is thousands of customer questions answered every year with an 85 percent solve rate that saves the company millions in support costs.[a]

Why do super-fans provide all this free product support and marketing buzz even before they are found and rewarded by companies such as Sony? Self-presentation theory explains motivations behind human behavior to project an image of oneself to other people. These actions are activated by the presence of other people observing behavior such as in an online community. Many people want to be perceived as knowledgeable, helpful, and friendly—especially in front of an audience. This audience-pleasing motivates people to want to help others learn about a brand and solve problems around a product for the reward of feeling better about one's self-image.[b] Online brand communities provide an audience that super-fans want to please. Instead of trying to control unofficial brand or product communication, smart marketers encourage fan communities and reward the most active users to help them grow.

[a] Jeremy Taylor, "Social CRM Cast Study: Sony Europe Creates a Community of Super-fans," OurSocial-Times.com, May 14, 2014, http://oursocialtimes.com/social-crm-case-study-sony-europe-creates-a-community-of-super-fans.

[b] Erving Goffman, *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life* (New York: Doubleday Anchor Books, 1959).

from people they know and two-thirds (66 percent) trust consumers' opinions posted online. Trust in unknown people's opinions is now at the same level of trust as editorial content such as newspaper articles (66 percent) and trust in forms of paid online advertising is 48 percent and lower.[42]

This social media word–of–mouth has also been linked to sales. A study in the *Journal of Marketing Research* found that purchase decisions can be influenced by others' opinions and that increased positive online word–of–mouth volume produces increased sales impact.[43] Word–of–mouth through social media such as Twitter has also been linked to increased box office revenue for movies[44] and Twitter with consumer reviews has been shown to impact sales of new video games.[45] Yet many marketing plans and budgets still devote the majority

of their time and money to traditional advertising. Perhaps that is why spending on social media is set to double from 10 percent of US marketing budgets to 20 percent by 2021[46] and global social media advertising spending doubled from 2014 to 2016.[47]

All this growth in social media presents an enormous opportunity. But some marketers view it as a threat. Empowered consumers generating and sharing their brand comments and content do not fit neatly into traditional models of marketing and communications strategy.[48] Most marketing principles and communication strategies still operate on a marketer, advertiser, or public relations control model. Social media breaks brand communication control and thus breaks the traditional model that most have learned and practiced. Going back to Seth Godin's quote, whether marketers like it or not the control model has to change. Marketers can no longer keep their heads in the sand pretending they still have control. Simply ignoring social conversation will not work.

The good news is that if marketers and their advertising and public relations partners choose to enter the social conversation through engagement, it can be very effective. **Engagement** is involvement, interaction, intimacy, and influence between an individual and a brand.[49] Engagement is effective. WOMMA reports that 78 percent of consumers indicate being influenced by a brand's social media posts.[50] Compare this to the Nielsen report of only 48 percent of consumers trusting traditional online advertising. Marketers and advertisers need to learn to talk and interact with consumers in a very different way if their brands are to have a chance in this highly transparent, consumer-empowered environment.[51]

Theoretically Speaking: Social Presence and Media Richness

What are the theories behind this phenomenon of social media? Researchers Andreas Kaplan and Michael Haenlein propose that social presence theory and media richness theory are key elements of social media.[52] **Social presence theory** states that media differ in the degree of social presence (acoustic, visual, and physical contact) they allow between two communication partners. Social presence is influenced by the intimacy (interpersonal versus mediated) and immediacy (asynchronous versus synchronous) of the medium. Social presence is thought to be higher for interpersonal (face-to-face discussion) than mediated (television) and for synchronous (live chat) than asynchronous (email) communications. The higher the social presence, the larger the social influence that the partners have on each other's behavior.[53] It is not hard to see how this theory predicts social media to be more influential than traditional media whether for personal or marketing, advertising, and public relations communication.

Closely related is **media richness theory,** which states that media differ in the degree of richness they possess—the amount of information they allow to be transmitted in a given time. If a medium is richer (it can transmit more information), it will be more effective in communication. Social media is rich in its ability to transmit text, images, sound, and video, and it can transmit this information instantaneously in both directions to or from anyone around the world. Think about the amount of media richness the average consumer has on their smartphone these days. One social media platform such as Facebook alone is rich

in many media options for posting, commenting, and sharing text, images, sound, video, emojis, illustrations, and graphics. Marketers who apply these theories to social media versus traditional media such as print, radio, and television will quickly see how advanced this communication medium is in terms of its potential for effectiveness.[54]

Chapter 2 Checklist

Social media can change quickly. Visit PostControlMarketing (http://www.postcontrolmarketing.com) for updates, but also use this chapter checklist to briefly check how social media statistics in this chapter have changed since publication.

- ✓ What is the current time spent per day by major media? Has it changed significantly?
- ✓ What types of information do people share in social media? Have the categories shifted? Are there new ones?
- ✓ Have advertising trust numbers shifted? Are opinions of strangers in social media still more trustworthy than all forms of online advertising or media like journalism?

SOCIAL PLAN PART 2
Adding to the Noise

Is an organization adding to the clutter? In the earliest stages of a social media plan, the goal is to start getting a sense of a brand's image in the marketplace. Take an inventory of all marketing and advertising activities and messages. Then determine how "pushy" the brand's marketing communication has become. Is the brand heavily reliant on push marketing through traditional media? In social media, is the brand intrusive with one-way sales-focused posts, or are posts helpful and responsive? Make a list or spreadsheet of all consumer touch points in traditional, digital, and social media. Analyze the type of messages the company is promoting in each, and report the answers to the following questions:

1. Is the communication company-focused or consumer-focused?
2. Is the information useful, newsworthy, entertaining, or valuable?
3. Do consumers perceive the message as an unwanted interruption or a welcome message?
4. Take an inventory of all brand marketing and advertising activities and rate the "pushiness" of brand communication. Is the brand over-reliant on traditional media? Are they using social media as more of a one-way communication channel? On a scale of 1 to 10, how much is the brand contributing to media clutter?

For a condensed version of the social plan see appendix A: Three-Part Social Plan.

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

1. How powerful and influential is social media word-of-mouth? Find an example of where social media word-of-mouth has made or broken an organization and an example of where it has changed a government or culture.
2. How much do you think consumer conversations actually influence purchasing decisions? Can you quantify this influence or find research that proves it?
3. Howard Gossage said we should not try to hunt our target audience, but instead entertain. Describe three of your favorite TV commercials and describe three of your least favorite. List characteristics of each category. What makes one group of ads more favorable than the other? Do your observations apply to online videos as well?
4. This chapter discusses evidence of media clutter such as the number of cable channels available in the average household (189). In what ways are marketers of traditional TV channels and TV shows using social media to grab and hold viewers' attention?

ADDITIONAL EXERCISES

1. Type in the Google search box a brand name and "+ complaints." Then hit return. How many customers are talking about the company? What are they saying—is it positive or negative? Where are they saying it? Now narrow the search to news, video, and blogs. Repeat the same search on Twitter. Read reviews of the company on retail or review sites. Remember that the internet is one of the first places people turn when seeking information about a brand, product, or service. With this in mind, what is the overall image of the brand when you take into account official brand communication and social media content?
2. Take a day and log your activity on your devices (desktop, laptop, smartphone, tablet). How many times a day do you check your devices, by device? Categorize each interaction by purpose, such as reading email, texting, reading news, checking social media, and posting or commenting on social media. Note the time of day and time in minutes. Then add up the total for the day in each category. What percentage of your time is spent on your devices and what percentage of your time is spent on social media? How does this compare to your traditional media usage? Do the results surprise you? What do they say for marketers? What do they say to you personally?

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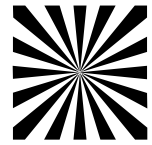
Marketer's Point of View from Control to Engagement

As the distracted consumer flits back and forth between watching TV, texting their friends, looking up information on actors, or just aimlessly surfing while the TV's on in the background, getting through to them with marketing mes–sages on any device becomes harder and harder.[1]

—Sean Carton

PREVIEW

When is the last time you shopped in a department store, in-store or online? What did you pur-chase? If you are like most people, you probably have purchased a wide variety of goods and services in person and online with ease in the last couple of days. Many take for granted the fact that anything you want can be found quickly, along with prices and reviews, and purchased with a touch of a button, with easy returns if you don't like it or it doesn't fit. We have come a long way in retailing.

At the beginning of the twentieth century, John Wanamaker opened what would become the first department store. Seen as a pioneer in marketing and integral to the establishment of the profession of advertising, Wanamaker started his stores in Philadelphia and later expanded to cities such as New York, London, and Paris. Known as "The Grand Depot," the twelve-story Wanamaker's in Philadelphia famously took up an entire city block. The store pioneered the

now-standard retail practices of fixed prices and money-back guarantees, expressed then as a revolutionary principle: "One price and goods returnable." A devout Christian, Wanamaker believed that if everyone was equal before God, then they should all be equal before price. This retail pioneer also started the practice of advertising and hired the first full-time advertising copywriter, John E. Powers.

Despite John Wanamaker's marketing philosophy and strong belief in the power of advertising, he is also well known for a phrase that is still talked about today: "Half the money I spend on advertising is wasted. The trouble is, I don't know which half."[2] As more and more marketing, advertising, and public relations moves online, more and more consumer actions are becoming traceable. Perhaps all the advancements in measurable digital marketing and big data have made this statement less applicable today. If John Wanamaker were alive, would he still say it? How far have we advanced in advertising practice and performance?

The Advertising Age Is Over

From the Super Bowl to *Mad Men,* advertising has become more visible in popular culture, but with the advancement of digital media the practice of advertising has undergone nothing short of a revolution. **Advertising** is defined as the placement of announcements and persuasive messages in time or space purchased in mass media.[3] The basis of the advertising profession was to craft persuasive messages and then purchase space in mass media to reach a large audience. Following this formula, advertising became a very effective marketing communications tactic for well over a hundred years.

Yet the advertising industry and the marketing professionals who hire advertising firms have gone through dramatic changes in the past few decades. The changes occurred in bits and pieces, but came to a more noticeable head in 2009 when the eighty-year-old leading trade publication *Advertising Age* boldly announced, "The Ad Age Is Over." The article "Cannes Swept by PR, Integrated, Internet Winners" explained that for the first time in history the top prize in the most prestigious advertising-industry award show went to an advertisement made for the internet rather than television. The film jury handed its sole Grand Prix to an internet film for Philips electronics.

In that same year, a tourism campaign for Queensland, Australia, took the first Public Relations Grand Prix along with new Direct and Cyber Cannes award categories. David Lubars, then chief creative officer of BBDO North America and president of the Cannes film and press juries, predicted, "The way the world is heading is voluntary engagement."[4] These were signs that the future of marketing communications was here. Mass marketing was moving into a new digital environment where the consumer had more involvement and control, thus more integrated communication efforts were needed to reach a more fragmented target audience. Mass media was diminishing and the method of persuasion transforming. Marketers and advertisers have entered a new age of engagement where they have less influence over all the messages consumers read, hear, and watch about their brands. Marketing departments and the advertising agencies they hire continue to move from controlled push marketing to more interactive engagement marketing.

▨ MINI CASE

Queensland Tourism

In 2009 Tourism Queensland challenged its advertising agency to deliver a global campaign that would raise awareness of the Islands of the Great Barrier Reef across cultures and backgrounds. With a relatively small budget, the effort tapped into a universal desire and wrote an employment ad for "The Best Job in the World."[a] The recruitment ads were placed in fifteen countries and described a six-month contract paying $150,000 (£75,000) to live in a rent-free luxury home on Hamilton Island and blog about the experience. Candidates had to upload an application video to islandreefjob.com. The public voted for the final sixteen, who were interviewed in person.

The campaign garnered worldwide media attention through traditional advertising and public relations and benefited from the power of word-of-mouth and social media engagement with the consumer. Results included more than 8 million website visitors, 34,000 video applications from 197 countries, a 67 percent increase in Facebook fans, and a 93 percent increase in Twitter followers. The public relations value was estimated to be nearly $400 million, and more than 9,000 passengers booked trips to Queensland following the campaign.[b]

Tourism Queensland has continued their track record of social media innovation. For example, years after "The Best Job in the World," one campaign used social listening for a surprise and delight effort that selected unknowing travelers on the ground in Queensland for impromptu customized trip enhancements. The trips were shared in social media–generating stories, comments, and views ultimately resulting in 2.5 million earned media impressions to #ThisIsQueensland or @Queensland.[c]

[a] "The Best Job in the World," iab.net, accessed February 17, 2015, http://www.iab.net/media/file/Sample_Case_Study.pdf.

[b] Tourism Queensland, "'Best Job in the World' Social Media Campaign," UTalkMarketing.com, April 12, 2010, http://www.utalkmarketing.com/pages/article.aspx?articleid=17349&title=tourism-queensland-%E2%80%98best-job-in-the-world%E2%80%99-social-media-campaign.

[c] "Case Study: How Tourism and Events Queensland's Innovative Online Listening Campaign Added 'Surprise & Delight' to Visitor Experiences via Twitter," DestinationThink.com (blog), April 13, 2016, https://destinationthink.com/case-study-tourism-events-queensland/.

A similar shift in public relations practice started to occur around the same time period. A sign in the beginning was a blog post titled "Die! Press Release! Die! Die! Die!," in which ex–*Financial Times* journalist Tom Foremski called for an end to the spin and spend on traditional public relations press releases.[5] That same year public relations agency SHIFT Communications developed the **Social Media Press Release**, which is an easy-to–scan document containing text and multimedia elements that are simple to share and which offers links to a collection of relevant information.[6] Digital analyst Brian Solis and developer of the Conversation Prism visual map of the social media landscape saw similar dramatic changes in public relations practice. In 2009 he described a shift from public relations 1.0 of "top down" standard press release writing, account management, and standard pitching to public relations 2.0 with a "bottom up" approach of experts in fields and tools engaging

with consumers through listening and monitoring, content creation and story development, community management and engagement, plus influencer identification and management.[7]

If the ad age is over, traditional public relations practices are diminishing, and new media is gaining so much attention, should marketers simply drop marketing communications in traditional media and move to all interactive digital and social media engagement marketing? Research says no. A study published in the *International Journal of Integrated Marketing Communications* analyzed integrated marketing communications touch points used in 421 Effie Award–winning campaigns from 1998 to 2010. Like Cannes, Effie Awards are prestigious awards for advertising, public relations, and marketing professionals, except that winners are also primarily chosen based on proven results. Effie campaigns are marketing success stories that are awarded for effectiveness. Each entrant submits verifiable data that demonstrates the campaign has delivered real business results by meeting its marketing objectives.

The research found that in twelve years of Effie Award–winning campaigns, there was an overall increase in the number of marketing or consumer touch points from an average of two (such as TV and print) to six (such as TV, print, radio, public relations, interactive, consumer involvement). Additionally, it was found that old traditional media such as TV has not been replaced by the new digital media. Instead emerging media has been added to traditional advertising media to ensure success.[8] As mass media has fragmented, marketing communications has had to spread its persuasive messages over more and more places to reach the same audience and achieve successful results. See table 3.1 for a list of examples of Effie Award–winning marketing campaigns and their increased touch-point usage over the twelve-year study period.

How should marketers respond to this new multi-touch-point, engagement reality? Marketing communications professionals, whether they approach social media from the marketing, advertising, or public relations discipline, need to adjust their perspective from a strict, top-down control strategy to a more participative and interactive one.[9] As Jeff Howe said in *The Atlantic,* "Now, a brand's success has everything to do with the global, real-time, 24/7, electronic conversation taking place around it. As consumers gain leverage, corporations are learning to obey."[10] Yet practicing marketing, advertising, and public relations in this post-control marketing world doesn't mean all brands and organizations are simply at the mercy of the consumer. There is room for strategy and influence and even greater opportunity for success.

Whether marketers view this shift in perspective as obeying the consumer or choosing to change, organizations must let go of the traditional message-control model. Empowered consumers generating and sharing their own brand content do not fit neatly into traditional models of marketing communications strategy and practice.[11] Some estimate that consumers are now generating at least a quarter of all messages about a brand on the web. This shift requires a strategic change much bigger than simply purchasing more consumer touch points or reaching more journalists for more earned media stories with advertiser-crafted sell messages and highly spun public relations news releases. Social media is a different medium where users have very different expectations. Traditional advertising is built upon purchasing consumer attention through interruption, and traditional public relations is built upon influencing journalists to get a message out through news. To be effective in social media, the brand must build interest and engagement with consumers directly in the social media channel.

Table 3.1. Effie Award Winners by Touch Point from 1998 to 2010

Year	Sponsor and Title	Touch Points	Touch Point Categories
1998	Maytag, "Keeping Your Cool"	1	TV
1999	YoCrunch, "Smooth & Crunchy"	2	Radio, Retail
2000	Volkswagen, "New Jetta Launch"	3	TV, Radio, Interactive
2001	Maybelline, "Maybe She's Born With It"	4	TV, Print, Sponsorship, Retail
2002	LA Times, "Connecting Us"	5	TV, Radio, Print, OOH, Retail
2003	Bud Light, "Great Lengths"	6	TV, Radio, Print, Interactive, OOH
2004	Yahoo Search, "The New Yahoo"	7	TV, Radio, PR, Interactive, OOH, Guerrilla
2005	Breathe Right, "Back in the Sack"	8	TV, Radio, Print, Direct Mail, PR, Interactive, Guerrilla
2006	Infinity Broadcasting, "How Far Will You Go?"	9	TV, Radio, Print, PR, Interactive, OOH, Retail, Consumer
2007	Saab, "Born From Jets"	10	TV, Radio, Print, Direct Mail, PR, Interactive, OOH, Retail
2008	Mayfield Dairy, "Nurture Milk Launch"	11	TV, Print, Direct Mail, OOH, PR, Direct Email, Design, Interactive, Retail, Guerrilla, Consumer
2009	Dos Equis, "The Most Interesting Man In The World"	12	TV, Radio, Print, Direct Email, PR, Design, Cinema, Interactive, Sponsorship, Retail, Guerrilla, Consumer Involvement
2010	Clear Wireless, "Welcome to the Future"	13	TV, Radio, Print, Direct Mail, Direct Email, PR, Cinema, Interactive, OOH, Trade, Sponsorship, Retail, Guerrilla

Source: Keith A. Quesenberry, Michael K. Coolsen, and Kristen Wilkerson, "IMC and the Effies: Use of Integrated Marketing Communications Touchpoints Among Effie Award Winners," *International Journal of Integrated Marketing Communications* 4, no. 2 (2012): 60–72.

Note: OOH is out-of-home advertising sources such as billboards and transit ads.

Social media is not a quick add-on, like picking up another advertising channel such as TV, radio, and billboards, or holding an event, or sending out a release about a new feature to get news coverage. Social media must be approached in a separate way, but still integrated into traditional marketing communication. Yet social media goes beyond the disciplines of advertising, public relations, and even marketing itself. When marketers open a social engagement channel, they will also find questions and interactions with consumers that have more to do with other business units such as operations, customer service, and human resources. A social media strategy affects the entire business organization. Consumers see brand social media accounts as one place to get all their needs including product information, but also nonmarketing needs such as customer service, sales account information, and even human

resources–focused employee or recruitment requests.[12] Therefore, any truly effective social media strategy must be built from the ground up, integrating all business units.

Marketing communications professionals must be careful not to underestimate the extent of this change from control to engagement. This seemingly simple adjustment in mindset can make a vast difference in practice. A shift of this magnitude occurred with the rise of a new discipline: integrated marketing communications (IMC). IMC arose out of a desire and need for marketers to integrate messages for consistency across traditional media channels and marketing communication disciplines. This was a change in the way managers thought about marketing to improve efficiency of promotional communication. Later it also became an effective tool to combat the proliferation of media clutter and build awareness in light of decreasing mass media audience.[13] Marketers could no longer rely on reaching their target markets by buying mass audience attention in one or two places or gaining a couple of high-profile news stories in traditional media.

With IMC, communications touch points are managed together for consistency and greater impact. Yet even this system and strategy has broken down with the increased consumer adoption of social media. Integrated marketing communications is no longer enough because social media is not just another organization-controlled touch point. The consumer has a more powerful voice and therefore has a say in brand communication (see figure 3.1). Today consumers create communications about businesses and organizations—good, bad,
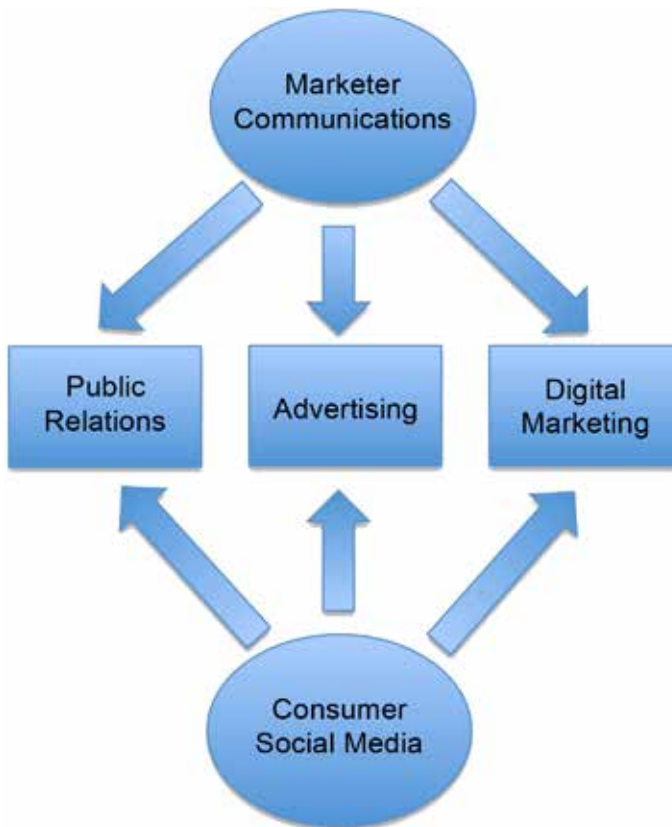
Figure 3.1. Control marketing is breaking down.

and indifferent—that marketers cannot directly control. Consumers have their own mass media channels that marketers cannot buy and traditional marketing practices don't account adequately for this social media–empowered consumer.[14] Hence, even an integrated marketing communications approach must evolve into an engagement model centered on a more powerful, influential, and demanding consumer.

Therefore, marketers must now do more than create consistent marketing messages pushed out to consumers through traditional communications disciplines. Both company-generated messages and consumer-generated communications should be integrated through engagement to create one cohesive marketing strategy. Social media creates conversations with consumers rather than one-sided strictly persuasive or sales-oriented brand messages.[15] Social media requires creating content the consumer values and will choose to engage with and share. Because the marketer cannot predict what the customer will say, the strategies must also be more flexible and nimble, accounting for more immediate adjustment, response, and inclusion of other business units like customer service, sales, and human resources.

This shift in perspective does not mean social media marketing is not persuasive. The business objectives to sell a product or service or gain support for a nonprofit organization remain the same, but the method to achieve those results needs to change. Interrupting sell messages should be balanced with content of value that attracts the audiences. Push sell messages should be supplemented with two-way consumer communication that involves them in the brand. Consumer content about the brand should be encouraged and shared. Consumer brand complaints should be noted and addressed. Again, this shift in mindset and strategy is not about completely giving up all control of a brand; it is about changing methods to maintain control and influence in a new consumer-centered social media reality.

From Interruption to Engagement

What feeling do you get when you're walking down the street or through the mall and a person stops to interrupt you and deliver a polished sales speech? You try to tell them that you are not interested. You try to tell them what you actually want, but they don't listen and instead of talking with you, they keep talking at you with product feature after product feature until you agree to buy or you simply run away. This can happen in social media.[16]

What would a marketer or advertiser do if they could not interrupt their audience? How would that change their marketing-communication message, strategy, and tactics? The answers to these questions requires a new model of marketing. This new model requires both interaction and integration of all information between the company and consumer.[17] Moving beyond traditional integrated marketing communications, marketers must now take a step back to include all sources of brand messages. The big difference now is that this not only includes brand communication produced by other business units or marketing partners, but also all consumer-generated brand content. Think of this new role as less of an integrated communications creator or controller and more of an integrated communications manager. In this new role, marketers, advertisers, and public relations professionals must also move from an overall emphasis on interruption to more

of an engagement perspective. When thinking about reaching a target audience with brand messages, traditional interruptive advertising and traditional public relations media placement still plays a role, but engagement should be a key consideration.

With the rise of the third screen and simultaneous digital and social media usage, it can be hard to tell if anyone is really paying attention to traditional media channels. As author Sean Carton says in a *ClickZ* article on the distracted consumer, "In a media marketplace that's increasingly fragmented and deficient in consumer attention, social media is one place where people tend to spend lots of time engaged with content and opinions."[18] To succeed today, marketing communications professionals must draw interest from the consumer where their attention is shifting, and must do it in a way so they will respond.

If mass media is losing consumer attention and that attention is shifting to social media, then marketers must follow to maintain brand attention. In this sense, social media is not a development taking away control from the marketing, advertising, and public relations professional. If brands learn to play by the new engagement rules, social media represents an opportunity to maintain control. Social media integration just may be the glue that can hold the professional practice of marketing, advertising, and public relations together in this new age of interactive media. Web 2.0 was not developed to kill advertising, public relations, or traditional marketing. Marketer communications professionals must simply evolve with these developments into matching practices of Marketing 2.0, Advertising 2.0, and Public Relations 2.0.

What if marketers thought of the consumer as less of a target to be sold to and more of a coauthor of the brand?[19] Professor John Deighton of Harvard Business School argues that the digital interactive transformation of marketing has become one of consumer collaboration. This new marketing model now includes a consumer's use of digital media or user-generated content that lies beyond the control of marketers. Deighton states, "The shift from broadcasting to interaction within digital communities is moving the locus of control over meanings from marketer to consumer and rewarding more participatory, more sincere and less directive marketing styles."[20] In an almost counterintuitive way, marketing communications professionals must give up brand control in order to maintain it. Learning to give up control and engage with the consumer more than competitors could reward a marketer and their organization with a competitive advantage.

One way to gauge the impact of these changes is to add to traditional marketing performance measurements such as share of market with communications measurements like share of voice. **Share of voice** is your brand social media mentions divided by total competitive brand social media mentions.[21] For further indication look at the sentiment of those social media comments. **Sentiment analysis** is identifying and categorizing opinions in a piece of text determining if the attitude expressed is positive, negative, or neutral.[22] Is your brand being talked about more or less than competitors in social media? Does your brand have higher or lower positive to negative social media sentiment compared to competitors? Social media management company Lithium suggests that these measurements can be indicators of brand loyalty, which contributes to brand sales. Therefore, improving share of voice and increasing positive to negative brand mentions above competitors in social media can be a factor in contributing to market share.

To gain this social media and overall business advantage, new marketing practices should aim to manage and integrate all brand-related communication, whether organization-created or consumer-generated, through more of a two-way conversation. Part IV of this book will explain in more detail how this engagement goes beyond marketing, advertising, and public relations practice to other organizational areas. To be the most effective, social media management and strategy must include other business units or disciplines such as research, product development, customer service, sales, and human resources.

To be effective, social media management must also understand how social media fits into the bigger picture of marketing and business objectives. Social media actions and even overall strategies and plans can exist on their own, but without an understanding of the marketing and business behind them, they could be acting in vain. Even communication-focused disciplines such as advertising and public relations must embrace the need for broader marketing and business knowledge. Incite's "State of Corporate Social Media" survey of global corporate social media professionals found that 90 percent say social media is considered an important part of their marketing strategy and 80 percent say that social media is an important part of their business strategy.[23] That means social media professionals must make the business connection by not only speaking the language of social media but by also translating social media activity into business action. Most C-Suite or top-level senior executives (CEO, CFO, CIO, COO, etc.) don't care about social media account follower numbers and engagement rates. To get approval and funding for social strategies, marketing communications professionals need to translate social media action into broader business goals such as sales, market share, awareness, customer retention, leads, etc. Learn to speak the language of business.

Social media professionals must also see the connection beyond their discipline. When a brand opens a two-way communication channel with a customer, the customer does not distinguish between marketing and nonmarketing messaging, but rather views the brand as one whole. In the new consumer collaboration model, companies become a hub for the constant flow of brand discussion as they monitor, respond to, and facilitate consumer buzz, and integrate consumer social feedback into other organizational activities. Perhaps IMC should evolve from integrated marketing communications to integrated communication management where marketer and consumer both contribute to the brand's messaging, promotion, and its products and services.

Marketing 2.0, Advertising 2.0, and Public Relations 2.0 recognize the power of the consumer social media voice to create and spread brand messages, improve operations and customer service, leverage influencers, communicate with key stakeholders such as employees and investors, recruit new employees, and provide valuable product, service, and marketing insight to supplement traditional research. An article in *AdNews* Australia sums up this thought nicely with the title "Time to Let Consumers Be the Voice of Brands."[24] Consumer brand social media is too powerful to ignore. An Olapic consumer trust survey found that 70 percent of US respondents and 53 percent of European respondents indicated they are more likely to buy a product after seeing a positive or relatable consumer-generated image of it.[25]

Adjusting to this transformation is challenging. It requires changes in strategy, tools, and organization, but there is reward for the organizations that embrace the shift in mindset and

implement a social media strategy correctly. Research into electronic word-of-mouth communication (eWOM) suggests that it is seen as a reliable source of information, increases the perceived value of offerings, and improves loyalty intentions.[26] Other research has found that participation in company or brand social networks enhances value co-creation by customers and customer stickiness. **Customer co-creation** is simply the joint creation of value by the company and customer.[27] **Customer stickiness** is the increased chance to utilize the same product or service that was bought before.[28] The authors of the research indicate that brand social networks are an important competitive marketing channel and play an important role in business enterprise.[29] Thus, the consumer voice generates brand awareness, increases brand value, and builds loyalty. In social media, loyalty is contagious. Marketers have always known word-of-mouth is the best form of advertising. Now through social media it has finally reached the scale and scope to be a significant business objective-reaching strategy.

As a result of these changes, growth and demand for employees with social media skills has increased greatly with many new career possibilities. A McKinley Marketing Partners survey of marketing companies looking to hire in 2017 found that the top in-demand marketing skills were digital marketing (56 percent) compared to the bottom category of traditional marketing (19 percent). The top skills in demand within digital marketing include digital advertising, content creation and curation, content strategy, and social media. Despite the active demand for digital skills at 56 percent, the available supply of active job seekers with digital skills is only 24 percent, representing a large gap. This is certainly a problem for companies trying to attract those employees. But it represents a big opportunity for marketing communications professionals or students who can demonstrate that they have that knowledge and those skills.[30]

The story is the same in the advertising and public relations industries. An *Advertising Age* article by Maureen Morrison explained that digital skills are no longer a plus but are expected and says that ad agency leaders "need to be steeped in the digital landscape and everything that goes along with it: social platforms and their data, ad formats and attribution models."[31] Public relations firms are also emphasizing social media skills. A survey of public relations firms by Gould+Partners asked what they require of new hires. Under the category of preferred knowledge, social media practices was number one (88 percent) followed by public relations practices (69 percent).[32] Having social media skills has become essential for any marketing communications professional. Yet there are also a host of new jobs focused on social media with many options inside the field itself. See table 3.2 for examples of various types of social media job titles.[33]

Theoretically Speaking: The Four Ps to the Four Cs

A basic principle in marketing is the **Four Ps**, which divides the marketing mix or function into four interconnected parts: product, price, promotion, and place (distribution).[34] The Four Ps concept was first introduced by Jerome E. McCarthy and then popularized by Philip Kotler, the Father of Modern Marketing.[35] This traditional Four Ps view of marketing has been taught since the 1960s. However, in the 1980s Gordon Bruner and other scholars

Table 3.2. Example Social Media Professional Job Titles

Social media professional	Social media engagement analyst	Director of social media and public relations
PR and social media manager		
Social media and marketing manager	Social media influencer marketing specialist	Social media communications manager
Social media strategist	Social media marketing lead	Social media content photographer
Social media editor	Social media community builder	
Social media producer		Social media curator
Social media coordinator	Social media account executive	Social media engagement manager
Social media graphic designer		
Social media marketer	Paid social media manager	Social media and processing specialist
Social media community manager	Paid social media specialist	
	Social media supervisor	Social media buyer
Social media project manager	Paid acquisition lead (social media)	Digital and social media specialist
Social media program manager		
	Sales development rep. social media	Social media content specialist
Social media analyst		
Social media director	Content and social media marketing specialist	Social media channels coordinator
Social media creative specialist		
	Head of social media	Manager social media analytics
Social media creator specialist	Social media lead	
	PR and social media pro	Social media and admission specialist
Social media marketing analyst	Social media content analyst	
		Social media marketing specialist designer
Social media marketing and sales associate	Customer advocacy/social media manager	

Adapted From: Brie Weiler Reynolds, "7 Companies Hiring for Sensational Social Media Jobs," FlexJobs.com (blog), September 28, 2016, https://www.flexjobs.com/blog/post/companies-hiring-social-media-jobs/.

started to argue that the Four Ps were no longer adequate to describe the new breadth of marketing applications. Bruner proposed a new marketing mix termed the Four Cs of concept, channels, costs, and communication.[36] The Four Cs were said to address changes in marketing tools and consumer perspectives.

Around the same time, the concept of integrated marketing communications (IMC) was introduced by Don E. Schultz and other scholars. The practice of IMC argues for the integration of what were previously seen as separate methodologies: advertising, sales promotion, direct marketing, and public relations. Thus, **integrated marketing communications** seeks to align and coordinate all marketing communications delivered to consumers to present a cohesive whole that persuades consumers to purchase.[37] IMC is also said to focus more on consumer-centric communication to meet the needs and desires of the customer.

More recently, Robert Lauterborn has further refined the Four Cs concept, emphasizing the value of customers and the importance of convenience and relationships. The

Four Cs can be explained as consumer not product, cost not price, convenience not place, and communicate not promote. In this shift in perspective from marketer to consumer, value defines the product in the marketplace instead of product features. In this perspective, consideration is paid to the customer's needs, limited money, and shopping experience, and communication becomes more interactive and relational.[38] Whether you believe that the Four Ps are relevant or not, it is clear that the marketing mix has changed and marketers' strategies must change along with it.

Chapter 3 Checklist

Social media can change quickly. Visit PostControlMarketing (http://www.postcontrolmar keting.com) for updates, but also use this chapter checklist to briefly check how social media statistics in this chapter have changed since publication.

- ✓ What is the current perspective on the social media press release? Has it been updated?
- ✓ How has the definition of Marketing 2.0, Advertising 2.0, and Public Relations 2.0 changed?
- ✓ Has the concept of the Four Ps in marketing evolved? Has there been greater adoption of the Four Cs concept?

SOCIAL PLAN PART 3

Quantifying Engagement

Ask and answer these questions: Is the brand integrating the consumer's voice into the organization? In what areas are consumers being integrated and engaged, and how much? In this part of the social media plan, visit all the active social media accounts for the brand, product, or service. Visit each account and scroll down the posts. Who is talking? Is it only the brand or are consumers responding? When consumers do respond, does the brand respond back? Is the brand fixing customer-support problems via social media? Has the brand ever considered or used consumer product or service ideas given in social media feedback? Conduct this research and then report findings in these areas:

1. List all brand social media channels with account names and active brand participants.
2. Gauge the interaction by quantifying brand versus consumer posts.
3. Provide example responses in each category: customer support, product/service ideas, promotions, and appreciation.
4. Explain any evidence that the brand has acted on customer social media contributions such as improving the product or service or using brand content.
5. List possible social media channels where the brand's consumers are active but the brand is not.

For a condensed version of the social plan see appendix A: Three-Part Social Plan.

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

1. The distracted consumer is a marketing problem, but also a human one. In the book *The Shallows: What the Internet Is Doing to Our Brains,* Nicholas Carr presents research arguing that the internet is physically changing our brains and reducing attention spans.[39] How distracted are you? Do you find your attention span waning?

2. Is the advertising age or traditional public relations age over? Find your own evidence to prove or disprove this statement.

3. What are your thoughts on integrated marketing communications? Is it always necessary, or do you believe a campaign could still be a success by using only one touch point, such as TV or just social media?

4. What opportunities are out there for marketing, advertising, and public relations professionals with social media skills? Do some job searches and find the top titles for social media pros. Make a list of required skills and responsibilities. If you found your dream job, make a plan to acquire those skills as you work your way through this book.

ADDITIONAL EXERCISES

1. Go back to the John Wanamaker quote: "Half the money I spend on advertising is wasted. The trouble is, I don't know which half." Do you believe this statement is still true today? Find evidence, tools, and research that prove John Wanamaker wrong. How do you know advertising works today? Is 100 percent of advertising spending not wasted, or has the percentage changed, and, if so, to what? You can also attempt this for public relations. What percentage of public relations spending can be proven to be effective and not wasted?

2. Take an evening during prime-time television and perform a content analysis of all of the TV commercials you see in one hour. Which commercials mention social media and what social media channels are included? Be sure to capture all the ways social media is integrated into the commercial messages. Do the social media icons simply appear at the end of the commercial or do the brands ask the viewer to do something?

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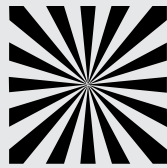
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PART

II

A Strategic Framework That Works

Lay a Foundation and Frame the Conversation

You should never go to battle before you've won the war on paper.[1]

—Philip Kotler

PREVIEW

Do you have goals for your life? I am sure most reading this automatically said yes. Perhaps general aspirations popped into your head. You would like to be successful in your career, perhaps have a family, and even retire early. Or maybe you had a thought that you just want to be able to get through this week. Beyond these vague ideas, have you taken the time to write down specific goals for your future?

For years, consultants have been telling a story about Yale's graduating class of 1953. Researchers reportedly surveyed the seniors and found that only 3 percent had specific, written goals for the future. Twenty years later, researchers polled the surviving members of the class and found that the 3 percent with goals had accumulated more wealth than the other 97 percent of the class combined! This is a fascinating story, but in 1996 Lawrence Tabak reported in *Fast Company* that it was completely untrue.[2] In fact, Yale University Library received so many requests for the study that they now report on their website that they have determined no "goals study" ever occurred.[3]

However, the nonexistence of the Yale study motivated Gail Matthews of Dominican University to conduct her own. In a survey of 149 participants Matthews found that those who wrote goals actually accomplished significantly more than those who did not.[4] Despite the true or untrue status of the Yale story, taking the time to plan and have specific written goals is important and leads to better results.

Business Objectives, Target Audience, Social Analysis

So far, this book has looked at the history and definition of social media and noted the changes in mass media, marketing, advertising, and public relations. This has provided valuable background and context to establish how persuasive, influential, and disruptive social media has become. There is a strong argument for why organizations should be active in social media. Of course, most businesses have heard this message and many have in fact responded. As of 2016, 97 percent of Fortune 500 corporations had a presence on LinkedIn, 84 percent were on Facebook, and 86 percent had Twitter accounts.[5] Yet as Philip Kotler points out, going into the social media battle and having a plan are very different actions.

Knowing an organization should be active in social media and even having social media accounts is not difficult. Many sources have published articles and videos on how to set up social accounts quickly and easily. For example, Social Media Examiner published a blog post on how to set up a Facebook business page in minutes.[6] A brand may have had a Facebook page for a decade or more, but learning to use that page effectively is an entirely different game. It is a game marketers, advertisers, and public relations professionals cannot win unless they take the time to plan an effective strategy.

In a survey of global chief marketing officers, 82 percent felt they were not prepared to deal with the data explosion, and two-thirds of chief marketing officers reported that they were not ready to cope with social media.[7] Why? Having a Twitter page and updating it with corporate press releases or promotions is not a winning social media strategy. This is treating social media as simply another traditional media channel to push out controlled marketing communications messages. Used the wrong way, a Facebook, Instagram, or Twitter page simply becomes another outlet to add to advertising clutter like digital billboards or bathroom-stall advertising.

There is also evidence that brands are not moving well beyond main social platforms to strategically add social channels well suited to their business goals and target audience. Of the high percentage of Fortune 500 companies on LinkedIn, Facebook, and Twitter, only two-thirds (66 percent) are using YouTube and just over one-third (36 percent) have corporate blogs. Under half of Fortune 500 brands are using other social channels like Instagram (45 percent) and Pinterest (33 percent)[8] and only 40 percent of Fortune 500 CEOs are active on social media.[9] Yet today success depends on having a multichannel social media strategy. For example, 93 percent of Pinterest users plan purchases on the platform and 87 percent have made a purchase after seeing a product they liked.[10] Snapchat can be the ideal place to reach younger target markets like millennials. Instagram has played an integral role in helping to lift sales for brands such as Gatorade which saw a 3 percent increased household penetration and 4 percent increased sales.[11] Businesses that have prioritized blog-

ging are thirteen times more likely to receive positive return on investment.[12] **Return on investment (ROI)** simply means measuring the profitability of an investment as a ratio between the net profit and cost of investment.[13]

How should brands communicate in these new social media outlets? They must go back to the very beginning of marketing. A **market** is defined as a place where products are bought and sold.[14] The best-selling book *The Cluetrain Manifesto* reminded us that marketing originated in traditional physical markets. In those open squares, "markets are conversations, talk is cheap, silence is fatal."[15] Old-time markets began as a place where people talked about what they cared about and the goods on the table between them. As the distance between producer and consumer grew, a gap between our business voice and our authentic voice appeared.

Marketing became an applied science to engineer responses through calibrated stimuli—control marketing. Social media bridges that gap, and brings the consumer and merchant back to the table in a personal conversation. Consequently, for social media success, marketers need to start with a customer-centric marketing strategy.

As the physical market turned into the marketing discipline, a gap also opened up between producer and marketing communications professional. When the person talking to the customer made the product and ran the business, the business goals were readily apparent to them. They most likely had objectives to sell a certain amount of product by the end of the day, week, month, etc. Today a gap has also opened up between the business manager, owner or producer, and the marketing manager and social media professional. Often they are speaking different languages and their goals and objectives don't align. This is where many social media efforts go wrong from the very beginning. As social media expert Jay Baer of Convince & Convert says, "The goal is not to be good at social media. The goal is to be good at business because of social media."[16]

Social media is not an end unto itself. The biggest mistake a marketer, advertiser, or public relations professional can make is to place their social media strategy objectives too low. Don't get caught in the trap of immediately going to easy objectives based on lower-level social metrics. Yes, it makes sense to have a brand presence in social media because your target market is there and you want to engage them. Yet setting follower and engagement goals with specific objective numbers on social platforms is, as marketing expert Jon Gatrell puts it, "viewing social media as both the beginning and the end." This is not only extremely limiting for your social media plan but also fails to recognize the reason upper-level managers or owners of the organization or business are paying you to develop and implement a social media strategy in the first place.[17]

A **goal** is simply something that a person or group is trying to achieve. An **objective** is a goal expressed in specific terms.[18] Goals and objectives should be business- or organization-driven, but they can vary wildly. A goal could be a straight increase in sales of a product or service, or an increase in donations or volunteers for a nonprofit. Perhaps a brand is suffering from a negative image and goals would be about changing consumer perception. A startup may want to increase general awareness or an established company may need to increase awareness of social responsibility efforts or a new product.

How do you know what these important higher-level business goals and objectives are? One way to know is to simply ask. Some managers and owners will know. It may come from

an annual report, a business plan, or a recently created or updated marketing plan. Other times you need to ask managers other questions. What keeps you up at night? What numbers must you hit? How do you know you are successful at the end of the year? How do you or your boss judge success? What has changed recently that is challenging you? What do the main stakeholders of the organization or business care about most?

Often managers get caught up in day-to-day operations and have trouble expressing a multitude of needs as one, two, or even three clear and concise organization or business objectives. Or perhaps the situation has changed since objectives were set in a dated business or marketing plan. This is where a situation analysis can uncover problems and opportunities to set business objectives and as a way to discover strategies to help meet those objectives.

One of the most basic strategic processes in marketing is a situation analysis, and one of the most powerful tools in situation analysis is the SWOT analysis. **SWOT analysis** is a process for identifying an organization's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats to analyze the internal and external factors impacting success.[19] Although credited to various people, no one knows the true origin of this concept. It may be that SWOT originated in a number of places, or became commonplace in the training rooms of corporate America in the 1950s and 1960s.[20] Either way, a structured planning method for marketing strategy starts by setting a goal and then collecting primary and secondary research data.

Whether performing a SWOT analysis on a brand, product, service, individual, for-profit, or nonprofit, goals should always be expressed as objectives following SMART guidelines. **SMART objectives** are specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and timely.[21] Expressing goals as quantified objectives that follow SMART guidelines ensures that they are measurable and thus success can be proven and effort can be justified (see box).

Again, when setting objectives for a social media plan, don't make the mistake of focusing on smaller social media activity such as "likes" or comments. Always start with larger overall business objectives such as increasing sales, generating leads, or improving customer satisfaction. Your business objectives should not be social media–focused like "Within six months, open an Instagram account and post a minimum of five times a week." A good business objective following SMART guidelines could be more like "Increase sales by 20 percent to sixteen- to twenty-four-year-olds within six months." Opening an Instagram account and posting a minimum of five times a week may be a part of your social media strategy and tactics to help meet that business objective.

Lead with business objectives. Then follow with target market, social media platforms, tools, and social metrics. Different organizational objectives and target markets may require very different social media support tools and social media channels from donation and awareness to customer service and lead-generation goals. Don't start with current brand social media accounts and simply set higher follower or engagement metric objectives. Existing channels may be wrong for the current objective and were started for very different reasons. New social media channels may be ideal, but were never considered. Customer service may be on a separate social media software tool from marketing, but now integration is needed. Start from the beginning and keep an open mind about adding and subtracting social media tools and social media platforms as the brand, industry, and consumer research indicates.

Later in chapter 14, after selecting social media platform channels and social media tools, we will discuss how to connect business goals to specific social media channel metrics as a way to measure success and prove ROI. Starting with larger overall business objectives ensures your social strategy will be relevant to company executives or the business owner and other business departments. It will help ensure that your social media actions are con-

tributing to the **bottom line**, which is the line at the bottom of a financial report showing profit or loss.[22] Make sure that you are translating your social media actions into the language of the people who have to approve and fund your social media plan. Aim to tell the bigger story of how social metrics align with higher-level objectives that matter to everyone in the business. Through the situation analysis, you should uncover problems or opportunities that will identify what these business objectives need to be or confirm the business objectives communicated to you. The situation analysis will also lay the groundwork for the social media strategies needed to meet those objectives.

Begin gathering internal and external data to identify the main categories of a SWOT analysis: strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats. Many organizations have existing primary research that is very useful for this analysis. If you are not an employee, some of this information can be found on corporate websites and in industry trade association reports.

Objectives Should Meet SMART Guidelines

Any business, marketing, or social media objective should be expressed in concise sentences that follow these SMART guidelines. Each objective should be a single sentence that meets all five requirements. Separate objectives should not be created for each SMART category. In most strategies there is also no need to explain how each objective meets these requirements. Simply make sure the objectives are written to follow these guidelines.

- **Specific:** If objectives are to increase sales, express this in terms of an exact percentage or dollar increase. If objectives are to increase awareness, state it in concrete terms such as a percentage of awareness among a target market.
- **Measurable:** A specific objective is useless unless it can be measured. If the objective is to increase awareness by 40 percent, current awareness levels must be known and there must be a plan to collect awareness levels later.
- **Achievable:** A sales increase of 400 percent is exciting, but is it feasible? Perhaps there isn't even the production capacity to meet that objective. If objectives are too big, they are setting the plan up for failure. Are the necessary resources and support available?
- **Relevant:** Objectives must match organization vision and mission. A specific, measurable, and attainable objective may still not be important to leadership or make a direct contribution to the organization's purpose.
- **Timely:** Any goal may be attainable given enough time, yet waiting ten years to increase sales 10 percent may be too little, too late. Set a due date to give a sense of urgency, ensure the objective is measurable, and then judge whether efforts have been a success.

To identify these business objectives consider questions like: What numbers must the company meet? How does management judge success? What big issue is challenging the brand? Hootsuite explains that real business goals tend to come from the three categories of business conversions, brand awareness, and customer experience.[a]

[a] Sarah Dawley, "Do Vanity Metrics Matter on Social Media? Yes (and No)," Hootsuite.com (blog), May 30, 2017, https://blog.hootsuite.com/vanity-metrics/.

There is a wealth of secondary research available as well. Start with Google, but also consider company profile databases such as Standard & Poors, International Directory of Company Histories, and Hoovers. Annual reports can be obtained from corporate websites or the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC). If accessible, use Mintel Oxygen, MarketLine, and SRDS (Standard Rate & Data Service) for valuable reports and research insight. PrivCo is also a good resource for private company data.

Always start with existing or secondary research, but there may be a need for new or primary research to make informed strategic decisions or to ensure objectives are measurable. **Secondary research** discovers information previously researched for other purposes that is publicly available. **Primary research** is new research to answer specific questions, and can include questionnaires, surveys, or interviews.[23] Start with secondary research first to see what is already available and to discover what primary research you may need to fill the gaps. Sometimes secondary research is free, but often you have to pay for individual reports or subscribe to services to access this data. Depending on your organization, the value of these reports and subscriptions can outweigh the cost and is normally less expensive than conducting your own primary research.

Smart research is an investment to help avoid costly mistakes down the road. Too many times marketers and other communications professionals skimp on research up front only to succumb to the old adage, "There's never enough money to do it right the first time, but always enough to do it twice." These days, it does not take a lot of effort to write and field an online survey. Consider fielding independent research via tools such as SurveyMonkey or Google Docs. What type of data could and should be captured?

Gather Primary and Secondary Data About:
- History of the organization
- Product and/or service description
- Current marketing campaign/efforts
- Recent sales/performance history
- Industry overview/trends
- Key competitor actions

Don't forget the business trade press, which can share valuable developments and insights. Many research companies such as Gartner, Nielsen, and Forrester issue press releases that highlight key findings. Sometimes the trade press will obtain research reports and write articles about key research highlights. Product industry trade organizations will occasionally conduct research and issue reports for their members. Other organizations such as the Pew Research Center and US Census Bureau issue data and reports for free. For information specific to social media, look to outlets such as Social Media Examiner, Social Media Today, and Mashable, or try marketing, advertising, and public relations trade groups such as WOMMA, the American Marketing Association (AMA), the American Association of Advertising Agencies (AAAA), the American Advertising Federation (AAF), or the Public Relations Society of America (PRSA). Other country-associated trade groups may offer valuable research including the Marketing Agencies Association (MAA), the Advertising Association (AA), and the Public Relations and Communications

Association (PRCA) in the United Kingdom; the Canadian Association of Marketing Professionals (CAMP), the Association of Canadian Advertisers (ACA), and the Canadian Public Relations Society (CPRS) in Canada; or the Australian Association of National Advertisers (AANA), the Australian Marketing Institute (AMI), and the Public Relations Institute of Australia (PRIA) in Australia. Check with university and public libraries for access to valuable databases. Facebook has now started collecting information on its over two billion users and is releasing consumer research reports called Facebook IQ. Think with Google provides marketing research and digital trends.

Also, be sure to gather information about current marketing communications activity. Is there an existing advertising, public relations, or IMC campaign that is running? Does the brand have a tagline, certain imagery, or a spokesperson that appears in all marketing promotion material? What is the idea or theme behind their current ads, whether traditional or digital media? What do these materials look like? Some brands have even trademarked their colors such as Pullman brown for UPS, T-Mobile's magenta, and John Deere's green-and-yellow color scheme.[24] It is important to collect and analyze existing marketing campaigns to ensure integration with any new social media strategy. For example, you probably cannot imagine any new social media effort for M&M's that doesn't include the M&M's characters Red, Yellow, Blue, Green, Orange, and Ms. Brown.

Once data is gathered, organize the information into meaningful categories. Start with a blank SWOT template such as the one shown in figure 4.1. Identify internal strengths and weaknesses and external opportunities and threats. **Internal factors** are the factors that occur within an organization and impact the approach and success of operations. **External factors** consist of a variety of factors outside the organization that marketers typically don't have direct control over.[25] Summarize the facts that may be helpful or harmful to the organization or business as short bullet points in each quadrant. List only the most relevant and important factors to highlight the big picture; do not include all the details in the graphic.

From this big picture of the current environment, try to identify internal factors that match external factors. For example, match internal strengths with external opportunities.

Figure 4.1. SWOT Analysis Graphic Template

Source: "SWOT Analysis," Wikipedia, last modified August 23, 2017, http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/SWOT_analysis.

Try many combinations. There is no one right answer, but several promising strategies should start to emerge. There will be varying degrees to which an organization's resources and capabilities match external factors to form a strategic fit. In a written plan or presentation, explain what you saw in the SWOT. Make sure the reader or audience sees what you are seeing and knows what challenges and opportunities have been revealed. These revelations should be relevant to the business objectives. If not, then you may need to identify other, more relevant challenges and opportunities or objectives may have to be modified. If a more promising opportunity is discovered, go back and modify one or more of the original business objectives, as long as they still fit SMART guidelines and are in line with organizational vision and mission.[26]

Don't underestimate the importance of vision. Take time to evaluate the organization's vision or reason for existence. The vision of Ben & Jerry's is most likely different from that of Häagen-Dazs, and that should make a difference in objectives and strategy. Vision is often expressed as a mission statement, which can usually be found on corporate websites. If you are working for a startup, you may need to work with the owners to write one. A **mission statement** is a written declaration of an organization's core purpose and focus that tends to remain unchanged over time.[27]

Finally, identify a target audience for the social media communications effort. Note that a target audience may be different from a target market. A **target market** is identified in business and marketing plan objectives and represents a group of people who share common wants or needs that an organization serves. On the other hand, a **target audience** is a group of people identified as the intended recipient of a communications message.[28]

For example, a nonprofit may have a target market of people in need to whom it provides services and a target audience of people who provide support through donation of their time or money.[29] There may also be important target audiences that are not in the target market but that influence end users to make conversion or purchase decisions. This is an especially important consideration in social media, where a quarter of consumers may influence the purchases of the rest.[30] The important decision here is to identify the group that is most likely to respond positively to the effort and directly or indirectly contribute to helping meet organization goals and overall business objectives.

A famous example of a target market not matching a target audience is Old Spice (see "Mini Case: Old Spice New Target"). Here the marketer and its advertising agency selected women as the target audience for a campaign where the target market, the main users of the product, was men.[31] This strategy was a more customer-centric marketing effort rooted in consumer insight.

In defining a target audience for a social media effort, narrow the selection by more closely defining who is most likely to respond to the brand, product, service, or organization. See table 4.1 for possible variables and bases of segmentation. Demographic and psychographic variables are normally the most important. Yet depending on the organization or company, geographic and behavioral variables can play an important role. In defining a target audience, you don't have to define all variables and bases—only those that are relevant.

As with business objectives that follow SMART guidelines, be sure the target audience designation is specific. Define the target in terms of both demographic and psychographic information. **Demographic variables** can include information such as age range, gender,

Table 4.1. Variables and Basis of Segmentation

Geographic	Demographic	Psychographic	Behavioral
Basis such as region, climate, population density, and growth rate	Basis such as age, gender, ethnicity, education, occupation, income, and family	Basis such as values, attitudes, and lifestyle	Variables such as usage rate, price sensitivity, brand loyalty, and benefits sought

geographic location, ethnic background, marital status, income, and education. When possible always quantify these designations with specific numbers, such as women aged twenty-five to thirty-four. Not only does this ensure that one person's interpretation of middle age is the same as someone else's, it will also match advertiser and publisher standards for buying media. Most agree that eighteen- to twenty-four-year-olds have more in common with each other in terms of interests, needs, and desires than they do with forty-five- to fifty-four-year-olds. Age ranges for target markets and target audiences usually follow time periods associated with stages in the family life cycle. The **family life cycle** is the stages people pass through from childhood to retirement that usually represent different needs and desires.[32] Stages can include child, pre-teen, teenager, young single adult, young married with no children, married with young children, older married with children, older married with no children, and older single. This can be broken down further into age ranges such as under six, six to ten, eleven to twelve, thirteen to seventeen, eighteen to twenty-four, twenty-five to thirty-four, thirty-five to forty-nine, fifty to sixty-four, and sixty-five-plus.[33]

Another factor to consider is **generational targeting,** when marketers target broader age groups such as baby boomers, generation Xers, or millennials because they may have similar desires compared to previous generations. **Psychographic variables** consist of internal factors such as values, attitudes, interests, lifestyle, and behavior. For example, not all eighteen- to twenty-four-year-old male millennials are equally interested in rugby, robotics, or running. Define the target audience utilizing both of these types of information. An example target audience could be "Twenty-five- to thirty-four-year-old married women professionals with young children living in urban and suburban areas interested in staying fit and active."

Finally, many marketing, advertising, and public relations professionals create a customer profile or buyer persona which provides an in-depth description of the target, not only to define who may respond but also why.[34] A **buyer persona** is a semifictional portrayal of the ideal customer based on real data.[35] Think of a buyer persona as the historical fiction story of a single person in the target audience that fills in a real life around the data. For the target audience example above, the buyer persona would dig deeper into developing a greater understanding of what it is like to be a specific woman in that target on a typical day juggling the demands of home and work while wanting to still devote time to her own health and well-being.

It is important to note that some, like social media expert Mark Schaefer, have raised concerns about creating buyer personas, cautioning that it may be an outdated technique.[36] Individual customers can be very different and writing to an average could lead to content

MINI CASE

Old Spice New Target

In 2010 the men's body wash category was growing, but Old Spice's sales were slipping. Procter & Gamble's research found that women purchased 60 percent of men's body washes. For the first time, Old Spice marketing was targeted to women with its "The Man Your Man Could Smell Like" campaign.[a] It received a lot of attention, but did it deliver business results?

In the first three months, Old Spice captured 76 percent of all online conversations about male body-wash brands, with more than half of that coming from women. This resulted in Old Spice becoming the #1 all-time most viewed and #2 most-subscribed branded channel on YouTube. The six-month campaign generated 1.7 billion total impressions, and sales more than doubled versus the prior year, with an increase of 125 percent.[b] In this case having a different target audience from the target market for the product was a better strategy. Also notice that success was ultimately expressed in sales increases. Social media views, likes, comments, and shares were the specific strategy and tactics to get there.

[a] "Old Spice Campaign Is Not Only Great, It Sells—Now #1 in U.S. in Both Dollar and Volume Share," CampaignBrief.com, July 16, 2010, http://www.campaignbrief.com/2010/07/old-spices-campaign-is-not -onl.html.
[b] "Old Spice Case," Effie Awards, accessed February 17, 2015, http://www.apaceffie.com/docs/default -source/resource-library/oldspice_case_pdf.pdf?sfvrsn=2.

that doesn't feel very human. Therefore never underestimate the value of personal experience. The owner, manager, or salesperson who has been in a business for decades can have a very thorough understanding of the customer and their needs. To really understand your customer, Tom Webster from Edison Research suggests going on client visits with the salespeople in a business-to-business brand in order to realize how inaccurate an average can be.[37] The more you understand individual customer needs and desires, the better off your social media strategy will be. An alternative for a business-to-consumer brand could be to go work in the restaurant or store with front-end employees or answer phone calls, emails, and social media comments with customer service representatives.

In *The Art of War,* Sun Tzu taught that true strategy was not planning by working through an established list, but rather responding to changing conditions.[38] The same thought applies when developing a social media strategy. The process may need to adjust to the situation. In some organizations, the target audience may be fixed. Start there and work back toward setting objectives and performing the SWOT analysis. Or the target audience may change in the midst of the process as new information and insight is discovered. And business objectives may change as new challenges and opportunities are uncovered.

Listening to what people are saying in a social media audit may change the target audience or business objectives. Remain flexible and respond to changing conditions, yet stay rooted in a solid foundation that meets the organization or business objectives, matches brand vision or mission, leverages research insight, and maintains communications focus.

Take Philip Kotler's advice in formulating the plan to win the battle on paper, but follow Sun Tzu's foresight in keeping it flexible and be willing to use an eraser.

Listen with a Social Media Audit

Ernest Hemingway said that he learned a great deal from listening carefully, yet most people he knew never listened.[39] A shortcoming of many marketing, advertising, and public relations people is that they like to talk. Maybe this is a characteristic that drew them into the field. Being able to talk serves them well in convincing people to bet millions on marketing, advertising, and public relations ideas. Yet listening is an important skill that is a key to social media success.

The creators of brand communication may not be seeking a Nobel Prize in Literature like Hemingway, but getting the crowds to like and share brand content is surprisingly similar to developing a best-selling novel. In 2010 Edward Moran and Francois Gossieaux performed a study of more than five hundred companies and found that, to increase chances of success, marketers developing a social media strategy must first listen to what online communities are saying about their products and where they are saying it.[40]

Furthermore, not listening can get organizations into big trouble. In 2006, Dave Carroll composed a song about United Airlines' mishandling of his $3,500 guitar and their refusal to compensate him (see figure 4.2). Within one week, the video received 3 million views, 17.5 million by 2017, and earned media coverage from news outlets such as CNN, the *Wall Street Journal*, the BBC, and the *CBS Morning Show*.[41]

The magazine *Fast Company* reported that Carroll contacted United for nine months with calls and emails, but only after the video's success, and United Airlines' stock price drop of 10 percent, did the company try to make things right.[42] Carroll wrote a book about the experience called *United Breaks Guitars: The Power of One Voice in the Age of Social Media*. United, like other airlines, has made great strides since then by significantly expanding customer service via social media. Unfortunately, they didn't completely learn that old policies must also be updated.

In 2017 a similar incident happened when Dr. David Dao was violently removed from Flight 3411 to make room for United flight crews and the cell phone footage of the incident went viral.[43] With global social media adoption greatly increased since 2009 and the many more social channels with video capabilities, this video racked up hundreds of millions of views within days, attracting over 100 million views on China's Weibo alone. After a huge social media backlash, negative news coverage, and a loss of $1.4 billion in stock evaluation, the airline apologized and eventually changed their crew travel policy.[44]

Listening in social media is important. The initial step in listening is a social media audit. A **social media audit** is a systematic examination of social media data. In this phase of social media planning, think of the social media audit as taking a snapshot of all social media activity in and around a brand and then evaluating the information gathered. It is a social situational analysis that includes both internal company social media actions and external consumer and competitor social media activity.

Figure 4.2. "United Breaks Guitars" is still gaining views.

Source: "United Breaks Guitars," DaveCarrollMusic.com, accessed September 4, 2017, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5YGc4zOqozo. © Big Break Enterprises Inc.

First, listen to what the brand is publishing on its social accounts and what consumers are saying about the brand, product, service, organization, and key personnel in any social platform. Also listen to what is being said by and about the brand's main competitors. Listen with an outside perspective to what the organization and its employees are currently saying on official corporate social media accounts and unofficial or personal accounts. A combination of internal and external social talk data will help identify challenges or problem areas within the current social media environment. The audit will also identify possible opportunities that may become significant parts of a strategic plan.

Second, organize the collected data and make it accessible for meaningful analysis. To accomplish this, use a social media audit template (see table 4.2). The template provided is divided into three key areas of talk for listening and analysis: company, consumer, and competitor. In each area, gather information and record what is found into "W" categories. These categories come from the principle of the **Five Ws**, by which journalists are directed to find out the who, where, what, when, and why of a news story.[45]

Table 4.2. Social Media Audit Template

Who	Where Channel/Environment	What Content/Sentiment	When Date/Frequency	Why Purpose/Performance	Opportunity 1 = challenge 5 = opportunity
Company					
Consumer					
Competitor					

Data collection and analysis should occur in these key categories: who—company, consumers, competitors; where—social media channel (YouTube, Facebook, Pinterest, etc.) and environment (describe the look and feel); what—type of content (articles, photos, videos, questions, etc.) and sentiment (positive, negative, neutral); when—frequency of activity (number of posts, comments, views, shares, etc. per day, week, or month); why—purpose (awareness, promotion, complaint, praise, etc.). Note that the number of rows under each "Who" (company, consumer, competitor) will vary based on the number of brand and competitor social accounts and the number of social media platforms or channels where consumer brand talk is found.

To be effective, the audit need not track down and collect each digital conversation. The objective of the social media audit is not to capture every mention but to gather a snapshot of the social talk—enough to get an accurate picture of what is currently happening in the social space. Still, be sure to gather a complete picture. Take the time to uncover conversation on all social media platforms not just where the brand and competitors already have official accounts. It may be useful to pause and take a look at the table of contents, part III, chapters 6 through 10, to ensure you are considering all possible social channels in the listening phase of the social audit.

For current company social media efforts, it is important to determine purpose and note key performance indicators (KPIs), if any. A **KPI** is simply a key indicator that is used as a type of performance measurement.[46] Try to determine the purpose of each social channel. For example, why does the organization have a Pinterest page and how is success being measured? For some this may be easy to answer and for others it could be a wake-up call. "Because everyone else is using it" is not an acceptable answer. A brand social media account should exist to support higher-level business objectives.

In the social media audit template larger organizations may have to divide the "Company" category further into departments, offices, or employees. Perhaps several departments or local offices are each operating their own company social media account, or numerous high-profile employees are active in talking about the organization on their personal accounts—such as a CEO. It is important to capture what each is communicating and to discern whether they are presenting a unified brand image.

When determining the "Why" or purpose of a communication channel, dig deep and find a strategic reason that directly supports the organizational mission or business objectives. If a strategic purpose cannot be found for being in a specific social media channel, then it needs to be reevaluated. Is maintaining the social media account worth the organization's time and effort? Finally, score each observation as either a problem or an opportunity. Use a five-point scale with 1 being a problem and 5 indicating an opportunity. This will help sort out areas for offensive and defensive social strategy.

Listening to what customers, competitors, critics, and supporters are saying is key to getting results from social media campaigns. How does someone listen? In Charlene Li and Josh Bernoff's book *Groundswell*, they describe two listening strategies: homegrown monitoring and professional monitoring. **Homegrown monitoring** is using search engines and going to each social media platform to find and manually track and analyze brand social media conversation. This includes simply typing into the Google search box the brand or

product name with the word "complaint" or "love," performing a blog search, and searching names and hashtags in each social media network. Discover what people are saying who have tweeted a company, product, or CEO's name. Find public support forums, fan clubs, and sites such as Yelp or TripAdvisor, and check the ratings and reviews on retail sites like Amazon.com. Do the same search for competitors as well.[47] Be sure to locate all brand social media accounts and find conversations that are happening on social media platforms where the brand doesn't currently have an official presence.

Professional monitoring is using one or multiple software tools or setting up a private community to track and analyze brand social media conversation. Professional monitoring doesn't always mean paid. There are numerous free social media monitoring tools and paid options often offer free basic accounts with fewer features or free, limited trials. If a brand is just starting out, the homegrown method and free monitoring tools can suffice. Marketers, advertisers, and public relations professionals can find enough information for the social media audit to formulate a solid social media strategy. This is especially suitable for students, small businesses, and startups. Yet homegrown monitoring efforts don't scale. If an organization is serious about social media and has a budget for it, it should invest in a paid social media–monitoring service and content-management system or pay a research company to start a brand community. Partnering with a vendor will save time in collecting data, delivering new content, and creating reports.

Costs for paid social media monitoring vary widely from $20 a month to $10,000 a month or more, based on needs, time, and long-term strategy for listening, content publishing, analytics, integration, and reports.[48] This expense could also be divided among departments. For example, chapter 13 details how real-time social media monitoring can turn into a real asset for customer service.

There are numerous paid and free tools offering many ways to analyze, measure, display, and create reports to gain insight from listening. See appendix B, "Social Media Tools and Resources," for a listing of the major tools available with both paid and free social media listening options.[49] For the most up-to-date list, visit postcontrolmarketing.com/links.

Many paid services also offer limited free versions or free trials such as at Hootsuite. Professionals are eligible for a free thirty-day trial of Hootsuite Pro. Students can access free training and the opportunity to earn Hootsuite Platform Certification. Other social media software services may offer college programs such as Meltwater, Cision, HubSpot, or Microsoft Dynamics 365. If you are an undergraduate or graduate student, inquire about programs through your university or professor.

Many marketers today are also investing in a social media command center. A **social media command center** is a branded social media monitoring room acting as a central, visual hub for social data. These centers tend to be set up in high-profile locations within company offices. In 2010 Gatorade built their mission-control center in the middle of the marketing department at their Chicago headquarters. Radian6 (now part of Salesforce) and IBM partnered with the sports beverage brand to build a custom war room that monitors the brand in real time across social media.[50] GM (General Motors) built a social media command center in their Detroit headquarters that is described as a "high-energy, state-of-the-art engagement environment featuring dozens of wireless work stations, multiple collaboration

rooms and 18 HD monitors that display a wide variety of social feeds." GM's twenty-six full-time social media advisers average more than six thousand monthly interactions for in-market presale and customer care. The command center covers 150 owned social channels from the car brands of GM, Chevrolet, Buick, GMC, and Cadillac while also monitoring 85 earned media sites like automotive fan forums.[51] As an indication of the importance of social listening, Target's mission-control-style monitoring room is called "guest central" and is on the C-Suite floor of their Minneapolis headquarters only steps from the CEO's office.[52]

After social conversation data has been collected and categorized into company communication, consumer communication, and competitor communication, it must be analyzed. Like any audit, data needs to be examined to formulate a judgment. What is the data saying? Does it point to any opportunities? Are there any trouble spots? How is the existing social media activity performing in terms of helping to meet organizational goals and business objectives?

If serious or not-so-serious negative issues have been found, they need to be addressed before starting any additional social media effort. If company social media channels are not integrated with the same brand, look, feel, and voice, this needs to be corrected as well. Drawing additional attention to existing social channels that are not unified is a waste of new efforts. Is there a discernible pattern in consumer negative chat? If significant numbers of customers are complaining about a similar customer service or product issue, it needs to be corrected now, before a new social strategy is set into place. Sending more people to a flawed issue will only increase the negative talk.

Don't skip the beginning of the next chapter about making repairs. If the brand does not fix what is causing the complaints, it will only send a loud message to existing customers that the organization doesn't listen and doesn't care. Remember that individual consumer complaints are now seen and heard by many. Don't be like most people Ernest Hemingway observed who never listen. Make a bold move to fix problem areas and take a first step toward social media marketing success.

Theoretically Speaking: Market Segmentation

What is the foundation for having and identifying a target audience? Many have heard the saying, "Birds of a feather flock together." This holds true in most people's personal experiences. They tend to gravitate towards like-minded individuals. It also holds true in marketing, advertising, and public relations. **Market segmentation** is a process of "grouping potential customers into sets that are homogeneous in response to elements of the marketing mix."[53] Wendell Smith introduced the concept in 1956,[54] and then Russell Haley in 1968[55] expanded segmentation bases to include psychographic variables. Market segmentation is a valuable strategic tool to help organizations focus marketing activities on target segments. This activity helps concentrate limited resources to make them more impactful.

Traditionally, market segmentation has fallen into two approaches. **Commonsense market segmentation** is when managers use a single segmentation criterion, such as age, to split consumers into homogeneous groups. On the contrary, **data-driven market seg-**

mentation is when managers analyze more complex sets of variables to split consumers into homogeneous groups. Commonsense segmentation is simple and easy, but a business basing its strategy on more data-driven approaches with more psychographic and demographic bases for segmentation will perform better.[56] The more research-driven segmentation bases marketers and advertisers uncover, the tighter and more successful the target audience and social media efforts will be.

Chapter 4 Checklist

Social media can change quickly. Visit PostControlMarketing (http://www.postcontrolmarketing.com) for updates, but also use this chapter checklist to briefly check how social media statistics in this chapter have changed since publication.

- ✓ What percentage of Fortune 500 companies are on the top social media channels? Have the percentages gone up or down? Are they spreading out to more social networks?
- ✓ Are there new social media listening tools? What are the latest free and paid options?
- ✓ Are social media command centers still popular and valuable? Is brand social listening happening at the brand headquarters or have communication partners like advertising agencies or public relations firms been monitoring for brands?

SOCIAL PLAN PART 4

Objectives, Target, Situation Analysis, and Audit

In this part of the social media plan, first identify quantified and time-bound business objectives and specifically define the target audience for listening and communication. Then gather a snapshot of the organization's industry, recent performance of the brand, existing marketing campaign, and all current social media talk and traditional marketing promotion for the product or service and its competitors. This part of the plan is about identifying where the business or organization wants to go and where it is currently. Cover these four areas in this report, following the process and tools outlined in this chapter:

1. Identify overall business objectives that follow SMART guidelines.
2. Perform a situation analysis and develop a SWOT table.
3. Explain the current marketing campaign and identify key themes, images, and taglines.
4. Define a target audience with multiple bases of segmentation.
5. Perform a social media audit, report results in an audit table, and describe insights gained.

For a condensed version of the social plan see appendix A: Three-Part Social Plan.

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

1. Why must marketers select target markets? Wouldn't targeting a broader audience, or everyone, result in more sales?
2. Is increasing the number of organizational social media accounts a good objective? Why or why not?
3. After the first social media audit, can brands then stop listening? Why or why not?
4. How should brands respond to negative comments on social media? Should the brand ignore comments, dispute them, or try to censor them?

ADDITIONAL EXERCISES

1. Find an organization's business plan, marketing plan, or corporate "About Us" web page. Look at the mission, objectives, and/or target market. Are they accurate and relevant? Now look at their social media efforts. Do they match? Everything done in social media should be checked to ensure it is in line with organizational vision and mission. Every social effort should help meet business objectives and be focused on talking to and with the right target audience. If there is a disconnect between the stated mission and current social media activity, which should be updated?
2. Log on to Twitter or Facebook and look at the streams of several large businesses in a specific industry, such as cellular service providers. Look at companies like Verizon, AT&T, T-Mobile, Sprint, and Boost. Are most of the tweets from the marketer? Do they respond to customers, and how? Are there a lot of complaints? What are most about? Is the channel active? How many followers does each have? Quantify and compare engagement. In just a couple of minutes you should form a quick assessment of efforts and gain some key insights. Which of the competitors is doing the best job?

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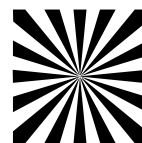
Make Repairs and Jumpstart the Conversation

> We think our job is to take responsibility for the complete user experience. And if it's not up to par, it's our fault, plain and simply.[1]
>
> —Steve Jobs

PREVIEW

How many friends do you have? Right away the number of friends you have on Facebook or the number of followers you have on Instagram or Twitter many pop into your head. But if you were asked this question as little as ten years ago, your answer would be very different and probably not in the hundreds. Back then friends meant people you see in person and with whom you open up and trust to share private details of your life.

Social networks began with the intention of being a private conversation between "friends." Yet today any complaint or random thought that used to be shared personally between closer friends is now published in mostly a public and searchable forum. Facebook Search allows any user to search for people, posts, photos, places, Pages, Groups, apps, and events on Facebook.[2] It is also just as easy for a Facebook friend to repost to their network or take a screen grab and post anywhere something that was originally only posted to friends or followers.[3]

Researchers from Cornell University and Facebook discovered how influential these posts could be. On average, twice as many Facebook posts contain positive words (47 percent) as

negative words (22 percent). However, this study found that people who had positive words removed from their news feeds made fewer positive posts and more negative ones and people who had negative words removed made fewer negative posts and more positive.

The research was based on the concept of emotional cognition.[4] **Emotional cognition** is a psychological phenomenon in which a person or group influences the emotions and behavior of another through conscious or even unconscious emotions.[5] This study emphasizes the importance of fixing organizational problems that may be creating negative brand social talk.

Fix Operations, Product, and Service Issues

Let's say that through social media monitoring or listening research, an organization discovers a serious customer service issue that is causing a lot of negative social media comments from customers. Or perhaps there is a substantial quality issue in product delivery that continues to show up in customer ratings and reviews. Many marketers would easily say that this is a customer service department or operations responsibility. In the new social media landscape, these issues become marketing, advertising, and public relations concerns even if these business functions don't have direct control over the issue. Steve Jobs may have been talking about user interfaces or operating systems, but the same thought applies to marketing communications professionals who must now take responsibility for the entire user experience with a brand.

Customer service is the process of ensuring customer satisfaction, often while performing a transaction, taking a sale, providing post-purchase support, or returning a product or service.[6] Customer service can take the form of personal interaction, a phone call, or an internet chat, usually provided by customer service representatives. **Operations** are jobs tasked with converting inputs such as materials, labor, and information into outputs such as goods, services, and value-added products that can be sold for a profit.[7] In general, operations makes what consumers buy, marketing gets the customers, and customer service keeps those customers happy.

Why should marketing get involved in an operations or customer service issue? As Steve Jobs probably would have said, marketing is to blame. Marketing, advertising, and public relations professionals make product and service claims or promises to consumers. When the product, service, or experience doesn't live up to that promise, the wrong communication has been delivered. If the message, product, or service is not adjusted, then any new efforts to increase social media talk will only increase negative communications. If marketing, advertising, or public relations does not address the root cause, it is merely setting itself up for failure in meeting its own objectives and goals.

Advertising creative director Jerry Della Femina once said, "Nothing kills a bad product faster than good advertising. Everyone tries the thing and never buys it again."[8] Today, this happens even faster, because every bad customer experience can be instantly told to hundreds or thousands of people through social media channels. Plus, once social media posts or comments are published, they do not disappear like a negative newspaper print article, TV report, or personal interaction by the watercooler. Social media is forever and is only a Google or social media search away. For a marketing department to reach its ultimate
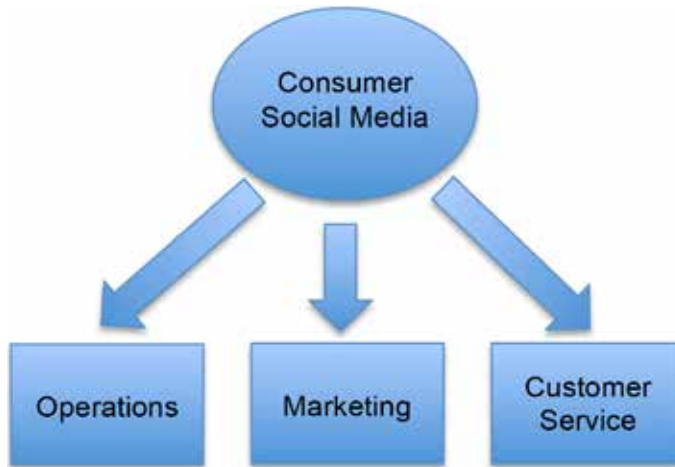
Figure 5.1. Social media impact all business units.

objectives, it must involve itself in other departments of the organization. Prevention is the best medicine.

For years organizations have been set up with dedicated business functions in departments such as accounting, marketing, and human resources. These units or "silos" often have separate goals, leadership, and resources. This can lead to a silo mentality where each department rarely interacts with other business units. In many ways the power and influence of social media is forcing down these disciplinary or business-unit silos.

Consumers don't see organizations as separate operating units with independent budgets, management, goals, and objectives. Consumer conversations in social media impact all business units (see figure 5.1). This is the main message in part IV of this book, "Integrating Social Media across Organizations." Marketing simply cannot be only about marketing anymore and must work across strategic business units. A **strategic business unit** (SBU) is a fully functional and distinct unit that develops its own strategic vision and direction.[9] Today, marketers, advertisers, and public relations professionals need to worry about other business functions. The good news is that if marketing becomes the social media expert in an organization, it becomes more valuable to all business units and will earn a larger role in the entire organization. This means a seat or more prominent seat for social media in the corporate suite as evidenced by Target's social media command center being on the same floor as the executive offices in their corporate headquarters. Some organizations are forming new organizational structures where a separate social media department or center has been created to work with and serve marketing, advertising, public relations, customer service, corporate communications, human resources, information technology (IT), and other departments.

No matter where social media is located in an organization or partner firm, if there is a discrepancy between product or service promise and delivery, a change must be made. In some instances the marketing, advertising, and public relations message needs to be adjusted to lower expectations and promise a less-ambitious customer experience. No matter what improvements are made, perhaps the organization simply can't meet over-zealous communications expectations. Other times, social media listening will uncover a customer service, product, or operations issue that needs to be fixed no matter what the

communications message. The key is to not move forward with a new social media strategy until adjustments are made.

In a ten-year analysis, Altimeter Research found that the number one cause of social media crises was exposure to a poor customer experience.[10] Every organization most likely has numerous competitors ready to take advantage of any weakness. Consider negative social media talk as an early-warning system to get any product or service issues right before they cause real and long-lasting damage.

As the collectors of this information, marketing and its communications partners must sometimes be the bearers of bad news. Communicate to and engage with other organizational departments to try to resolve the issues as soon as possible. Fix them before more consumers find out. Fix them and go out of the way to make it right with current customers. In turn, they will most likely reward the organization with positive talk. **Silo syndrome** is when a department or function, like marketing, develops its own culture and has trouble working with other functions such as operations, customer service, or sales.[11] Marketers, advertisers, and public relations professionals should avoid silo syndrome and start collaboration and coordination with other strategic business units from the very beginning of the social media strategy process.

Steve Cody, CEO of Peppercomm public relations, talks of company-crushing, social media–driven uprisings, saying, "People are pissed because they feel no one's listening to them. And often, no one is listening to them." If people are mad, listen to them and fix it—no matter the root of the problem. If the CEO said something dumb in a comment, encourage the CEO to apologize or correct it. If people are upset about ingredients in a product, change them or explain them better.

Changing the problem is what happened with lean, finely textured beef. "Pink slime" was a filler made from meat scraps that used to comprise many beef products such as fast-food hamburgers. The industry considered this an acceptable ingredient until ABC News ran a series that triggered a social media backlash, protest, and boycott targeted toward elementary schools, supermarkets, and restaurants. Those companies listened, contacted operations, and then manufacturing adjusted its process and dropped producers of pink slime from the supply chain. The negative social talk died down.[12] Unfortunately, it is not clear whether lean, finely textured beef was an acceptable food ingredient. In 2017 Beef Products Inc., the manufacturer of "lean, finely textured beef," filed a defamation suit against ABC. Both sides quickly agreed to a confidential settlement, but ABC stood by its reporting saying that it did nothing wrong.[13]

In *Social Media Marketing: An Hour a Day*, Dave Evans calls this consumer-influence process the social feedback cycle. A central concept of marketing is the purchase funnel, by which companies move prospective consumers from awareness to consideration and finally purchase through marketer-generated activity. **Purchase funnel** is the consumer-focused model that illustrates a customer journey toward purchase from awareness to interest, desire, and action.[14] In each step, the number of consumers gets smaller. Evans adds user-generated activity after purchase, when consumers use the product or service and then talk about it on social media, where the funnel gets larger again and then cycles back to the consideration phase where prospective customers read posts, comments, ratings, and reviews. Social media conversation is so

powerful because it has a unique ability to influence the consideration phase of this traditional marketing purchase funnel through the social media consumer feedback.

The **social media feedback cycle** is social media connecting post-purchase social media conversation back to the purchase process, where social media is the product of operations based on the expectation given in marketing communication.[15] A television advertisement is good at generating awareness, but when consumers are really contemplating a purchase, they go to the internet to see what other consumers think. This is where they see post-purchase consumers talking on social media about their experience with the brand, product, or service. The talk can be positive or negative and it carries more influence than marketing's traditional consideration phase point-of-purchase materials such as in-store posters. Acknowledging and implementing this additional phase in the purchase funnel process represents a key shift in thinking to be successful in social media strategy.

Big Ideas and Being Interesting

T. S. Eliot wrote, "Distracted from distraction by distraction." This poetic reflection on the nature of time and order of the universe was written nearly fifty years before the internet existed and nearly seventy years before Web 2.0.[16] Yet the quote provides an astonishing observation on the current state of humans living in a continuously connected digital world. Todd Gitlin's review of *The Shallows: What the Internet Is Doing to Our Brains* adds another characterization. He appropriately sums up Nicholas Carr's book, saying that our information society has turned into the interruption society.[17]

The Pew Research Center has found that people see this distraction as a negative aspect of mobile connectivity. A quarter of US survey respondents said cell phones make it harder to give people attention and focus on single tasks.[18] Perhaps people are still operating under the myth that they are great multitaskers. However, there has been growing evidence that the ability to multitask is a myth. It can take up to 40 percent more time than single-tasking—especially for complex undertakings.[19]

As early as 2004, researchers in the *Journal of Advertising* sought to discover why people avoid advertising on the internet. What they found was that prior negative experience, advertising clutter, and goal impediment were the most significant explanations. The authors note, "The unexpected appearance of advertising messages on the Internet disrupts user tasks or goals and causes consumers to extensively avoid the noise."[20] Remember Howard Gossage from chapter 2: "Nobody reads ads. People read what interests them."

How do marketing messages not become the noise people want to avoid? Forget brand, product, and service for a moment and delve into the mind of the consumer. Become an account planner, and dig deep for consumer insights that can turn into actionable strategy. Account planning is a discipline imported from the UK to US advertising agencies in the 1990s that has since expanded to marketing departments, public relations firms, and design agencies as an important method and discipline. The account planner finds consumer insight through research and ensures the customer's perspective is represented in the marketing communications, advertising, and public relations strategic process.

What Is Account Planning?

Account planning is designed to bring the consumer's perspective into the process of developing creative advertising and public relations messages and executions. While others worry about sales, clients, media placement, and creative awards, an account planner's job is to seek consumer truth and insight through primary and secondary research so advertising and public relations is relevant, entertaining, memorable, and effective.[a]

One of the most famous and successful examples of an account-planner-driven idea was the California Milk Processor Board's "Got Milk?" campaign. By now this campaign is so ubiquitous that every business from bath remodeling to used-car dealers has commandeered the slogan. But this great campaign started with an account planner's consumer research, which led to a "milk deprivation insight." This is the feeling people get when they run out of milk to go with a food that really needs milk.

How powerful was this consumer insight? It led to an integrated marketing communications campaign that stopped a twenty-year sales decline. The agency on the campaign, Goodby, Silverstein & Partners, used surveys and focus groups, but also collected research by placing video cameras in kitchens stocked with cereal, cake, and cookies and removed the milk to see how people genuinely reacted.[b]

[a] "What Is Planning?," Apg.org.uk, accessed February 17, 2015, http://www.apg.org.uk/#!co-how tobecomeaplanner/ctyy.

[b] Jeff Manning and Kevin Keller, "Making Advertising Work: How GOT MILK? Marketing Stopped a 20 Year Sales Decline," *Marketing Management* (January/February 2003).

Working on a project with a good account planner can help produce some of the most effective campaigns. If an organization doesn't have an official account planner, take on the mindset of one. Scour existing organizational research and research others have performed, and seek employees' knowledge of the target audience. Go on ride–alongs with salespeople, work with front-line employees, and interview customers directly. What kind of information should marketers, advertisers, and public relations professionals be searching for? Actionable insight. *Merriam-Webster* defines insight as "the ability to understand people and situations in a very clear way" or "the understanding of the true nature of something."[21] The word *actionable* has its root in the law, but simply mean "able to be used as a basis or reason for doing something."[22] In other words, find **actionable insight,** or a true understanding of people in the target audience and situations related to the product or service that can be used to meet objectives of a marketing effort.

Insight can be found anywhere. Renowned advertising copywriter David Ogilvy found it reading technical articles to pen one of the most famous and successful advertising headlines: "At 60 miles an hour the loudest noise in this new Rolls-Royce comes from the electric clock."[23] This line takes insight from the obsessive luxury mindset of the Rolls-Royce target audience, combines it with a product feature, and turns a mechani-

cal detail into an emotional pull. In a similar way, Goodby, Silverstein & Partners found insight with video cameras in kitchens. "Got Milk?" took that insight about people's reaction to a specific situation and made it a reason to keep refrigerators always stocked with milk. Marketers and advertisers should search for that actionable insight that will lead to a big business-objective-exceeding idea.

In a campaign for a regional airport, the insight came from an informal visit to the airport terminal. The integrated marketing communications team noticed the short trip, close parking, and small lines compared to the big-city airports they normally drove hours to fly out of on business trips. The consumer insight became actionable when it was linked to the marketing strategy and service benefits. The idea was a scavenger-hunt challenge in which two local radio celebrities raced each other to Chicago and back—one flying out of the regional airport and the other driving to the closest big-city airport. Live updates were reported on the radio and social media and culminated with a public relations event that evening with the local business association. The result was a campaign that not only announced the airport's new direct flight but also delivered the busiest month in the airport's history. Many times an insight is a common problem or solution to a problem. Sometimes it is simply a way of looking at a situation with empathy that acknowledges how the consumer feels.

In another successful campaign for a company that sold health insurance plans to businesses, the insight was found in the fact that the target audience, human resources managers, had gone through a lot emotionally. Human resources managers had nothing but bad news to deliver to their employees year after year for several years. The thought of holding yet another company meeting to inform employees that premiums were going up by double digits was downright depressing. Empathy, something the large competitor insurance company lacked, was the insight. It became actionable when linked to the smaller company's more flexible plans and account representatives who were empowered to deliver customized solutions that helped soften premium hikes. The campaign featured crying human resources managers in print and human resources managers singing the blues on the radio.[24]

A highly successful smoking-cessation campaign was inspired by research reported in an academic journal that linked quitting smoking with the same feeling people have in bad romantic relationships. The resulting campaign featured a woman trying to break up with a jerk boyfriend dressed as a cigarette.[25] Finding the right insight can make it easy to translate into media communication built around social interaction. Both the insurance and smoking-cessation campaigns would integrate nicely into social media content playing up the personal aspects of the cigarette and human resources manager.

Actionable insights can lead to big ideas. British brand-consulting firm Millward Brown defines a **big idea** as a driving, unifying force behind brand marketing efforts.[26] How does one know when they have a big idea? In three decades of working with companies, Chris Wirthwein, CEO of 5MetaCom, has found ten qualities that differentiate big ideas from "not so big ideas." See table 5.1 for an excerpt from his *Entrepreneur* article, "What's the Big Idea?"[27]

When selecting a big idea or big insight a main consideration should be making sure it is social. Social media is about personal interaction, and placing that at the heart of a marketing, advertising, or public relations campaign is an excellent jumpstart. Think about

Table 5.1. Ten Qualities That Set Big Ideas Apart

1. **Transformation:** Can it change attitudes, beliefs, and behaviors?
2. **Ownability:** How closely can it be connected to your brand only?
3. **Simplicity:** Do people get it without explanation?
4. **Originality:** Is it unique enough to grab attention?
5. **Surprise:** Will people see it as unexpected in a good way?
6. **Magnetism:** Does it have a special allure or attraction?
7. **Infectiousness:** How memorable is the idea?
8. **Contagiousness:** Will it compel people to tell others?
9. **Egocentricity:** Is it about people's self-interest?
10. **Likability:** How much will people like it?

Source: Chris Wirthwein, "What's the Big Idea? 10 Qualities That Set Big Ideas Apart," Entrepreneur.com, October 20, 2014, http://www.entrepreneur.com/article/238441.

the difference between traditional advertising and successful social media campaigns. A big idea in traditional advertising is not always a big idea in social media. Standard advertising practice places a corporate logo in the bottom right of a print ad. Yet in social media, it is hard to be personal with a corporate logo. Big ideas in social media should have personal interaction built in.

In the previous smoking-cessation example it is fairly easy to see how an abusive cigarette boyfriend could play well in social media. Do not assume that this means a big idea must have a brand character. Without a character, social media big ideas can emphasize consumer-generated content or even employee-generated content. Imagine the "Got Milk?" campaign interacting with consumers by inviting them to share their own milk-deprivation stories. Consumers would become content generators for the effort. Zappos.com has built its brand on the insight that consumers love excellent customer service. So their big idea is having hundreds of employees posting on social media as themselves, providing that exceptional customer service experience.[28]

Perhaps what is needed is simply spending time watching the target audience. The academic term for this is observational ethnographic research. Informally this can be accomplished by activities such as working the lunch hour at a convenience store, observing an operation at a hospital, informally asking questions of customers in a department store, or touring factories and talking to workers. This is what the team did with the regional airport to get their big idea. Even observing personal experiences with products, friends, family, and life in general can provide valuable insight. Never underestimate the power of instinct and don't hesitate to seek out the data and research to justify a gut feeling. The subconscious mind is often right.

To jumpstart the social media conversation, the big idea needs to be based on actionable consumer insight. This will make the marketing interesting, driving key factors needed to make a social media campaign successful. When marketers, advertisers, and public relations professionals know the audience well, they deliver what the audience wants, needs, and desires. A great social media strategy can be brilliant on paper but a flop in the social world, like a job candidate who has an exceptional resume but falls short in person.

Also, an idea is not big if it is not interesting. Advertising can buy attention, but social media must earn attention, engagement, and shares for additional views. In a world where we are constantly being "distracted from distraction by distraction," interruption is becoming less and less effective. Social media big ideas must be unifying but also interesting and engaging. Social media strategy is about creating relationships with consumers, not creating ads.

Big ideas must also have legs. **Having legs** means a campaign theme can be executed, or created for many different media, for a long period of time.[29] Having legs also refers to ideas big enough to take advantage of current events. How fast is the idea? Timing is another key to being interesting. Stand-up comics know this. So did the marketers at Oreo when they took advantage of a Super Bowl blackout by sending out a quick tweet: "Power Out? No problem," with an image of an Oreo cookie and the line, "You can still dunk in the dark." It was retweeted ten thousand times in one hour. The image released during the thirty-four-minute blackout was designed, captioned, and approved within minutes. What was the ROI on this tweet compared to a multimillion-dollar thirty-second Super Bowl TV spot?[30] Chipotle Mexican Grill takes advantage of current events by engaging their customers. For example, an Instagram post included a picture of people eating their burritos while on their smartphones and asks "Caption this." Comments include mentions of *The Big Bang Theory*, Hurricane Irma, and the new iPhone announcement.

Telling a Story in Social Media

When working in marketing communications many in advertising agencies and public relations firms are obsessed with finding the big idea. They are on the search for that great campaign and clever tagline that will get people talking, get people buying, and win them awards. This catchphrase even turned into the CNBC advertising executive talk show, *The Big Idea with Donny Deutsch*.[31]

However, in the Donny Deutsch show days, the big idea was more about running a six-month or annual advertising campaign with perhaps three print ads, a radio commercial, some banner ads, billboards, a press release, and a kick-off event. Big ideas were tidy mini-stories told in a small series of well-crafted and finely controlled media executions. Of course, this was before the explosion in social media use and influence of the consumer voice that this book is about. What then are marketers, advertising, and public relations professionals to do with this concept of the big idea?

In a way, big ideas today have to be bigger. Today's big idea is more than a clever tagline created by an advertising executive. Today's big idea is a big brand story. In social media, there are so many individual mini-brand communications created daily, by brands and their consumers. The big idea needs to be even bigger and more flexible to include trends and consumer comments and content. The big idea is a big brand story that doesn't end but evolves and is co-created over time through interaction with customers and even employees.[32]

If the big idea in social media is about story, what makes a good brand story? Research published in the *Journal of Marketing Theory and Practice* analyzed two years of Super Bowl TV commercials—the one time all year people choose to watch advertisements for the

enjoyment of the ads themselves. The researchers wanted to know which ads were the most liked, the ones that drew voluntary interest and the most votes in Super Bowl Ad ratings polls like *USA TODAY* Ad Meter and SpotBowl.com. Ratings indicated consumer likability but also valuable viral engagement and earned media coverage.[33]

The commercials were coded based on Freytag's Pyramid, a theory which breaks a story down into five parts: introduction, rising action, climax, falling action, and resolve. Shakespeare used this story formula to draw mass audience for his five-act plays. Results found that the ads that tell a complete story (all five acts) were the most popular and the ads at the bottom of the consumer ratings polls told less of a story (less than five acts). Having all five parts creates a dramatic arc or plot—the formula for being interesting. This is the same story formula you can apply to social media.

Social media depends on producing frequent, consistent, quality content. Brand managers used to producing yearly advertising campaigns with a series of three to six ads are often left wondering what to post daily or weekly on their social networks. Establishing a bigger brand story can give you the content base you need. Then each social post or response can be a mini-chapter or character quote, expressing and advancing the overall story. To plan a larger brand story for social media, plan out the big idea considering all five acts of storytelling as depicted in the Social Media Story Template (see table 5.2).

Table 5.2. Social Media Story Template

STORY ELEMENTS					
PLOT >	**ACT 1** Introduction/ Exposition	**ACT 2** Conflict/ Rising Action	**ACT 3** Climax/ Turning Point	**ACT 4** Results/ Falling Action	**ACT 5** Resolve/ Release Tension
CHARACTERS POV: Brand/ Consumer					
SETTING Background/ Context					
CONFLICT Problem/ Solution					
THEME Moral/Lesson					

▨ MINI CASE
Chipotle Scarecrow

Chipotle Mexican Grill has addressed negative social media by improving their product and then talking about issues consumers care about in entertaining ways. Chipotle has changed their product and operations to support sustainable farming, which is expressed in their "Food with Integrity" marketing campaign. In 2013, they created a mobile game and animated short film, *The Scarecrow*, telling the story of a scarecrow's fight against corporate food production.

The film reached 6.6 million YouTube views in less than two weeks.[a] Supported by a small online and mobile advertising campaign, plus public relations outreach, the campaign generated more than a half-billion media impressions and the game was downloaded more than five hundred thousand times in six weeks. The free iOS game delivered a sustainability message in a fun way, but also let players earn buy-one-get-one-free deals on Chipotle menu items, which drove traffic to the store.[b]

[a] Jason Ankeny, "How These 10 Marketing Campaigns Became Viral Hits," Entrepreneur.com, April 23, 2014, http://www.entrepreneur.com/article/233207.
[b] Karlene Lukovitz, "Client of the Year: Chipotle Mexican Grill—The Content Marketing Master," Media Post.com, January 8, 2014, http://www.mediapost.com/publications/article/216937/client-of-the-year-chipotle-mexican-grill-the-c.html.

Act 1: Introduction. This story element is also called the exposition and provides the background details, setting, previous events, character, etc. People buy brands for products and service, but also for the backstory. Does your big idea have room for sharing the organization's history, people, and mission or vision through social media content?

Act 2: Rising Action. This part of the plot delivers a series of related incidents or events that build toward a point of greatest interest—the climax. When considering social media content, be careful of flat posts that simply contain the same information over and over in different ways. Think from a much broader and longer perspective of creating social media posts that build upon each other towards a big action, reveal, or turning point that consumers can look forward to, check in on, and keep coming back to see.

Act 3: Climax. This act of a brand story is the turning point which changes a main character's fate. The main character of a social media effort can be from the brand's perspective or the customer's point of view. In social media, consider presenting the brand or customer reaching a turning point and finding a solution or overcoming a challenge by drawing upon brand, product, or service strengths.

Act 4: Falling Action. During the falling action of the brand story element, the consequences of the turning point are revealed in greater detail and allowed to play out. If an obstacle was overcome, illustrate the results for the brand or consumer. If an opportunity was seized, detail the benefits and outcomes that point toward a final victory.

Act 5: Resolution. In this final phase of a complete story, all of the preceding events lead to an ending scene of the drama or narrative. Conflicts are resolved for the characters, which creates a release of tension and anxiety. Here social media content can show the brand or customer winning. Provide a glimpse at the ultimate goal of the brand and its customers—the happily ever after.[34]

The researchers of the Super Bowl ads did a follow-up study presented at the American Marketing Association conference and found the same results in viral advertising videos. A two-year analysis of viral advertising videos found that views and shares were higher for online brand videos that followed the five-act plot formula. The more acts included, specifically four- and five-act stories, the higher the views and shares leading to improved viral marketing performance.[35]

Remember that in traditional marketing and advertising, brands interrupt the stories people want to see (TV shows, magazine articles, radio programs) with paid promotions. In social media, the brand must create the content people want to view and create a story that consumers want to be a part of creating themselves. Social media big ideas must inspire content that grabs people's attention, holds their interest, invites engagement, and elicits sharing. As marketing communications professionals start to develop the big idea, strive to get out of a campaign mindset and aim for a bigger brand story that leverages all five acts of storytelling that can be lived out in social media on a daily or weekly basis over a long time. This may also be a consideration as stories have become a popular social platform feature on channels such as Snapchat, Instagram, and Facebook.

Theoretically Speaking: Ethnographic Observational Research

Ethnographic research has its roots in anthropology or the social sciences, but now marketing, advertising, and public relations have found this method to be useful in studying the culture of consumers. **Ethnography** is investigation of a group or culture based on immersion and/or participation to gain comprehensive understanding.[36] This type of investigation is often conducted via observational research. **Observation** is a form of qualitative research that involves the systematic collection of data where researchers use all of their senses to examine people in natural settings and situations.[37] Some researchers emphasize a distinction between observation and participant observation. As early as 1958, Raymond Gold described the roles a participant observer could play.[38] The following methods of observation could prove useful in various situations:

1. Direct or participant observation via handwritten or electronic field notes.
2. Self-reports via written and photographic journals kept by study participants.
3. Secondhand reports by people directly involved in the situation being studied.
4. Electronic observation via video or audio recorder, internet, or GPS.[39]

Chapter 5 Checklist

Social media can change quickly. Visit PostControlMarketing (http://www.postcontrolmarketing.com) for updates, but also use this chapter checklist to briefly check how social media statistics in this chapter have changed since publication.

✓ What are the latest developments in account planning? Is it still a separate discipline or has it become more a part of the way other communications professionals practice?

✓ Is silo syndrome still a problem? Is there evidence that marketing departments are working more closely with customer service, operations, and sales? If not, what are the barriers?

✓ Since the release of *The Scarecrow* viral film, Chipotle has faced several food poisoning scandals. This really emphasizes the connection between marketing communications and operations—food safety regulations. How has the company handled these public relations crises in social media?

SOCIAL PLAN PART 5

Repair Plan and Big Idea

In this part of the social media plan, go back to the social media audit to quantify and analyze negative versus positive social media content. In addition, social listening tools can be helpful in quantifying overall social media sentiment toward the brand. See appendix B: Social Media Tools and Resources for options. If negative commentary is significant, specifically identify customer service, product, operations, human resources, or marketing message problems that may be causing negative social media talk. Create an interdepartmental plan to fix the root cause of negative comments. Even if negative talk isn't significant, identify a plan to reduce the negative comments that are there. Next gather and conduct consumer research through various primary and secondary methods to discover a key actionable consumer insight that leads to a campaign big idea that is interesting and has legs. Report all research, findings, plans, and ideas in these areas:

1. Identify top brand social complaints and the root business-unit cause.
2. Devise an interdepartmental plan to fix issues and reduce negative talk.
3. Gather all research and uncover a key actionable consumer insight.
4. Create an interesting big idea that has legs across traditional and social media.

For a condensed version of the social plan see appendix A: Three-Part Social Plan.

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

1. If a company is used to planning out an advertising campaign with three print ads, two radio spots, and a TV commercial six months in advance, what challenges must they overcome in implementing a successful social media campaign?
2. Is concern about unapproved social media messages sent by employees in real time warranted? What could go wrong? Can you think of any specific examples?
3. If you are a marketer used to approving every brand message before it goes out, what best practices should be put in place to minimize concern?
4. Why is ethnographic observational research valuable? What are the potential differences in results or insight in observation versus traditional market-research surveys and focus groups?

ADDITIONAL EXERCISES

1. Do some silo smashing. Visit a customer service department and ask what the number one complaint is and how they deal with it. Visit operations and ask questions and listen. If the brand manufactures products, go on a factory tour. Talk to the managers and the employees on the front lines. Ask questions about their goals, accomplishments, and challenges. Don't forget to visit human resources and get their perspective. Do they have an employee social media policy in place? Students can perform this exercise by contacting the company they are working on, finding secondary research, or simply thinking from each perspective.

2. Get out of advertising-campaign thinking. Look at the social media stream of a brand that is currently excelling in social media. What do you notice about their messages? Are they contrived, fine-tuned, and overly clever? Or are they natural, in the moment, and more personal or human? Can you imagine your brand communicating like this? Devise a strategy that plans messages on a social media calendar but also allows for live, unscripted interactions. What guidelines are needed to allow social media that happens in the moment?

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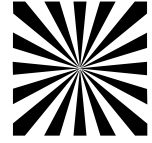
Integrating Marketing, Advertising, and Public Relations with Social Media

> Welcome to convergence culture, where old and new media collide, where grassroots and corporate media intersect, where the power of the media producer and the power of the media consumer interact in unpredictable ways.[1]
>
> —Henry Jenkins

PREVIEW

Have you heard of the term "information superhighway"? Perhaps you remember it and haven't used it or seen it in a while. Or maybe it is a term you've heard in older TV shows and movies. Today you may take for granted the enormous amount of information you have access to at the click of a button or the swipe of a finger. Questions like "Who invented the peanut butter and jelly sandwich?" don't have to go unanswered for even a moment. According to the National Peanut Board, PB&J sandwiches were invented in 1901 by Julia Davis Chandler, but became popular during World War II as a part of US military ration menus.[2]

What happened to the "information superhighway"? First appearing in 1983, the phrase **information superhighway** describes a telecommunications infrastructure used for widespread, rapid access to information.[3] It was a way for people to talk about the possibilities of new

connections brought about with the development of the internet. In the mid-1990s enthusiasm for the internet as an amazing source of knowledge exploded and the term "information super-highway" appeared in more than 4,500 major newspapers around the world. Yet a year later the term died down to half that number and by 1999 the news media played down information superhighway imagery to fewer than nine hundred mentions. Instead the term "e-commerce" rose in popularity and people began to talk more about the possibilities of electronic commerce. By 1999 major newspapers mentioned the term "e-commerce" more than 20,641 times.[4]

E-commerce describes activities related to the buying and selling of goods and services over the internet.[5] Why did the conversation shift so dramatically from information superhigh-way to e-commerce? People realized they could make money on the superhighway and then the emphasis became more on commerce than knowledge. Information was still shared, but the emphasis began to focus on building business in the new connected electronic marketplace. Today society may be turning back to the original vision as marketers must now share valuable knowledge in social media to gain an audience to maintain and grow commerce.

The Real Convergence

Academic researchers and industry professionals have predicted convergence of media and technology for a long time, yet as renowned media scholar Henry Jenkins points out, the actual convergence has happened in unpredictable ways. Within the concept of convergence there are two types or possibilities. One is convergence by the concentration of media. The other is convergence through the advance of technology. At first it was predicted that all devices would converge into one central machine that did everything for consumers.

What scholars are actually noticing is that the technological hardware is diverging and it is the content that is converging.[6] The main vehicle for that converging content is the internet. Thus, a new term has emerged called **IP convergence,** which means using the Internet Protocol (IP) as the standard transport for transmitting all information such as video, data, music, and TV teleconferencing.[7]

What we are finding today is that the internet is the place for transmitting not only communications media via traditional communications devices like computers, tablets, smartphones, and smart TVs but also object data. This is called the **Internet of Things (IoT),** or the network of physical objects with embedded technology that includes an IP address for internet connectivity to communicate with the external environment.[8] Now cars, thermostats, vending machines, lights, watches, and even toasters and refrigerators are connected to the internet. Gartner research predicts over 20 billion connected things will be in use by 2020.[9]

Some possible marketing uses for IoT include real-time tracking of behavior such as use patterns to improve content delivery time or content.[10] This could be a running app letting you know it's time to get out and run based on the times and days you normally run, or it could be your refrigerator noticing that you are out of yogurt, recommending a specific brand, and putting it on a list for home delivery. Other marketing applications include improved segmenting of consumers based on actual behavior. An example given by Dr. Ari Lightman, professor of digital media and marketing at Carnegie Mellon University, is a car

collecting driving habits of different users who may be in the same demographic target but vary in how they drive. The IoT data would enable the marketer to customize messaging to those who drive for performance versus those who drive for gas mileage and safety.[11]

IoT aside, what are some examples of converging content in terms of media communication? Newspapers and magazines have struggled in the transition to a more digital economy and many have gone out of business. The newspapers and magazines still in business are still in print, but now they are also online and have added video and blogs and social network content to their stories. In addition, newspapers and magazines have created mobile-optimized websites and have developed apps for tablets and smartphones. Some newspapers, like the *New York Times* or the *Wall Street Journal*, have ventured into audio and video podcasts.

Television shows are now multimedia spectacles as they scroll tweets across live programming and create rich interactive websites and apps that encourage the use of multiple media to enhance the content of the program. News, TV shows, music, and movies stream via the internet, and many customers are getting rid of their landline phone service entirely, using cell phones and video conferencing on the internet. People's phones are used more for messaging, social media, internet access, search, and apps streaming video or radio than for calling.

These trends have great implications for marketing, advertising, and public relations professionals. Organizations can no longer buy the attention of mass audiences as they could via traditional advertising. Instead, successful marketers are investing in multiple media buys filled with "converged content." As discussed in chapter 3, integrated marketing communication has developed into a primary strategy for marketers. This holistic approach leverages consistency of message and emphasizes complementary use of online and offline media for greater impact. Now it is evolving further to include the consumer conversation generated in social media.

As early as 2005, the *Wall Street Journal* reported that integrated marketing was the focus of most job searches for advertising agency executives.[12] Integration has been an important topic for marketers and advertisers who need to adjust strategies to fit with the new reality of converged media. When putting together a social media plan, marketers and communication professionals must not ignore the other communication activities in the organization. Whether social media is the lead or will support more traditional efforts, it must be completely integrated. Traditional efforts have not gone away, but they must be supplemented with cross-discipline efforts.

Today fewer people are talking about the coming media convergence because it is already here. Instead all communications professionals are focusing on **converged media,** which is the combining or blurring of paid (advertising), owned (brand sites and accounts), and earned media (social and public relations). In 2012 tech research and consulting firm Altimeter Group released a report laying out a converged media strategy that uses all these channels through a consistent story line, look, and feel. In order to accomplish this strategy, Altimeter emphasizes that execution of this strategy requires silo smashing for cross-channel integration.[13] The consumer does not see a difference in disciplines and is simply interacting in the new reality of media. Thus, social media integration is an essential strategy as people consume more and more converged media.

The Attention Economy

The internet started with the promise of an information superhighway delivering all the wisdom of the world. Yet within a decade the discussion quickly shifted to the promise of sales through e-commerce. Nearly fifteen years later, an ever-increasing number of technology companies are now battling for consumer attention. Once they get attention and build an audience, they resell that attention back to advertisers. In "The Distraction Economy: How Technology Downgraded Attention," Tomas Chamorro-Premuzic of the *Guardian* points out that when information has no limits, attention becomes rare and precious.[a] What is rare and precious becomes very valuable to those who obtain it.

As early as 1997 Michael H. Goldhaber wrote of this in *WIRED* magazine. He proposed that we are not living in an information economy. On the contrary, he argues that the purpose of economics is to study how society uses scarce resources, and today information is not the resource that is scarce. Information is overflowing and available everywhere. Because of this, attention has become the scarce and desirable resource and thus society is now living in an attention economy.[b]

In relation to marketing, **attention economics** deals with the problem of getting consumers to consume advertising and public relations messages. Since the cost to transmit brand messaging to consumers is now sufficiently low, more ads and brand content can be delivered to a consumer than they can pay attention to and process. Thus, the consumer's attention becomes the scarce resource to be allocated.[c] As the entire economy shifts more toward attention, marketing, advertising, and public relations will grow in importance to play a more central role in business.

[a] Tomas Chamorro-Premuzic, "The Distraction Economy: How Technology Downgraded Attention," TheGuardian.com, December 15, 2014, http://www.theguardian.com/media-network/media-net work-blog/2014/dec/15/distraction-economy-technology-downgraded-attention-facebook-tinder.
[b] Michael H. Goldhaber, "Attention Shoppers!," Wired.com, December 1997, http://archive.wired .com/wired/archive/5.12/es_attention.html.
[c] "Attention Economy," Wikipedia, accessed February 17, 2015, http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/ Attention_economy.

Barbara Rentschler, CMO and senior vice president of global marketing for K'NEX Brands, agrees with a social integration strategy. Rentschler says, "Social media is another tool in the marketing toolbox. We seldom use a single tool when reaching out to our fans and look for ways to combine traditional and digital tools to super charge our communication efforts."[14] Converged media demands converged strategy.

K'NEX knows traditional marketing must be maintained to compete and drive sales in the toy industry, but they also know the value of leveraging social media. For example, K'NEX sent a personal thank-you and free product to an influential blogger who used the product name in a blog post. The gift in return spawned a full post on the brand, garnering further positive brand attention and awareness.[15]

Nike and its agency Wieden + Kennedy understood this when they planned an attempt to break the two-hour barrier for the marathon in the Breaking2 project. Eliud Kipchoge finished 2:00:25, 2:32 faster than the world record, while 5.2 million people watched the live stream on Facebook, and 6.5 million watched the short video of the finish. Additionally, it was broadcast live on Twitter and YouTube. The effort was covered by mainstream news media such as the *New York Times*, the *Guardian*, ESPN, and *Runner's World*. The global earned media was planned to lead up to the Nike Zoom Vaporfly Elite introduction.[16] This global sports event was also an epic integrated marketing brand event. Competitor Adidas even congratulated Nike on the attempt via Twitter.[17] It also resulted in a full-length documentary produced in partnership with National Geographic.[18]

However, knowing that integration among communication channels is important is simply the beginning. Making it happen is something completely different. To get there, marketers and advertisers should comprehend the full context of why integration has not been an easy process. To understand this further, take a step back and look at the background and context of the silos that make up the traditional communications disciplines. Integrating these specific areas of advertising, public relations, digital (or interactive), and social media represents both challenges and opportunities.

Think Like an Expert in All Fields

Traditionally, marketers have hired advertising agencies, public relations firms, and digital companies to plan and promote marketing communication. Inside the agencies, the advertising copywriter and art director came up with the "big idea" for an advertising campaign. **Copywriters** are the writers of advertising or publicity copy[19] and **art directors** are the professionals who execute or coordinate the type, photos, and illustrations used in advertising design.[20] Both copywriters and art directors are usually employed at advertising agencies and are often called the creative team. In contrast, **public relations executives** are the professionals who focus on nonpaid forms of brand communication such as media relations, event planning, speeches, and, if needed, crisis communication.[21] **Digital marketing specialists** are the professionals who handle online activities for a brand, such as web development, online advertising, search engine optimization (SEO), paid search (PPC or pay-per-click), and e-commerce.[22]

In the past, the advertising creative team came up with the core campaign concept, then public relations and digital professionals were brought in to help execute that main strategic concept. These are two important viewpoints that were not represented in the creation of the core driving idea of the campaign. Public relations and digital marketing were left to retrofit their plans to something already created. The copywriter and art director may have considered public relations and interactive marketing, but their focus was on more traditional, high-profile advertising vehicles like TV and print. Right or wrong, this is how it worked in both large international advertising firms and small regional creative boutiques.

In the best cases, public relations and digital marketing are in separate departments inside the same firm. But many times, advertising, public relations, and digital marketing are completely separate companies in different cities hired by the marketing client. Perhaps this makes sense in terms of hiring the best in each field, but it certainly is not the best way to
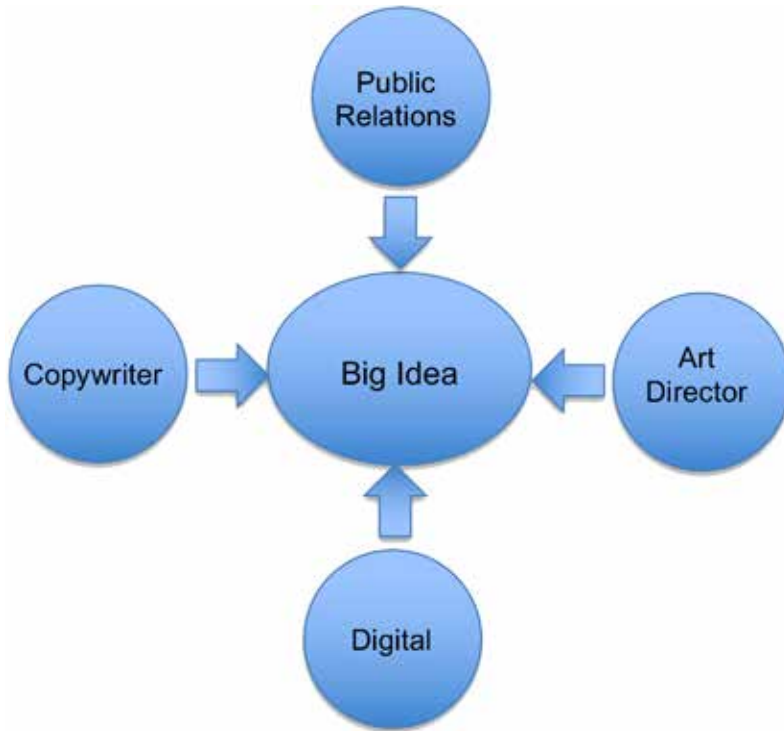
Figure 6.1. Brainstorm big ideas in multidisciplinary teams.

achieve integration. What further complicates integration today is that many social media departments are now found in-house with the marketing client. Again, this structure may make sense for some organizations, but it represents a further segmenting and separation of discipline experts. Integration is much more effective when the creative process of idea generation goes beyond the copywriter and art director. In the best cases, real integration happens when an expanded cross-disciplinary team works together on the big idea from the beginning, and in the same room, if possible (see figure 6.1).

One example goes back to the regional airport case mentioned in chapter 5. Not only did the big idea come from observational research, but also a multidisciplinary team helped create it. An expanded team strategy was used to create the truly integrated effort. The copywriter, art director, public relations executive, digital specialists, and social media expert drove to the airport and met in the terminal together to come up with a "bigger" big idea. The idea was big because it was based on key consumer insights gained through observation. The idea was "bigger" because it truly drew from all disciplines, leveraging the strengths of each equally for a greater combined execution.[23]

Marketers and communications firms should strive to work in this type of expanded team whenever possible. If a marketer is creating a campaign by himself or herself, as within a small business or startup, or as a student, then it is possible to combine these skills individually. Study discipline-specific best practices and learn to think like an expert from each field. When brainstorming an idea, bring each discipline's perspective to bear in the formation of the integrated communications strategy.

One of the early advertising agencies to understand the concept of integrated disciplines was Crispin Porter + Bogusky. At an *Adweek* Creativity Conference, agency principal Alex Bogusky said his agency always strived for "PR-able advertising." The public relations aspect meant more than traditional press releases and events. Crispin Porter + Bogusky saw the power of the internet and viral marketing before social media was big. In 2010, they were one of the first traditional advertising agencies to be named interactive agency of the year at the Cannes Lions International Advertising Festival.[24] The amazing part is that their early viral success with Subservient Chicken for Burger King happened before and without the power of social media.

In thinking about PR-able advertising that comprises advertising, public relations, digital marketing, and social media, marketers and advertisers may find it useful to visualize social media as the glue that holds the other disciplines together. Some organizations have even gone so far as to create new structures built upon this idea. On a tour of Target's NetBase-powered social media command center, it was learned that the social media staff are located on the executive floor of the company and in their own department working with external advertising and public relations partners, and internal departments such as marketing, digital, corporate communication, and customer service. Target's CEO Brian Cornell takes social media listening seriously, seeing value in gaining crucial real-time consumer insights for action across business functions.[25]

Thinking of social media as an end-listening device to provide cross-discipline feedback is a good start, but in reality social media represents much more. True integration is about having public relations, advertising, and social media "baked" into the big idea from the beginning.[26] It is about not forgetting the other communications touch points. That is why social media strategies should never be planned in isolation. The base strategic approach for social media should work in digital (social media), in earned media (public relations), and in paid media (advertising).

When forming a big idea, start by looking for consumer insights that are actionable across all three communications disciplines. Marketers, advertisers, and public relations professionals must ask themselves, "What is the big campaign concept that will lead to motivating and inspirational advertising, newsworthy public relations, and engaging social media?" Ideally the insight will lend itself to powerful advertising, be unique enough to be picked up by the press, and interesting enough to engage the target audience in social media. Also in thinking about public relations specifically, try to come up with an idea that goes beyond a single story or event. Look for an idea that can be sustained and will garner attention over a longer period of time.

Three is the magic number when these disciplines work together. The magic comes from the increased attention and engagement that it can deliver. Marketing is now a two-way street, so a truly big idea should be big enough not only to integrate media but also to engage people to talk and spread the message. Marketers must join conversations consumers are already having, or get consumers to start brand conversations. Maintaining separate specializations and training is still valuable. Marketers need to have experts in all fields but should bring them together at the idea level.

The *International Journal of Integrated Marketing Communications* research study highlighted in chapter 3 demonstrated the importance of integration. In 421 Effie Award–winning

MINI CASE

Burger King Subservient Chicken

In April 2004, a chicken dressed in garters emerged on the internet responding to any command viewers typed. Subservient Chicken was the creation of Crispin Porter + Bogusky for marketing client Burger King. The viral campaign played off Burger King's "Have it your way" slogan and was created to help build awareness for the new TenderCrisp Chicken Sandwich. The agency and client decided to go with the more opt-in media of the web versus traditional TV advertising because that is where their target audience was spending more of their time. Agency employees first seeded the URL in a couple of chat rooms.

   Within a year the microsite drew nearly 400 million hits, with visitors spending an average of six to seven minutes with the brand. This and the earned media coverage on major news outlets turned Subservient Chicken into a cultural icon. Further, sales of the sandwich increased 9 percent a week, with double-digit awareness, and total Burger King sales shot up 14 percent for the year after the campaign.[a] Bear in mind that the campaign managed to achieve these results before social media: Facebook was still limited to college students and Twitter wouldn't be created for another two years.[b]

   [a] Mae Anderson, "Dissecting 'Subservient Chicken,'" Adweek.com, March 7, 2005, http://www.adweek.com/news/advertising/dissecting-subservient-chicken-78190f.
   [b] Alex Alvarez, "Case Study: The Subservient Chicken," CMPMiami.com, August 31, 2012, http://www.cmpmiami.com/case-study-the-subservient-chicken.

marketing campaigns studied, it was proven that an increase in the number of marketing communication touch points was needed over time to achieve award-winning results. The level of integration increased from an average of two marketing consumer touch points in 1998 to an average of six in 2010 in campaigns awarded for meeting business objectives.[27]

   Part III of this book will now move into detail about selecting specific social media platforms or channels that fit the target audience and organization message, and that best execute the big idea. Before moving on to executing or creating the brand social media content, make sure the big idea is integrated and sustainable for the long term. As a marketer, advertiser, or public relations professional moves forward in the strategic process and focuses more directly on social media, it is important not to forget the traditional aspects of a marketing campaign. Including traditional marketing communications channels and campaigns will expand and leverage social media activity to achieve that magic integration. Many new social media efforts need traditional marketing and advertising to build awareness and jumpstart participation. Once the big idea has been developed, move on to the next chapter to explore the best social media ways and places to bring that idea to life for the target audience.

Theoretically Speaking: Corporate and Marketing Communication, Public Relations, and Advertising

When discussing integration, it is first important to fully understand what is to be integrated. The above concepts are all interrelated yet sometimes can be confused in practice. **Corpo-**

rate communications involves managing internal and external communications aimed at corporate stakeholders.[28] **Marketing communications** coordinates promotional messages delivered through channels like print, radio, television, and personal selling.[29] **Public relations** creates and maintains the goodwill of the public, such as customers, employees, and investors, through nonpaid forms of media.[30] And as we defined in chapter 3, **advertising** is the placement of announcements and persuasive messages in time or space purchased in mass media,[31] while integrated marketing communications seeks to align and coordinate all marketing communications delivered to consumers to present a cohesive whole that persuades consumers to purchase.[32] Think of corporate communications as focusing on the enterprise in dealing with issue management, mergers, and litigation. Marketing communications deals with the products and services and with creating demand or positioning. From crisis management to media outreach, public relations can help meet both corporate and marketing goals. Advertising can be used for marketing and corporate communications when it is targeted to consumers and corporate stakeholders.

The BP oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico provides an example of how all these disciplines can work together. Following the spill, corporate communications focused on crisis management through both public relations and corporate TV advertising to inform stakeholders and consumers as to what BP was doing to clean up. The BP TV ad was also aimed at BP employees; **internal marketing** promotes the firm and its policies to employees as if they are customers of the firm.[33] The traditional definition of integrated marketing communications limits the practice to synergistic efforts to meet marketing objectives, but as seen with the BP example, it is possible to create a larger integrated plan that uses advertising, public relations, and internal efforts to meet both corporate and marketing communication objectives.[34]

Native Advertising and Paid Social Media

There is another important reason to consider integration with traditional marketing methods—the amount of social media content is growing. Every minute it is estimated that there are 448,800 new tweets, 3.3 million Facebook posts, 65,972 Instagram photos, and 500 hours of YouTube videos added to the internet.[35] That is new content every minute of every day, with much of it coming from marketing communications professionals. Social media consultant and author Mark Schaefer calls this "content shock" and it is only going to get worse.[36] In a Content Marketing Institute B2C survey, 86 percent of marketers say they are using content marketing and 73 percent expect to produce more original content in the next year.[37]

Because of this social media clutter, paying for social media reach has become a more important strategic consideration. Paid social media, also known as social advertising or native advertising, is simply paying for distribution or views in social media channels. This can take the form of promoted, sponsored, or boosted posts and other types of ads that appear in people's news feeds or other places in social media channels. Two general terms have emerged to describe paid social media. **Social Advertising** is advertising that relies on social information or networks in generating, targeting, and delivering paid marketing communications.[38] **Native advertising** is paid marketing that delivers useful, targeted content along with and in a form that looks like the social media site's or app's non-ad content.[39]

Native ads can take the form of promoted listings in Twitter, sponsored updates on LinkedIn, or promoted Facebook posts or articles on BuzzFeed. Some social networks offer other forms of paid social media such as display ads, text ads, pre-roll, or filters in the network.

The need for paid social advertising has increased as organic reach, or the percentage of followers or fans that see brand posts, has decreased significantly. **Organic reach** is the number of unique people who saw a social media post through unpaid distribution. **Paid reach** is the number of unique people who saw a post as a result of paid distribution.[40] Organic reach is often calculated as a percentage by dividing the total number of users reached by the total number of posts. This is usually collected within a specific time frame such as thirty days. Then the average number of users reached per post is divided by the total number of followers, fans, or page "likes." Getting someone to "Follow us on Facebook" doesn't deliver nearly as much guaranteed exposure today as it did in the past.

With each social network becoming more flooded with content, reach is dropping. This is especially apparent in Facebook. By 2014 Facebook reported that the average person saw more than 1,500 stories in their news feed whenever they logged in to their account. This was too many to possibly read. Facebook responded by adjusting their algorithm to show only about 300 stories.[41] This resulted in a drop of average organic reach to 3 percent for many business pages.[42] Recent average organic reach rates for some of the top social channels include Facebook average organic reach of 2.27 percent, Twitter average organic reach of 3.61 percent, LinkedIn average organic reach of 20 percent, and Instagram average organic reach of 20 percent.[43]

Of course, the numbers reported here are averages and there are strategies to get above average organic reach. Some brands have managed to maintain impressive organic reach numbers with high engagement or other methods. A study found that some smaller Facebook pages can still see average organic reach of up to 11 percent on Facebook.[44] Yet that is still low, and for most brands, paid social advertising is becoming a necessary part of the social media plan. The good news is that paid social reach can be one of the more effective forms of paid advertising. Results of an eMarketer survey of US social media users reported that nine out of the top ten most effective marketing tactics included sponsored social media messages. TV commercials were the only nonsocial marketing tactic in the top ten.[45]

All this talk of paid social media does not mean that organic social media is ineffective. Organic is still very important. As Adobe points out in an article on their digital marketing blog titled "Stop Debating the Death of Organic Social Media," organic, or nonpaid, social media still has the benefit of branding without a budget. Even with lower organic reach rates, nonpaid social reach lowers marketing costs, builds brand-loyal communities (measured by engagement rates), and takes advantage of new social networks, early adopters, and niche audiences. Yet adding paid social media to organic posts helps extend your message by increasing reach. Paid social advertising also provides customized targeting, retargeting, and improved insights with advanced analytics and testing.[46] The bottom line is that paid and unpaid social media work best together.

Programmatic media buying is a growing method of purchasing advertising media globally. Programmatic trading accounts for over 70 percent of all online and mobile display spending in the US and UK and it is moving into other media such as online video, TV, and

radio.[47] Programmatic advertising is also a growing part of social media buying for platforms like Facebook,[48] Twitter,[49] Pinterest,[50] Instagram,[51] Snapchat,[52] and LinkedIn.[53]

What is it? **Programmatic advertising** is the automated buying and selling of advertising media targeting specific audiences and demographics placed through artificial intelligence (AI) and real-time bidding (RTB). Programmatic media buying is in online display, mobile display, online video, and social media advertising, and is expanding to digital outdoor, radio, and TV.[54]

Adobe Social Advertising Solutions further clarifies that programmatic advertising has two distinct methods. First, **real-time bidding (RTB)** is auction-based ad transactions placed on real-time impressions in open and private marketplaces. Second, **programmatic direct** is ads purchased via a publisher-owned application program interface (API) like Facebook and Twitter or an existing demand-side platform (DSP) like DoubleClick, Ad Exchange, or MediaMath.[55] Programmatic social media buying offers more precise targeting and more efficient spending using online data (like browsing activity) and offline data (like loyalty card data) to laser-target the placement of ads. Data brokers match offline data with online data and license data-management platforms (DMP) to organize the data and use demand-side platforms (DSP) to automate the execution of media buys for more efficient spending.[56]

Social media marketers can run more effective campaigns through automated buying and by reaching a precise audience with highly relevant messages. One example is Red Bull targeting videos to Twitter feeds of people who have viewed extreme sports sites. Programmatic advertising enables buying ads and promoted posts on social media networks, but also placement of brand-sponsored articles and videos directly through publishers like BuzzFeed**,** the *New York Times*, and the *Wall Street Journal*.[57] Additionally, native programmatic budgets are going to programmatic native platforms like Outbrain, Taboola, Sharethrough, Nativo, and Bidtellect that place sponsored content across the web. These platforms boost brand content serving up links to sponsored articles with messages below publisher content saying, "you may also be interested in . . ."[58]

Beyond social network ads and paid-content marketing, influencer marketing offers programmatic ad buying. **Influencer marketing** focuses on leveraging key leaders to advocate on behalf of a brand to reach the larger market.[59] For example, ROI Influencer Media (representing more than fifty thousand influencers from celebrities to social media all-stars) has partnered with programmatic platforms like Rubicon Project, PubMatic, OpenX, MediaMath, and Google's DoubleClick Ad Exchange. When buying programmatic ad packages, bundles of influencers appear as options where marketers pay for viewable impressions on influencers' social media sites and walls. Authenticity is preserved through influencers still having final approval and control over their feeds.[60]

Other companies like Fanbytes and Gnack offer programmatic buying of user-generated content from Snapchat and Instagram influencers and micro-influencers with fewer than ten thousand followers. Dashboards enable marketers, advertisers, and public relations professionals to bid on influencer ads programmatically, buying branded content on influencers' social media pages, blog pages, and websites. TapInfluence provides influencer marketing software creating an easy-to-navigate marketplace for brands to find content creators and influencers (see figure 6.2).[61] Influencer marketing will be discussed further in chapter 12.
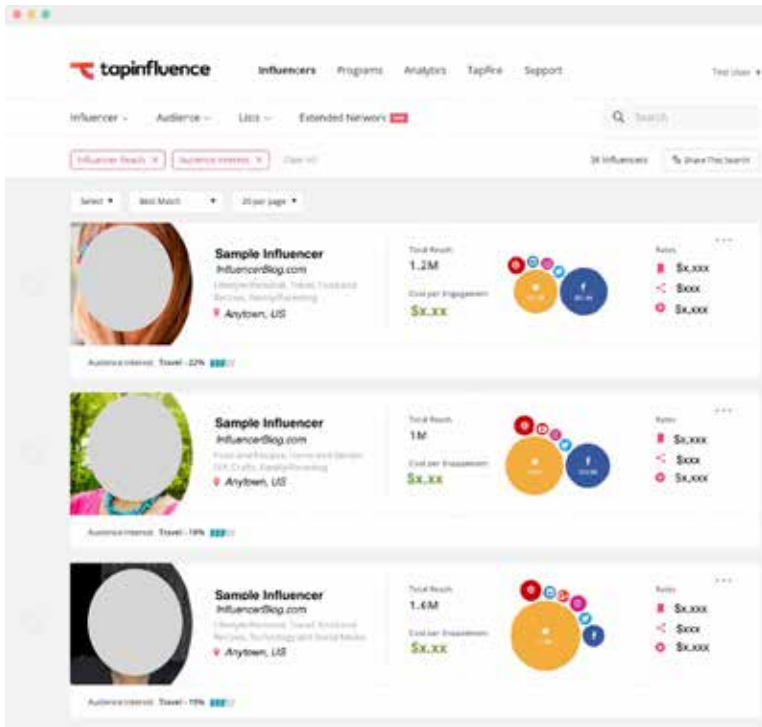
Figure 6.2. TapInfluence features 50,000+ opt-in influencers through Influencer Discovery.

Source: TapInfluence website, accessed October 4, 2017, https://www.tapinfluence.com/building-influencer-lists/. © 2017 TapInfluence.

As established social channels grow more crowded and move toward algorithms that further decrease organic reach like Facebook,[62] Instagram,[63] and Twitter,[64] the number of paid social opportunities are growing. As you go through part III of the book, organic and paid opportunities will be presented with the social media platforms that offer them. Both organic and paid social ads should be considered when selecting social media channels for the plan. But no matter how much paid social media grows, it is important to note that paying for reach does not replace the need to create good engaging content. Paid social media may buy exposure but it does not buy engagement and action that still requires quality content—the kind you create for organic social media posts. One strategy may be to take the best-performing organic content and then pay to boost the reach. Pay to increase reach on the content already proven to be a winner.

Many marketers and advertisers have shifted from a focus on reach to engagement. Social media may become more important for engaging current and prospective customers than for generating awareness, for which traditional advertising and public relations in mass media are still effective tools. Facebook did announce more news feed changes in January 2018 and indicated they would emphasize more meaningful interactions. Posts with more engagement in the form of comments, likes, and shares from Facebook friends could be rewarded with more reach.[65] As the social media landscape becomes more crowded, market-

ers should not abandon traditional marketing communication methods. One method is not enough. Social media is more effective when you add advertising, paid media, and public relations earned media to help meet goals.[66]

Chapter 6 Checklist

Social media can change quickly. Visit PostControlMarketing (http://www.postcontrolmar keting.com) for updates, but also use this chapter checklist to briefly check how social media statistics in this chapter have changed since publication.

- ✓ Has the Internet of Things (IoT) grown? Has IoT become more of a direct influence in social media strategy for marketing communications?
- ✓ What are the latest numbers in content marketing? Is content shock significantly disrupting social media marketing strategy and practice?
- ✓ What are the latest average organic reach statistics for the top social media channels? Are more social channels introducing algorithms to their feeds and offering more paid social media options?

SOCIAL PLAN PART 6

Integrate Traditional Marketing with Social Strategy

In this part of the social media plan, focus on integration of traditional marketing, advertising, public relations, and digital marketing efforts with the new social media strategy. Collect and analyze information on all marketing efforts for the brand. What techniques are being used? What is the core message or promotion? Is there a common character, theme, or concept? Is there a brand or campaign tagline? Make note of current efforts and include what is being formed in the new social media plan, accounting for and explaining how current traditional efforts will be integrated into the new social effort. You may find that a new traditional market-ing, advertising, and public relations effort or campaign is needed, and thus your plan should make those recommendations. Report all findings and ideas in these areas:

1. Identify all traditional brand marketing, public relations, advertising, and digital efforts.
2. Explain the current promotion, concept, character, theme, and tagline.
3. List ways in which the current marketing communications effort could be integrated with the new social media big idea.
4. If a new traditional marketing or advertising campaign and promotion are needed, explain what they should be.

For a condensed version of the social plan see appendix A: Three-Part Social Plan.

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

1. With the increased importance of integration, should marketers continue to hire separate public relations, advertising, and digital firms? Or should every activity be brought in-house with the company? What are the advantages and disadvantages of each method?

2. Go back and look at the definitions and descriptions of integrated marketing communications and converged media strategy. What is the difference between these two models of thought? Which could be more effective and why?

3. Look more closely at the disciplines of public relations and advertising. What do the practices have in common? What is substantially different? What are ways public relations and advertising could work more closely together?

4. Why do you think Subservient Chicken was so successful? If Burger King launched the same campaign today, would it have the same results? How would social media play into the new launch effort?

ADDITIONAL EXERCISES

1. Find evidence of the attention economy and answer the following questions: Explain which businesses are succeeding and why. Which tech companies are succeeding at gaining attention and what methods are they using? How are companies that produce physical products competing in the attention economy? What best practices from marketing communications, advertising, and public relations are organizations adapting into their business practices? Must every company now be interesting, or can attention still be bought?

2. Visit the American Association of Advertising Agencies website (www.aaaa.org). Look at the blogs and resources and note their emphasis and perspective. What is the purpose of advertising and what tools do advertising professionals have at their disposal? Now visit the Public Relations Society of America's website (www.prsa.org). Do the same, by visiting their resources, research, and articles. What are the goals of public relations and how do they achieve them? Finally, visit the Word of Mouth Marketing Association website (www.womma .org). Explore what they are talking about and are concerned with, and how they leverage social media to obtain their goals. Keep these professional perspectives in mind as you integrate and leverage each in the social media plan.

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PART

III
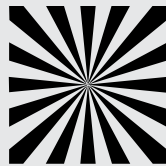
Choose Social Options for Target, Message, and Idea
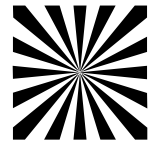
Social Networks, Blogs, and Forums

My best stories come from well–placed sources who point me in the right direction.[1]

—Wolf Blitzer

PREVIEW

What did your friends do last night and where did they do it? Where did your cousin's band play last weekend? What sites did your grandparents or parents see on their last trip? Is that girl or guy you met last week single or in a relationship? Where did they go to school? How do you know these things? Most likely you know a lot about what's going on in your family's and friends' lives because of Facebook. Yet Facebook wasn't always the social network.

Before Facebook there was a pioneering site called Friendster. **Friendster** was one of the original social network service websites allowing users to make contacts with other members and share online content and media with them. Launched in 2002, Friendster reached more than 3 million users within months and was considered the top social networking site, eventually reaching 115 million users.[2] Friendster peaked around 2004 when Google wanted to buy it for $30 million, but it soon lost ground as Facebook grew. Friendster lost so many users that it became a gaming site in 2011 and shut down completely in 2015. Peter Pachal of *PC Magazine* says the main reason Friendster failed was its lack of a news feed. It never went beyond user profiles.[3]

Ten years after Facebook, Friendster's founder Jonathan Abrams told his side of the story in a Mashable article. Abrams explained that there were a lot of copycat social networks spamming Friendster and poaching users. The site planned to add Friendster College, a news feed, and music sharing, yet they faced technology issues and stability problems. The Friendster founder is now busy with Nuzzel, a social news aggregator launched in 2012.[4] As this anecdote points out, social networks can come and go. At the height of their popularity no one thought social giants like Friendster and MySpace would decline or close completely. More recent shutdowns of popular social channels include Meerkat, Blab, and Vine. When developing a social media strategy, focus on social media categories and characteristics while exploring the main social media channels. That way, individual social channels can come and go but a brand's core social strategy will continue.

Choosing Social Options

Part III of this book will cover key characteristics of the main types or categories of social media channels, and the major platforms in each. Each section describes the size of the channel, who is talking there, and what type of information they are sharing. This part of the book will also look at global and mobile use of each social channel plus possible key performance indicators (KPIs).

Entire books have been written on each of these social channels and by the time you read this, the statistics will have changed. The purpose here is not to explain all of the details about specific channels, such as how to set up a Facebook business page or the latest number of users. A quick Google search reveals plenty of guides and the most recent usage numbers. Instead, this section is designed to provide the information necessary to choose the best social channels by category for a specific social media strategy. Choosing channels based on these key characteristics is a strategic process that can be applied to any current social network or new one that emerges. In case today's Facebook becomes yesterday's Friendster, you still have a social strategy that works. Sometimes a popular social channel can shut down unexpectedly like when Twitter shut down Vine after five years.[5] Or channels can rise quickly like Meerkat only to go just as quickly after only twenty months.[6] Yet a brand strategy based on short-form video or live video can continue on Instagram, Facebook Live, or Twitter's Periscope.

Now that the business objectives, target audience, key consumer insight, and big idea are in place, it is time to select the optimal social channels to implement the social strategy. Like journalist Wolf Blitzer putting together a news story, think of each social channel as a well-placed source to launch a social media campaign in the right direction.

What follows are descriptions of the central characteristics of key social channels (size, content, and users) in several categories. To gain a full appreciation of each, join the channel as a user and become a firsthand witness to the unique social experience delivered by each option. Also, look up statistics on current social channels to see how they have shifted since publication of this book.

In reading through each category and channel, keep the business objectives, target audience, and key insight with the big idea in the front of your mind. Look for the ideal vehicles to deliver brand messages and engage the target audience to deliver the right message to the right people. "Try on" each social outlet, imagining the kind of content the social strategy idea could create from the organization, its employees, and consumers within the context of brand competitors. This method will keep the social strategy focused and prevent wasted

effort chasing every new social channel that makes headlines. This strategic approach allows adding new channels that make sense for the content and consumer as they emerge.

As social media platforms have grown crowded and gone public, many started selling native ads. Social media strategy now includes a significant paid component. When considering social media channels in the following chapters, also consider paid options. Paid social media options will be highlighted for the social media channels that offer them. Successful social media strategies have a balance of paid and earned components. Paid social media is a good way to reach a targeted audience, jumpstart a new effort, or boost specific promotions.[7]

Social Networks

Of all the types of social media, social networks seem to have drawn the most hype, and for good reason. Social channels such as Facebook and LinkedIn are big. Facebook may be known as "The Social Network" because of its enormous global reach and the movie about its founding, but it is not the only social network. A **social network** is any website where one connects with those sharing personal or professional interests.[8]

Social networks allow people to set up a profile and offer ways to join groups and interact with other users through updates or posts with media from links and text to photos and video. This is a good start for a definition, but today mobile access plays an ever-increasing role in social-network activity. Many social networks, which started on websites, are now mostly accessed via mobile devices in optimized websites and apps on smartphones and tablets.

Facebook

Founded in 2004, **Facebook** is an online social-networking service where users create profiles, connect to other users as "friends," and exchange messages, photos, and videos. Facebook made big news surpassing two billion monthly users and is by far the largest social media channel of any of the categories. For marketers, that number is hard to ignore. Not only are users growing but they are becoming more active. Sixty-six percent of users are active daily, up from only 55 percent when there were one billion users.[9] The majority of users are global, with North American users comprising roughly 13 percent of total users. An estimated one-third of Facebook's users are in Asia (33 percent) and about one-fifth (20 percent) in Europe.[10] US penetration of Facebook has steadily climbed to nearly eight-in-ten (80 percent) of online adults.[11]

Facebook started as a social network for college students, but now its demographic makeup is much broader. The largest group is eighteen- to twenty-nine-year-olds (29 percent), followed by thirty- to forty-nine-year-olds (27 percent), fifty- to sixty-four-year-olds (24 percent), and a large group of users aged sixty-five and older (20 percent, up from only 12 percent in 2012). Of all age groups, Facebook users skew slightly female (53 percent) versus male (47 percent). Two-thirds of Facebook users (67 percent) have at least some college education or a college degree while one-third (33 percent) have a high school degree or less.[12]

Facebook users are diverse when it comes to income, with roughly a quarter each earning annual incomes in the ranges of less than $30,000 a year (27 percent), $30,000 to

$49,999 (25 percent), $50,000 to $74,999 (24 percent), and over $75,000 (24 percent). It is important to note that there is also strong Facebook use by a younger, school-aged population from thirteen to seventeen years old, but this age group may be much more active on other social media platforms such as Instagram or Snapchat. Facebook users are also now evenly divided among regions, with roughly a third living in urban (34 percent), suburban (32 percent), and rural (34 percent) areas. In general, Facebook is most appealing to young to early middle-aged women.[13]

Every person on Facebook has a profile page and a home page. The profile page is built on the timeline design, in which users' most recent activity is shown first and users can scroll down—and back in time—to birth. The home page is where they view the activity of friends or pages they have liked via the news feeds of recently posted updates. Facebook also allows users to create and join groups of common interests where photos and videos can be shared and discussions can take place. Pages or fan pages are where businesses and other entities exist on Facebook. Profiles are reserved for individual people. When an organization posts content on its page, some of it shows up in the news feeds of people who have liked it. It also may show up in a friend's news feed if someone liked the content.

It is important to note that not all friends or fans see all updates. Facebook organic reach is expressed in terms of a percentage of fans or followers who see a person's or organization's published content. This has been declining as Facebook has grown more crowded and adjusted the Facebook algorithm. An **algorithm** is a formula or set of steps used for solving a problem such as how to rank content to decide what is seen in social media feeds.[14] The percentage of updates that are seen varies but average organic reach has declined to between 2 and 3 percent,[15] although some pages are still able to achieve average organic reach up to 11 percent.[16]

Facebook has mobile apps, including iOS (iPhone) and Android, and includes a mobile-optimized website. By 2012 they had already officially declared themselves a mobile company when for the first time the number of daily active mobile users surpassed the number of users checking Facebook from a computer.[17] Since then mobile use of Facebook has risen to 83 percent.[18] Facebook is the most-used smartphone app ahead of YouTube.[19] Newer features include expansion of live video from mobile to desktop, 360 Photos and 360 Video, GIFs in comments, and Workplace by Facebook for employee communication.[20] Do note, however, that Facebook adds new features often, especially ones that appear to be popular on other programs—for example, live video first appeared on Meerkat and Periscope, and stories and filters first appeared on Snapchat. Look online to discover the latest.

Marketing strategies for Facebook should include sharing information that fans of the brand would find interesting, entertaining, and shareable. Early strategies should focus on building fans/likes to increase audience exposure for later efforts. Many brands have done this by running contests and promotions where consumers like the brand page to enter a contest. Facebook apps make contest entry through the social network easy. You can also add paid placement to increase reach and grow fans. Facebook groups are another way to tap into people interested in a subject that aligns with your target audience. Engagement can be much higher in groups and have increased organic reach. Start your own or start participating in an existing group—there are over one billion of them.[21]

Many have discovered that photos and video garner the most views and engagement. Besides the type of media, a recent study of the text in brand Facebook posts found that

Figure 7.1. UNICEF responds to Hurricane Irma asking for support.

Source: UNICEF Facebook page, accessed September 11, 2017, https://www.facebook.com/unicef/. © 2017 UNICEF.

posts that contain "new" or "now" and time or date messages increase engagement through shares, likes, and comments. However, the same study found that posts with educational messages can decrease engagement.[22] The UNICEF Facebook page informs people who the organization is and provides ways to help from a "Donate" button and an "Actions" tab powered by the Facebook app ActionSprout that lets users share an update with their friends and sign up for the nonprofit's newsletter.[23] UNICEF emphasized a new and date message following Hurricane Irma, letting people know they were helping children and mobilizing relief efforts to Florida (see figure 7.1).[24]

In late 2017 Facebook announced new features and increased support for nonprofit fundraising and disaster relief and response. The new tools were introduced by CEO Mark Zuckerberg at the company's second annual Social Good Forum. A Fundraisers API allows marketers, advertisers, and public relations professionals working for nonprofits to sync off-Facebook fundraising campaigns to Facebook fundraisers to easily share updates and keep track of progress. In addition, the platform eliminated the 5 percent payment transaction fee on donations made to nonprofits on Facebook. They also created a new Community Help API to help organizations like the Red Cross respond to crises faster and more effectively by providing detailed information on users who are in need.[25] Facebook VP of Social Good, Naomi Gleit, says their efforts in this area also includes a new AI (arti-

ficial intelligence) for suicide prevention and support for blood donations. These efforts are judged on positive, real-world results not profit.[26]

Other strategies for Facebook include encouraging customers to upload content, such as photos of themselves using the product, and awarding prizes by voting on the best submission.[27] Hashtags can be used on Facebook, but are more central to channels such as Twitter and Instagram. Straightforward promotions and product news can be shared on Facebook, but don't get too promotional. What works best is quality content. Best practices are a great place to start, but each brand and target audience is unique so be sure to experiment and discover what strategies and content work best for different brands and audiences.

Marketers may feel good boasting about the number of likes their organization has on Facebook, but it also represents a real metric of how many potential eyeballs content is reaching with every update. This exposure can multiply quickly, considering the average Facebook user now has 338 friends.[28] However, updates in Facebook's news feed algorithm have produced a drop in organic reach and the network now sells sponsored posts to make up for the drop.[29] Today this represents engagement with the brand's most loyal fans. Yet Facebook continues to tweak their algorithm toward engagement so that friends sharing, liking, or commenting on a brand post increases the chances it will be seen in another friend's post.

Another option to boost reach is by Facebook tagging. Encourage fans to tag the brand page in their posts, or a brand can tag other company or organization pages and people. Depending on the match of audiences, this could extend reach to another page or person's followers. Also consider the organic post targeting tool. This allows you to customize content and then target posts to specific segments of brand page audiences based on unique interests. Similar to the way email segmentation boosts open and response rates, audience optimization in Facebook targets posts and messages to specific segments or groups of people who are most likely to be interested.[30]

A good overall strategy is to post quality content. Buffer Social performed an experiment where they reduced their average Facebook posts from five or six a day to one or two. This resulted in a 330 percent increase in reach and engagement. The Buffer team found that a reduced schedule meant that they were not simply posting everything to Facebook. They posted only the best content right for Facebook, which they found was edu-tainment content.[31]

Also consider native ads or paying to boost posts to gain more reach. Facebook Business offers ads as boosted posts and ads that can appear as sponsored posts, suggested apps, display ads, and in-stream live video ads. The Facebook Ads Manager and Power Editor enables specific audience-targeting by age, gender, language, location, connections—customized audiences of people who have already completed certain actions from brand customer files and lookalike audiences to optimize ad buys. Facebook ads could be a great way to stand out considering that just 8 percent of all businesses on Facebook advertise.[32]

Facebook Audience Insights provides a wide array of information including demographics such as age and gender, location and language, but also lifestyle, education, relationship status, job role, and household size. You can also learn about Facebook usage and purchase behavior.[33] Possible key performance indicators (KPIs) to focus on could include number of fans, posts, shares, likes, comments, tags, links, and referrals, and don't forget to indicate sentiment when appropriate.

LinkedIn

Launched in 2003, **LinkedIn** is a business-focused social-networking service that allows users to create professional profiles of work experience and form connections with other professionals. LinkedIn can be thought of as the professional side of social networking. It has surpassed 500 million users, with 138 million in the US, 91 million in Europe, and 102 million in Asia.[34] LinkedIn promotes itself as the world's largest professional network, and that focus shows up in the type of people it attracts. It was acquired by Microsoft in 2016 so look for new features and increased integration of the two companies' services in the future.[35]

Twenty-nine percent of US adult internet users are on LinkedIn. Users of this professional network are nearly evenly split between men (53 percent) and women (47 percent). People in college and those in their prime working years aged eighteen to forty-nine are the key users of the site (61 percent). A sizable group of LinkedIn's users are mid- to high-income earners, with 41 percent making more than $75,000 a year and 29 percent earning $50,000 to $74,999 a year.[36]

Not surprisingly, LinkedIn users are also highly educated, with 86 percent having some college education or a degree. More than 56 percent of LinkedIn users have a college degree or higher. It seems LinkedIn attracts its main users during or right after college graduation, and is used by both men and women who are starting or are in the midst of their professional careers.[37]

LinkedIn has always been a business-oriented social-networking site, and that remains the focus of its users' activities. Like other social networks, LinkedIn is built around profile pages, but here users list information such as job experience, education, and professional skills—the kind of information listed on a resume. Instead of "friends," this community focuses on building a professional network through "connections." The emphasis here is on coworkers, bosses, former bosses, clients, business partners, and other professional contacts people have made over the years. However, LinkedIn has also become an important sales and recruiting tool where salespeople and recruiters also focus on connecting with prospective customers and clients or employees.

Like Facebook, LinkedIn also offers groups, but here the subject is more professionally oriented. Groups are where professionals in the same field or with the same interests can share content, ask questions, or post and search for industry jobs. Job search is a major activity on the site, which has become a valuable tool for job searchers and recruiters alike whether with independent recruiting firms or in-house human resources personnel. Users are able to apply for positions through LinkedIn, and recommendations attached to users' profiles function much like letters of recommendation.

Similar to Facebook fan pages, LinkedIn offers organizations the option to create a company page that can function like a corporate website with social-interaction features. Fresh content is delivered via status updates that appear under the activity feed of a user's profile or as discussion posts in groups. Like the rest of the site, the content shared favors industry or professional topics.[38] LinkedIn Pulse was added to the site in 2014 and became an integrated publishing platform with basic blogging capabilities available via posts. It is now known as LinkedIn Publisher with more integration and easier publishing. Many users have had great success publishing their content directly into LinkedIn, instead of sharing it

linked from external sites, thus expanding reach and increasing engagement through shares, likes, and comments.[39]

Like Facebook, LinkedIn has seen a dramatic increase in mobile use with 59 percent of visits happening via mobile devices, up from only 20 percent in 2013.[40] LinkedIn app features include enabling users to submit job applications via mobile devices and geolocation check-in features to help recruiters keep track of job-candidate information during events and conventions.[41]

Since the Microsoft acquisition, LinkedIn has a redesigned desktop to be more like the mobile app, more engagement analytics, unified search capabilities, chat-like messaging, a calendar chatbot to set meeting times, and an easier blogging interface. The feed emphasizes more content and fewer status updates with new algorithms and editors.[42] Most recently, LinkedIn has supplemented and enhanced multimedia capabilities like video, attaching multiple photos to posts, and tagging people using "@."[43] These additional publishing and social engagement features have helped turn LinkedIn from an online resume into a more professional news discovery engine that has increased time and engagement on the platform (see figure 7.2).[44]

Figure 7.2. LinkedIn offers new publisher tools.

Source: Keith A. Quesenberry, "How to Leverage Mobile Micro-Moments for Social Media Success," LinkedIn .com, March 15, 2017, https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/how-leverage-mobile-micro-moments-social-media-keith-a -quesenberry/.

Because of LinkedIn's professional focus, it can be especially beneficial for business-to-business (B2B) efforts, helping salespeople find leads and sell trade-oriented products. Recruitment advertisers and marketers with an emphasis on personal sales should consider this an invaluable social media tool for their efforts. Paid access to LinkedIn Premium Professional provides additional features to help with prospecting through enhanced insights, search, and InMail capabilities.[45] To grow connections or followers, publish quality content in blog-like posts with graphics, photos, and video. In addition, consider influencer marketing with key organization employees such as presidents and CEOs to become thought leaders in their industry.

Paid social media options on LinkedIn are expanding. LinkedIn Marketing Solutions offers highly targeted Sponsored Content, Sponsored InMail, Display Ads, Text Ads, and Autoplay Video Ads.[46] LinkedIn Talent Solutions also offers specialized options for hiring such as Recruiter, Job Posts, Job Slots, Career Pages, Referrals, and Work With Us Ads.[47] A business professional or salesperson might track key performance indicators (KPIs) such as connections, followers, groups, likes, shares, updates, InMail responses, posts, searches, links, referrals, and views.

Messaging Apps

Because of their personal and social nature, messaging apps will also be discussed under social networks. **Social messaging** is instant messaging or chat applications created around social networks for communication on mobile phones with fewer limits and more features than traditional texting.[48] Messaging apps are popular and have grown to over five billion monthly active users worldwide. Top apps have over one billion users each, such as WeChat (1.2 billion) and Facebook Messenger (1.2 billion), with other popular apps being Kik (300 million), Viber (236 million), and Line (217 million).[49]

A Nielsen survey of Facebook Messenger users found that various generations are using messaging, from millennials (65 percent) and gen Xers (65 percent) to boomers (63 percent). Messaging apps are seen to make communication simpler (69 percent), more ongoing (65 percent), easier for groups (65 percent), and more frequent (63 percent). In the future people expect to use messaging apps more for communicating one-to-one (50 percent), with groups (60 percent), and, the most increase, with businesses (67 percent). Fifty-three percent of Messenger users said they would more likely shop with a business that they could message directly.[50]

People like social messaging for text chats, group chats, and notifications, and social features like status updates, media sharing, and stickers.[51] With advanced features, they can chat with friends, obtain customer service, make calls, play games, access content, and even buy products.[52] Chatbots are an important feature of messaging apps. **Chatbots** are computer programs that simulate human conversation for customer service or information acquisition and distribution.[53]

WhatsApp is a free, cross-platform instant messaging service that allows encrypted multimedia communication through mobile cellular numbers. WhatsApp was founded in 2009 and bought by Facebook in 2014. WhatsApp is the dominant messaging app across

most of the world.[54] However, Facebook Messenger has grown significantly to become number one in countries like the United States, Canada, Australia, and some Western European countries. **Facebook Messenger** is the instant messaging service application that enables sending multimedia content with optional encryption through Facebook accounts. It was first developed as Facebook Chat in 2008, but relaunched as a stand-alone app in 2011.[55] WeChat is dominant in China and smaller messaging apps are popular in other regions like Line in Asian Pacific countries and Viber in Eastern European countries. The messaging app Kik is unique in that it is popular with younger users aged thirteen to twenty-three. Another messaging app consideration for B2B is Slack, which is an internal communication tool for companies.[56]

As with other social media platforms, businesses and organizations should consider adding messenger apps to their marketing, advertising, and public relations strategies because their customers are there and are expecting brands to be there as well.[57] Messenger apps can provide access to direct sales and customer service, and they can extend the reach of brand content.

Messaging apps can tell brand stories, demonstrate products, and create engaging quizzes, trivia contests, and games. Special offers, sales, promotions, and even direct sales can occur in messaging apps unlike in social networks. Also, the real-time nature and privacy of conversations makes messaging ideal for customer service.[58] A good way to understand the possibilities for using messaging apps for social strategy is to see what brands have done on various messaging platforms.

The NBA increased fan engagement during the NBA Finals and the NBA Draft with their Facebook Messenger bot that provided fans with instant access to highlights resulting in over 350,000 interactions.[59] Teen celebrity magazine *J-14* used two bots to deliver content and customized quizzes on the messaging app Kik, building up a young consumer subscriber list of 500,000.[60] Miller Lite created a football game-day collection of branded digital stickers used in Kik and Viber. The campaign led to over 600,000 downloads and millions of sends.[61]

The British fashion brand Burberry reached consumers in China with a culturally relevant WeChat campaign. During the Chinese New Year, Burberry sent an image of a letter with a pink bow to "shake" open and send a personalized Burberry greeting to a friend celebrating the Lunar New Year. Users could shop their New Year collection within Burberry's WeChat store and sign up to win limited-edition Lunar New Year envelopes to be picked up in-store.[62]

Hellman's mayonnaise created a "WhatsCook" WhatsApp campaign in South America. Consumers sent a picture of what was in their refrigerator and chefs sent back custom recipes with pictures and videos. Average interactions lasted 65 minutes and the effort reached 5.5 million people.[63] Macy's partnered with Viber to offer in-chat shopping where users search and share Macy's products in the messenger app.[64] Adidas has used WhatsApp to build hyper-local brand communities in cities across the world offering members first notice of new releases, invites to events, and access to Adidas' ambassadors.[65]

Like many other social platforms, social messaging apps have also moved to paid social with native advertising options. Facebook Messenger offers sponsored messages, Kik offers promoted chats, and Viber offers sponsored content. Line sells in app ads and WeChat offers

Moment ads. WhatsApp has not offered native advertising options. WhatsApp has, however, announced advanced customer service solutions to go with verified business accounts for small businesses to chat with customers and large companies to manage customer conversations to share schedule times, delivery notifications, and other updates.[66]

Social Network Considerations

In sharing the brand, product, or service story, what social network will be the best source? Match objectives, target audience, and the type of content the big idea (insight) lends itself toward creating. These social networks and top social messaging apps are some of the most popular, but are not the only options.

Google+ is a social networking and identity service, founded in 2011, that added a social layer to other Google properties and also serves to link web content directly with its author. Google+ grew quickly, with 540 million monthly active users, but critics claim that only half of those users visited the social network because most users starting a Gmail account were signed up for Google+ automatically.[67] The latest user statistics available estimate that active Google+ profiles dropped to 111 million by 2015.[68] This is most likely lower today, but certain niche groups remain active.[69] The new Google+ redesign in late 2015 removed many social-networking features, which were shut down completely as "classic" mode in January 2017 to emphasize communities.[70] Many have pronounced Google+ dead, but it still could be an effective channel to build targeted web traffic,[71] high Google rankings,[72] social sharing, and overall **search engine optimization (SEO)**, which is improving the visibility of a website in unpaid (organic) web search engine results.[73]

Myspace is one of the first social media networks that declined in favor of Facebook, although it has a loyal following in the area of music. Founded in 2003, Myspace was the largest social media network until 2008 when Facebook overtook it.[74] However, Myspace has again grown to roughly 50 million monthly active users—a 575 percent increase since 2013—and is most popular among the seventeen- to twenty-five-year-old demographic.[75] It is still popular for music, with 14 million artists and 53 million songs on the channel with 13,000 more uploaded daily.[76]

If a brand is a global organization, smaller social networks may be more popular in specific countries such as VKontakte, Qzone, and Odnoklassniki.[77] Be sure to research individual country social media use statistics to ensure relevance to local global users. There has also been a surge in more niche-focused social networks such as physician-only social networks that could be very valuable for healthcare organizations.[78]

Blogs and Forums

Seth Godin's book *Poke the Box* says, "The cost of being wrong is less than the cost of doing nothing."[79] One way to "poke the box" is to test and get ideas by publishing a blog. **Blog** is an abbreviated version of Weblog, which describes websites that contain a reverse chronological order of entries or posts featuring diary-type commentary or stories on specific subjects that range from personal to political.[80] Blogs include hyperlinks to other sites and also allow easy embedding of multimedia content such as photos, video, and

audio. Readers can "talk back" to the author through comments under each post. The unique characteristics of blogs are that anyone can publish one easily on any topic and that blogs are interactive. The rise in popularity of blogs has helped remove the gatekeeper from professional media publishing.

However, a nonprofessional label for this social medium can be misleading. Top blogs have mass media appeal. The *Huffington Post* blog pulls in 110 million unique views a month and has secured a coveted seat in the White House briefing room.[81] To put this in perspective, *Time* magazine's total US audience is only 17 million.[82]

But a brand does not need to reach millions to be successful. A mommy blogger with twenty thousand monthly views can be worth a marketer's attention for the right product or service because her viewers are segmented and very focused.[83] Blogs often form active communities of common interests, and authors can be very influential in those areas. **Mommy blogger** is defined as a mother who blogs about her children, motherhood, parenting, and other related topics.[84] This term has become standard in marketing. However, it should be noted that many women find this term condescending, stating that they are moms but also writers, bloggers, business owners, website owners, and entrepreneurs. Critics argue that the term doesn't represent the professionalism of moms who own blogs, they don't call each other by this term, and not all moms blog about children. Others ask why there is no related term such as "daddy blogger."

How many blogs are there? In 2008 the Blog Herald reported roughly 200 million blogs.[85] By 2014, Technorati's Top 100 directory contained more than 1.3 billion blogs listed by category.[86] Unfortunately, Technorati shut down its blog ranking index in May 2014 to focus on its advertising platform. Of the blogs out there, Nielsen reports that 6.7 million people publish blogs on blogging websites and 12 million are writing blogs using social networks.[87]

We will first look at each of the major blogging platforms: WordPress, Blogger, and Tumblr. Each of these blogging platforms has unique users, content, and characteristics. Then we will explore forums. Similar to blogs, forums are online discussion sites that form around common needs or interests. There is usually a moderator, but no one person or group is responsible for creating content. Posts are like informal conversations versus more formal articles on blogs.

WordPress

WordPress is a free, open-source blogging and content-management system launched in 2003. WordPress averages roughly 750 million visitors a month.[88] By 2012 WordPress was used by close to half (48 percent) of the top one hundred blogs worldwide.[89] WordPress reports they generate more than 42 million posts and 61 million comments a month.[90] WordPress.com is highly global, with only 17 percent of visitor traffic coming from the United States. Top individual countries include Brazil (8 percent), Indonesia (5 percent), the United Kingdom (5 percent), and India (4 percent).[91]

WordPress users are evenly split between male and female visitors who are likely to have a college or graduate degree and usually browse the blogging site from home versus work or school.[92] Top audience interests include news and media plus arts and entertainment. Most

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GM Fastlane Blog

At the turn of the century, General Motors was struggling to win back customers lost to foreign automakers. GM first fixed the product problem by hiring Bob Lutz, a rock star in product development. Yet the company felt the new cars were not getting a fair chance from the automotive press. So they launched the Fastlane blog to get the company's message directly to customers, enthusiasts, and media.[a]

Introduced in January 2005, the blog featured direct access to the candid thoughts of then-vice chairman Bob Lutz and other GM executives. These higher-ups in the organization challenged the public to take a new look and test-drive their new cars and trucks. The effort helped GM overcome its dinosaur image, reach customers quickly, and attract web traffic through other sites and blogs linking to Fastlane. The results included millions of visitors and thousands of comments with more than five hundred other blogs linking to Fastlane. The blog was covered by mainstream press such as the *New York Times*, the *Wall Street Journal*, the *Financial Times*, and *Business Week*. The effort won a PRSA Bronze Anvil Award[b] and Forrester Research reported that the yearly value of the blog in consumer research insight alone was $180,000.[c]

[a] "GM Fastlane Blog: A Corporate Giant Fights Back," PRSA.org, accessed February 18, 2015, http://www.prsa.org/SearchResults/view/6M-063005/0/GM_Fastlane_Blog_A_Corporate_Giant_Fights_Back#.VLo968b91UQ.

[b] Manning Selvage & Lee BlogWorks, "GM Fastlane Blog: A Corporate Giant Fights Back." PRFirms.com, accessed February 18, 2015, http://prfirms.org/resources/gm-fastlane-blog-a-corporate-giant-fights-back.

[c] Charlene Li, "New ROI of Blogging Report from Forrester," Empowered (blog), January 25, 2007, http://forrester.typepad.com/groundswell/2007/01/new_roi_of_blog.html.

of WordPress traffic comes from search (roughly 60 percent), followed by direct (19 percent), referrals (11 percent), and social (9 percent). Interestingly, over 50 percent of WordPress social traffic is generated by Facebook compared to over 60 percent of competitor Blogger's social traffic, which comes from YouTube.[93]

WordPress is known for its flexibility, with many different design themes and functional plug-ins to customize blogs.[94] WordPress.com offers free blogs with hosting and WordPress.org allows free download of the software to install on other hosting services. Most large blogs are hosted on WordPress, so it is more of a platform for professional bloggers, media businesses, and companies than the simpler Blogger platform that will be discussed next.[95]

Some examples of the high-profile companies on WordPress include *People* magazine, *Harvard Business Review*, the *New York Times*, and Eddie Bauer. Eddie Bauer's blog features photos and stories about living an adventure lifestyle. Direct links send readers to the retail website.[96] Turkey Hill Dairy has been publishing their blog, the "Ice Cream Journal," since 2006, cultivating a community of ice cream fans (see figure 7.3). The blog receives high engagement, with posts reaching over a hundred comments, and solicits feedback with an annual ultimate flavor tournament to determine the "Frosty Four" fan favorite new flavors. It also has been awarded top five ice cream blog.[97]

Figure 7.3. Turkey Hill's ice cream blog attracts fan engagement.

Source: "September prize: What's your favorite part of the fall season?" IceCreamJournal.TurkeyHill.com, September 8, 2017, https://icecreamjournal.turkeyhill.com/index.php/2017/09/08/september-prize-whats-your-favorite-part-of -the-fall-season/. © Turkey Hill Dairy.

WordPress also has mobile applications that allow posting, commenting, liking, and replying. In addition, the blogging platform includes a plug-in that optimizes its blogs for viewing on mobile devices. Possible WordPress key performance indicators (KPIs) include posts, comments, likes, links, views, engagement, referrals, and sentiment.

Blogger

Blogger is a blog-publishing service that allows free user accounts hosted at the subdomain of blogspot.com. This free blogging system is very clean, fast, and streamlined. It is the oldest of the three major blogging platforms. It started in 1999 and was acquired by Google in 2003.[98] It was the largest blogging platform but has lost ground to WordPress over the years. With roughly 165 million visitors a month, Blogger.com is highly global, with only 15 percent of visitor traffic coming from the United States. Top individual countries include Brazil (11 percent), India (7 percent), and Indonesia (5 percent).[99]

Blogger users skew more male than female. They are more likely to have a college or graduate degree and to browse the blogging site from home versus work or school.[100] Top audience interests are different from WordPress, with internet and telecom plus people and society coming first. Perhaps because of its connection to Google, Blogger draws more search (Google.com) and social traffic (YouTube.com) than WordPress, but WordPress has higher direct, referral, and email traffic. Overall, 50 percent of Blogger.com traffic comes from search, followed by 21 percent direct, and 16 percent from referrals. The ease of use and limited custom options also make it more the domain of casual bloggers.

With Blogger's ease of use come limitations in design choices, and it does not support plug-ins for advanced features and customization.[101] Because Blogger is owned by Google, it provides easy integration with Google+, Google AdSense, and other Google properties.[102]

For ease of use, integration with other Google accounts, and higher search traffic, Blogger may be the ideal tool to get an organization blog up quickly. Depending on target audience, it may also be a place to search for influential individual bloggers with sizable subscriber lists who appeal to a niche audience for the product or service.

Specific numbers on Blogger mobile usage are not available. However, Blogger does have mobile apps that enable users to post and edit blogs or share photos, links, and location. Blogger blogs are optimized for easy viewing on mobile devices through internet browsers.[103] For key performance indicators (KPIs), marketers should consider tracking posts, comments, likes, links, views, engagement, referrals, and sentiment.

Tumblr

Tumblr is a blogging platform and social-networking website that allows users to post multimedia content in a short-form blog. Tumblr is a later blogging platform entry, beginning in 2007 and acquired by Yahoo in 2013,[104] but has grown to roughly 345 million users with 206 million registered blogs. Tumblr blogs are unique in keeping their audience's attention, with average stays up to twice that of Blogger and WordPress. Tumblr is global, yet roughly 33 percent of its visitors come from the United States. Other top countries include the United Kingdom (6 percent), Germany (4 percent), Brazil (4 percent), and Canada (4 percent).[105]

Tumblr is unique in that its focus is on simple, quick posts that highlight images and videos. In fact, it could technically be considered a microblogging platform with social-networking features. For strategic purposes, Tumblr has been categorized as a highly visual, short-form blog. Yet this blogging platform emphasizes social media activities where users follow blogs, like posts, share content by reblogging it,[106] and include "@" in posts to tag other users.[107]

Top audience interests here are adult-oriented topics, internet, and telecom, plus arts and entertainment. Tumblr gets most of its traffic (50 percent) from direct traffic, followed by search (20 percent), referrals (17 percent), and social traffic (13 percent). Most of Tumblr's social traffic comes from Facebook (26 percent), Reddit (24 percent), and YouTube (20 percent).[108] Tumblr access also tends to happen more from home than school or work.[109]

Tumblr users are split between men (48 percent) and women (52 percent) but are overwhelmingly younger, with the largest percentage of users in the eighteen- to twenty-nine-year-old range (roughly 54 percent), with the next-largest group aged thirty to forty-nine

(30 percent). Income levels are diverse, with 40 percent earning under $30,000 a year, yet 28 percent earning over $75,000 a year. Nearly a third (31 percent) have a high-school education or less, yet just over a quarter (28 percent) have a college degree.[110]

It should be no surprise that Tumblr's content focuses on multimedia such as photos and video, but it also engages users interested in games and internet memes.[111] Look for unique content such as infographics and comics. Tumblr is not ideal for text-heavy entries, and the emphasis on sharing means less original content. This environment lends itself toward casual bloggers looking for something between Twitter and WordPress, and businesses that are more focused on visual content.[112] However, many media outlets have opened Tumblr accounts as another venue to share their program content.

Tumblr can be an ideal channel to feature high-quality graphics for users to share quickly. Tumblr is also a good network for blogger outreach if the target audience is in a niche fashion, graphic, craft, or design industry. For example, Electrolux created a unique Tumblr blog that reaches a foodie audience with artful photography and well-designed food recipe films.[113]

Tumblr does offer paid social media or native advertising through Tumblr Business. Brands can purchase sponsored posts, sponsored video posts, and a sponsored day. Sponsored days enable brands to pin their logos and taglines at the top of the Tumblr dashboard for twenty-four hours and link to exclusive brand content on an Explore page tab. Tumblr ads are targetable by gender, location, and interest. Because Tumblr is owned by Yahoo, Tumblr posts can also be purchased for syndication to Yahoo to increase reach.[114]

Tumblr has a mobile app that allows easy posts with photo and video, likes, and comments, as well as search via hashtags and mentions. Tumblr blogs are also optimized for viewing on mobile devices.[115] Tumblr key performance indicators (KPIs) are slightly different than the other blogging platforms and could include posts, comments, likes, links, views, engagement, referrals, and sentiment, but also follows and reblogs.

Other blogging considerations are Medium, which has grown to roughly 85 million monthly visitors,[116] and Typepad, which has dropped to around 15 million monthly visitors.[117] The website platforms Squarespace and Wix and the question-and-answer website Quora also support the creation of blogs.

Forums

Forums are online discussion sites where people hold conversations on related topics via posted messages. Forums differ from chat rooms in that the messages are usually longer and chat rooms happen in real time, more like a phone call, versus a forum discussion that functions more like an email conversation. Some estimate there are millions of internet forums. Forums are similar to blogs in that they provide digital meeting places for people interested in common subjects. Forums may also be called message boards, bulletin boards, discussion boards, threaded discussions, or discussion groups.

On forums, people can create discussions by starting a new thread or subject and others respond with replies to those threads. Threads can be anything from simple statements and questions to longer opinions, stories, or how-tos. Unlike chat rooms, forums keep archives of discussions with many users linking to archived entries.[118]

One popular use for forums is learning how to repair items or troubleshoot computers and software. Forums have sprung up around products, services, and brands. On these forums, fans provide tech support to each other and discuss brand activities. They can be consumer-run forums like forums.tdiclub.com or brand-supported forums like discussions .apple.com. Marketers should find the forums relevant to their organization or industry.[119]

Forums have owners who administer them, build discussion categories, create moderators, and manage users. The moderators are assigned to monitor a certain category or categories and are given the power to delete messages or even ban individuals from the forum. Users are the individual members who have public access.[120]

Forums tend to have strict rules on behavior and policies on posting threads and replies. Participants can be scolded or banned for posting off-topic messages or for inappropriate activity such as personal attacks. On most forums, overt sales messages are especially not tolerated. Marketers do not want to be labeled as spammers and be banned from the community. This could especially be harmful on a forum centered on a brand. Try to be helpful, not pushy.

To find forums, try directories and search options including BoardReader, ProBoards, or Omgili. Perform searches around the brand, product, service, industry, and target audience. You probably found some during the social media audit. Now go back to those sites to look at their size, the kind of users the forum attracts, and the type of content they share. Is there potential for participation to help meet organizational objectives? Are the users in the target market? Does the content shared lend itself to the main message, key insight, or big idea? If so, those forums may need to be a part of the social media strategy. If no forums currently exist, could the brand benefit from starting one? Could a brand-sponsored forum help meet objectives or even help overcome some obstacles identified in the social media audit, such as poor product support?

Blog and Forum Considerations

Why engage bloggers or members of forums? Seth Godin has it right in his quote about poking the box. The emphasis should be presence over perfection. Failing to contribute to vibrant communities engaged in discussion about a brand, product, service, or industry costs organizations. As in any personal relationship between friends, spouses, or coworkers, silence is deadly. A well-meaning personal statement, if not perfect, goes a long way in the consumer's mind versus polished, push-marketing campaigns.

Consider the **1% rule** or the 90-9-1 principle, first coined by bloggers Ben McConnell and Jackie Hunt. It states that in collaborative sites such as blogs and forums, 90 percent of users view the content, 9 percent contribute infrequently, and only 1 percent actively create new content.[121] As a marketer, this is good news. If a brand can engage the 1 percent of bloggers or forum participants, they will spread the word to the other 99 percent.

Like with social networks, join some brand, fan, or industry forums and poke around. Key performance indicators (KPIs) for forums can include posts, comments, members, views, threads, referrals, and links, and don't forget to indicate positive or negative sentiment when appropriate.

Marketers, advertisers, and public relations professionals should know that people are out there talking about their organization. Start reading, posting, and commenting on these

blogs and forums, or start your own. The cost of not engaging in that conversation can be huge, such as a missed opportunity to stop an angry protest before it gets out of hand or an opportunity to fuel a viral campaign. Find the right fit for social media campaign objectives, target, and big idea.

Chapter 7 Checklist

Social media can change quickly. Visit PostControlMarketing (http://www.postcontrolmar keting.com) for updates, but also use this chapter checklist to briefly check how social media statistics in this chapter have changed since publication.

- ✓ How have social networks, messaging apps, blogs, and forums changed? Are Facebook, LinkedIn, WhatsApp, Messenger, WordPress, Blogger, and Tumblr still the top platforms?
- ✓ Do a quick search to confirm key statistics for each of the social media channel options covered in this chapter. Go through the list above and update numbers for: monthly users, global and mobile use, user demographics such as gender, age, education, and income, plus platform use and new features.
- ✓ Check for new paid social media opportunities. Have any of the social media platforms covered in this chapter added new or native advertising options?

SOCIAL PLAN PART 7

Select Social Networks, Blog Platforms, and Forums

In this part of the social media plan, explore all the major social media networks. Research each, looking at the size and makeup of the users. Does the brand target audience match the main users of the social network? What kind of content is popular? What is the culture of the social network? Do these characteristics match brand, product, service, and big idea? Do the same exploration and comparison for blogs and forums. Could the brand benefit from a blog? Which platform would be best? What about a forum? Should the organization start its own, or participate in existing forums? Report all findings and ideas in these areas:

1. Identify the top social networks where the target audience is active.
2. For each social network, describe the main type of content and culture.
3. Find existing brand, product, or service blogs and forums. How could the brand participate?
4. Is there a need for a customer-support forum or other type of forum?

For a condensed version of the social plan see appendix A: Three-Part Social Plan.

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

1. Facebook is by far the largest and most dominant social media network. Do you feel all organizations must have a Facebook page? Can you think of an example where it wouldn't make sense?
2. Have any new social networks emerged as a viable option? Has Myspace returned or a new network emerged to become a valuable brand option to reach niche audiences?
3. How could a B2B (business to business) company use LinkedIn as a marketing tool? What strategies could be used on LinkedIn to build qualified leads and secure sales?
4. The GM Fastlane corporate blog was a success. Find another company blog that has done well. What business objectives is the blog helping to meet? Can you find any ROI (return on investment) data to report?

ADDITIONAL EXERCISES

1. One of the best ways to learn about social-network options is to join them. This exercise challenges you to join these top social networks and others you feel may apply to the target audience of your brand. This doesn't mean launch an official business presence. Join them personally to get a firsthand look at the environment, how it works, and what content tends to be liked. Also, notice the posted and unposted community rules. Make note of them for later efforts. Have fun and think like a consumer enjoying these social networks while observing them for strategic business insight.
2. As with social networks, one of the best ways to learn about blogs and forums is to join them. Do a search to find some of the most active forums in and around the brand, product, or service. Look for the most active contributors and identify them as possible influencers. Find some top blogs in your field and subscribe to them. Or perhaps start your own blog. Learn firsthand the characteristics and possibilities of this channel. Also, as with social networks, make a note of the community rules for your later efforts. Again, have fun and think like a consumer while observing for strategic business insight.

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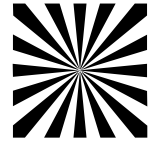
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Microblogging and Media Sharing

> Be sincere; be brief; be seated.[1]
>
> —Franklin D. Roosevelt

PREVIEW

Have you ever looked forward to a three-hour lecture class? How about a client meeting you knew was going to last for hours or even a half or full day? Yet you may recall rejoicing when a class or meeting let you out earlier than expected. There is something in our minds that drives us to believe shorter is better.

As an illustration, the following words were spoken at a historical event: "Standing beneath this serene sky, overlooking these broad fields now reposing . . ."[2] Do you remember what speech these words are from? On the other hand, these words began another speech that day: "Four score and seven years ago our fathers brought forth . . ." Many people probably don't know the first quote yet remember the second quote as the beginning of the Gettysburg Address given by Abraham Lincoln on November 19, 1863.[3] The first quote was from the main Gettysburg Address given by Edward Everett. Everett's speech was a two-hour, nearly fourteen-thousand-word oration on the event of the US Civil War. Right after Everett's speech, Lincoln spoke just ten sentences in two minutes and accomplished much more than Everett.[4]

When *Time* magazine published a Top 10 List of greatest speeches, Abraham Lincoln's Gettysburg Address was included among those of other greats such as Socrates, Martin Luther King Jr., and Winston Churchill. It is also interesting to note that Winston Churchill's famous "Blood, Toil, Tears and Sweat" speech of 1940 lasted a mere five minutes.[5] The lesson here is that clear and concise communication is often the most powerful and memorable.

Microblogging

In the Franklin D. Roosevelt quote that started this chapter, he may have been giving his son instructions for making a speech, but this way of thinking is behind some of the most influential social media channels. Even as we spend more and more time engaging with social media, placing limits on those individual interactions has spawned two of the most popular social media icons: Twitter and Pinterest.

Microblogging is a form of traditional blogging where the content is smaller in both file size and length of content. Microblogs limit exchange to smaller bits of information such as short sentences, single images, or video links that can be called microposts. Like traditional blogs, users post on topics from what they are doing and seeing right now to motorcycles or chocolate or television programs like *The Voice*.[6] The difference may seem small, but microblogs are used in very different ways than traditional blogs or other social media channels.

There have been many microblogging services, including Twitter, Pinterest, Vine, MeetMe, Sina Weibo, and Plurk. Some also consider Tumblr to be a microblog. Social-networking websites such as Facebook, Myspace, and LinkedIn also have microblogging features in the form of status updates.[7]

The other key characteristic of microblogging is the real-time reporting that has emerged from the short nature of updates that allows users to post items quickly. Twitter has developed into a source of news for crisis situations such as the Mumbai terror attacks, the Boston Marathon bombing, and the Paris attacks. Citizens have become sources of information outside formal journalism to influence or even cause mass media coverage. Microblogging also creates an enormous amount of data that can then be analyzed for trends with services such as Trendsmap.[8]

Additionally, microblogging has become an increasingly mainstream customer support channel. When a customer has a problem with a product or service they often turn to microblogs like Twitter first, not only to voice their discontent but also with the expectation of a timely response. There is also potential for collaborative work in organizations where email has become slow and inefficient. There are many free and open-source software services that act as hosted microblogging platforms for private organizational use. A popular microblog for organizational use is Slack. **Slack** provides a quick employee communication platform for messaging, sharing files, searches, and apps and is used by companies such as Samsung, Ogilvy, Time, Pinterest, eBay, and Ticketmaster.[9]

Why do people microblog? The findings of a study by Emily Pronin and Daniel Wegner suggest a link between short bursts of activity and feelings of elation, power, and creativity.[10] Is there some connection between these feelings or the live news feel and the organization's brand, product, or service? Can microblogging be leveraged in the social

media plan? Find out by looking at the two main microblogging platforms, Twitter and Pinterest, in further detail.

Twitter

Twitter is an online social-networking service that enables users to send short, character-count-limited messages. Launched in 2006, this microblogging platform defines itself as "what's happening in the world and what people are talking about right now."[11] Twitter has grown to over 328 million monthly active users. Marketers may want to consider the global aspects of Twitter. Just 68 million or 21 percent of those monthly active users are from the US, yet this is the platform's most important advertising market.[12] Twitter grew enormously at first, doubling in size from 2010 to 2013, but its growth has slowed more recently. Yet close to a quarter (24 percent) of US online adults are tweeting.[13]

Who are Twitter users? Twitter use is most common among those eighteen to twenty-nine, with 40 percent of all users in that age range. The second-highest age range for users is thirty- to forty-nine-year-olds at 26 percent, and fifty- to sixty-four-year-old users at 23 percent. Most are highly educated, with 64 percent having some college or a college degree. They are close to being equally divided among urban (35 percent), suburban (32 percent), and rural (32 percent) areas. The largest group of Twitter users makes more than $75,000 a year (41 percent), followed by 38 percent earning $50,000 to $74,999, yet close to a third (32 percent) earn less than $30,000 a year. Women (51 percent) and men (49 percent) are evenly split on the platform.[14]

What do these users share? They share thoughts, news, information, jokes, pictures, and links in 280 characters or less—not words or letters. These message updates are called tweets.[15] After ten years of having a 140-character count limit, in 2017 Twitter officially expanded to a new 280-character limit. After experimenting for months, Twitter said that extending the limit didn't make tweets longer but helped people get tweets out more quickly because they were not hitting the limit and were sending tweets faster because they spend less time editing. No matter the character count, Mashable says Twitter "makes global communication cheap and measurable." Like the social networks, users have profiles, but on Twitter most are public for anyone to see. In addition to a profile, each user is assigned a handle, which is their username. Usernames vary wildly, from real names and abbreviations to nicknames or organizations. Organizations can open Twitter accounts with profiles. They are not restricted to separate pages like they are on Facebook.[16]

Users follow other users that interest them so that their tweets appear in the other user's feed, or stream of tweets (updates), on their home page. The more people following, the more people see the updates. That is why early marketing efforts on Twitter should concentrate on building followers. If a user sees a tweet they like in their feed, they can "retweet" (RT), or reshare, the message, giving credit to the original author, but then having it appear in the feed of everyone following them.

Another way to acknowledge another user and separate specific tweets from all conversation is with a mention (using the @ symbol). For example, adding @Kquesen to a tweet notifies the author of this book, initiating a discussion in this public space. Twitter users can

also direct-message (DM) another user to conduct private messages back and forth with the same character limit. Yet users can only direct-message a user who follows them.

Many brands have found that including photos and videos improves user engagement. **Twitter Cards** can be a useful tool in this regard because they enable users to attach rich photos, videos, and media experiences to tweets and drive traffic to websites. Twitter Cards work by creating special pages on the brand's website and then sharing that URL. Users who tweet the link to that content will have a "card" added to the tweet that's visible to followers. There are four Twitter card types including summary cards with a title description and thumbnail image and a summary card with a large image. An app card has a direct download to a mobile app and a player card provides video and audio media.[17]

Another popular strategy on Twitter is to host and participate in Twitter chats. **Twitter Chats** are when an organization or individual talks live with others about a topic during a preplanned time using a hashtag. To start a Twitter Chat, use a tweet chat directory to find hashtags that are already being used, then create your own, set a time and topic, and promote it to followers. Sites such as Twubs.com and TweetChat.com can help you set up and participate in Twitter Chats. Example Twitter Chats include #HootChat, #SproutChat, #LinkedInChat, #TwitterSmarter, #ViralChat, #HBRChat, #SmallBizChat, #PRChat, and #MillennialChat.[18] Brands could host Twitter Chats to establish thought leadership, become influencers, share content, and increase awareness. Twitter Chats build engagement, which attracts followers and builds a community around the brand while providing insights into what customers need which can lead to valuable and engaging content development. They also offer an opportunity to connect with customers and leads. Brands can do this through their own Twitter Chat or brand influencers and salespeople can participate in other relevant and popular Twitter Chats.[19]

Companies such as Verizon provide customer service via Twitter. These companies try to get angry customers off the public feed by encouraging them to follow and then send a direct message. Other companies such as airlines have opened separate Twitter accounts dedicated to customer service. With some 500 million tweets a day, users find related messages by including a hashtag (#) to designate a topic of conversation such as #TheVoice or #startup.[20] Hashtags are the main search tool for Twitter that allows users to find all tweets about a given subject—even from users they don't follow. Twitter also owned the social media app Vine, which emphasized short video content in the form of six-second looping clips, but shut down that platform in January 2017. Twitter also owns the Periscope app, which streams live video, and has integrated it into Twitter thus adding live video broadcasting capabilities to Twitter.[21]

One of the main attractions of Twitter is its real-time reporting. Marketers like HGTV use the channel to share interesting content, but also to promote their shows in real time.[22] Twitter is very mobile, with apps available on both iOS and Android devices, and is reported to be the fourteenth-most-used smartphone app in the US just head of Pinterest and right behind Amazon Mobile.[23] With 77 percent of Americans owning a smartphone and just over 50 percent owning a tablet, they are now accessing Twitter while watching television at the same time, which has made TV programming a more interactive experience.[24] This activity will also increase across the globe as nearly half of the world now uses a smartphone.[25]

Native advertising is an option for Twitter. Marketers should consider purchasing promoted tweets to boost reach and jumpstart efforts. Twitter Business offers promoted tweets for clicks, followers, engagement, or apps built around campaigns for a variety of business goals from driving website traffic to increasing brand awareness. Paid Twitter social ads can track impressions and cost-per-result for each campaign objective and can be targeted by gender, interests, language, location, followers, devices, keyword, behavior, or tailored audiences from CRM lists.[26]

More and more media companies are creating profiles to allow fans to follow shows and sporting events, make live comments, and vote via hashtags that can also be published on the television screen. The NBA was early in leveraging the third screen, with two-thirds of its players engaging fans on Twitter by 2013, reaching more than 130 million people.[27]

Despite its slowed growth, Twitter users are a highly influential group and a large number of journalists use the network for story leads. Journalists are the largest, most-active verified group worldwide on Twitter, making up nearly a quarter (24.6 percent) of authenticated users, followed by sports teams and athletes (17.9 percent) and actors and entertainers (13.6 percent).[28] Twitter could especially apply to public relations efforts to garner earned media coverage.

Key performance indicators (KPIs) for Twitter could include followers, likes, links, tweets, retweets, mentions, direct messages, referrals, and impressions. Don't forget to analyze sentiment. Twitter has become a favorite place for angry customers to complain about products and services, and a growing number expect a quick response from organizations. The challenges and opportunities of social media customer service will be discussed further in part IV of the book.

Pinterest

Pinterest is a web and mobile social network that enables visual discovery, collection, and sharing and serves as a storage tool. An even newer phenomenon than Twitter, Pinterest began in 2010 but has grown to over 175 million monthly active users.[29] This online pin board has a high amount of business activity with one of the highest percentages of business accounts, which may help explain why only about one-fifth of Pinterest images contain faces.

This channel is focused on products, designs, and ideas. It is not a family-photo-sharing service. Pinterest has an impressive influence on purchases with 87 percent of users purchasing a product because of Pinterest and 93 percent using Pinterest to plan a future purchase.[30] Another distinguishing characteristic is that nearly half (46 percent) of Pinterest users are from within the US.[31] This could be an important factor to consider depending on organizational objectives and target audience.

Nearly a third (31 percent) of US adult internet users are on Pinterest. Like many of the social channels, Pinterest has younger users, with the most aged between eighteen and twenty-nine years (32 percent) followed closely by thirty- to forty-nine-year-olds (30 percent), and another quarter aged fifty to sixty-four years (25 percent). They are well-educated, with nearly three-quarters (74 percent) having some college or a college degree. Income

of Pinterest users is spread fairly evenly with 27 percent earning more than $75,000 a year, 24 percent earning between $50,000 and $74,999 a year, 25 percent earning $30,000 to $49,999, and 23 percent earning less than $30,000. One of the key characteristics of Pinterest is that the site skews heavily female. Women make up nearly three-quarters of platform users (74 percent) compared to men (27 percent).[32]

Pinterest may be thought of more as a highly visual search engine where images that users like can be collected in categories for later reference. Some describe its main activity as "virtual scrapbooking," but this scrapbook enables users to collect and share photos, videos, and articles of their interests. Like other social sites, this channel starts with a profile where users place their name, bio, and photo. The main action is to pin. A pin is a post or update that is shared on the public network. It is similar to a tweet, but is image-based. Each pin added is automatically linked back to the website from which it came. A collection of pins is linked by a topic and collected on a board. A board of "Famous Chili" could have pictures of different chilis with links to the recipes.[33] Campbell's food leverages the recipe and themed boards well for their Campbell's Kitchen recipe content (see figure 8.1).[34] The content on Pinterest tends to favor topics like fashion, food, DIY, and crafts. Despite being photo-centric, images with faces are not popular on this site. Pinterest and Instagram expert Alisa Meredith says that images with people tend to not feature faces so
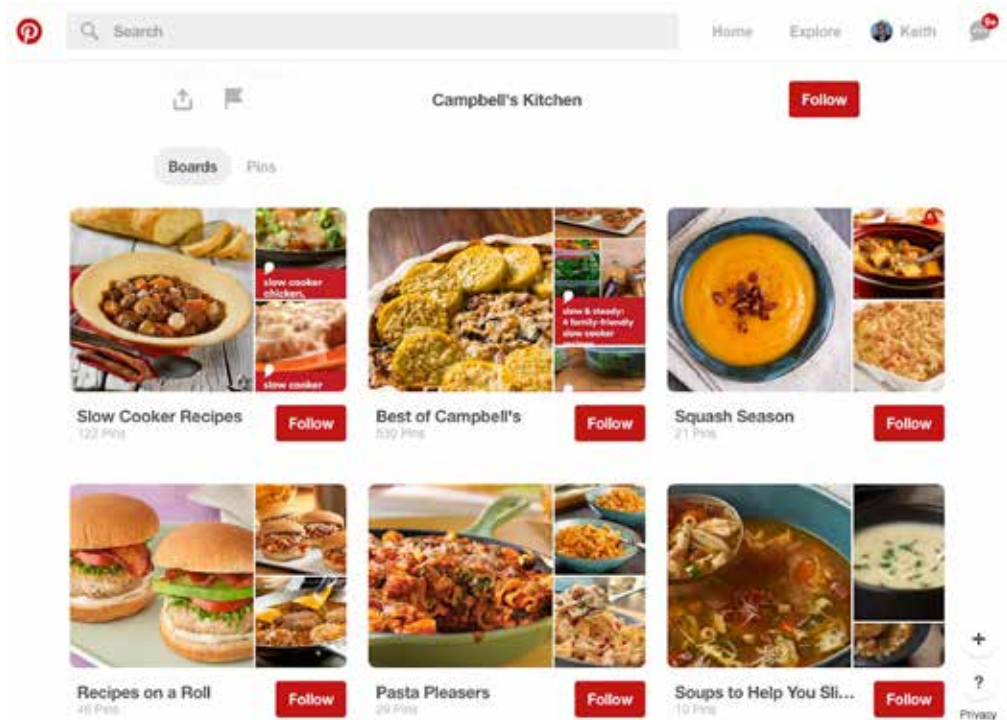
Figure 8.1. Campbell's leverages themed cooking boards on Pinterest.

Source: Campbell's Kitchen Pinterest Account, accessed September 18, 2017, http://www.pinterest.com/campbell kitchen. © CSC Brands LP.

the viewer can envision themselves wearing the clothes or creating the craft. Images with faces perform better on Instagram. She also indicates that warmer colors tend to perform better on Pinterest versus cooler colors on Instagram.[35]

Like other social channels, users select other users to follow. Being a follower means the person can follow all of another user's pins or just certain boards. When following, those pins show up on the Pinterest home page under the following board. This activity functions like a Facebook or Twitter stream. Similar to a retweet on Twitter, users can repin an image they like and add it to their own board, but it still gives credit to the original author and maintains the source link. Authors can add captions to their images but are limited to five hundred characters and are not allowed to include hyperlinks in the text.[36]

Pinterest also enables users to like pins that they approve of, but this will not place it on that user's board the way a repin does. Similar to Twitter hashtags, Pinterest's pins and boards can be tagged by category, such as "Food & Drinks" or "Gifts." Gifts may be categorized with price tags and users can search for gifts by price range. The site has added price alerts that automatically send an email when the price of a pinned product drops.[37]

It is easy to see why this channel is popular with businesses. Pinterest has a trends page to help marketers, advertisers, and public relations professionals stay on top of what is trending on the visual microblog and also provides a robust web analytics system for business.[38]

Native advertising is available on Pinterest and could be a way to increase reach by purchasing promoted pins. Pinterest for Business offers ads by promoted pins to build awareness, increase engagement, and drive website traffic. Pinterest social ads work by increasing views of already-published organic pins so they look and feel natural inside the platform. Promoted pins can be targeted by category interests, keyword targeting, demographics, and behavioral audience targeting. Businesses are charged per performance as cost-per-click versus merely views.[39]

Pinterest is mobile, with apps for many devices designed to allow pinning right from the smartphone's camera. In fact, up to 80 percent of Pinterest traffic comes from mobile devices.[40] Pinterest is also the thirteenth most popular of all mobile apps in the US, right below Twitter and above The Weather Channel.[41] Unlike other social channels, Pinterest seems to have had an eye toward business from the beginning and probably deserves a good look for many organizations. But marketers should consider its size, capabilities, and the small percentage of male users. With Pinterest key performance indicators (KPIs) could be boards, pins, repins, likes, followers, clicks, referrals, and don't forget sentiment.

Microblogging Considerations

The size of content and the user base of the leaders in microblogging are both smaller than in the big social networks. But the type of content, type of users, and channel capabilities might be perfect for the right big idea, target audience, and business objective. As FDR told his son, being brief can be much more powerful than being long. Also remember the lesson learned from Everett's and Lincoln's Gettysburg addresses. Short can be impactful. Be sure to explore the top microblogging platforms as social strategy options.

MINI CASE

Pharrell's "Happy"

The song "Happy" by Pharrell was originally produced for the animated hit *Despicable Me 2*, but the artist and producers wanted to broaden its appeal. The world's first twenty-four-hour video was created and launched at 24hoursofhappy.com. The song played and replayed for twenty-four hours while viewers could tune in any time to see people going about their jobs dancing to "Happy."[a] The music video featured an interactive sequence showing Pharrell and three hundred people, some famous and some not, dancing around Los Angeles over the course of a day.

The viral video took the top prize, a Grand Prix in Cyber Craft, at Cannes Lions.[b] The idea spawned imitations, of which some became viral hits of their own. Clips of the video and these imitations spread via social sites like YouTube. After the viral release, sales of the single rose sharply by 14,000 percent. This promotion was one of the biggest hits of all time, drawing close to 10 million visitors from around the world. The United Nations even named March 20 as Happiness Day, sponsored by Pharrell.[c]

[a] Ed Owen, "24 Hours of Happy Wins Cannes Cyber Grand Prix," Global Academy of Digital Marketing, June 24, 2014, http://www.gogadm.com/24-hours-of-happy-wins-cannes-cyber-grand-prix.

[b] Ann-Christine Diaz, "Pharrell's 24-Hour 'Happy' Video, Chipotle's 'The Scarecrow' and Volvo's 'Live Tests' Take Cyber Grand Prix at Cannes," AdAge.com, June 18, 2014, http://adage.com/article/special-report-cannes-lions/pharrell-happy-chipotle-volvo-cannes-cyber-grand-prix/293773.

[c] Owen, "24 Hours of Happy Wins Cannes Cyber Grand Prix."

Media Sharing

Virginia Woolf said in *The Common Reader*, "For pleasure has no relish unless we share it." She tells us that her intention is for her essays to be read by the "common reader" who reads books for personal enjoyment.[42] Perhaps that is why social media sharing has become so popular on the internet and through apps on mobile devices. It is a common desire for people to share and read for enjoyment. When asked, 70 percent of internet users say they have shared some type of content on social media sites within the previous month. With the growing popularity of visually focused sites such as Instagram and Snapchat, it is no surprise that pictures are the most popular type of content, shared by 43 percent of internet users. Beyond that, the next four most popular types of content shared are people's opinions, status updates, links to articles, and recommendations.[43]

Video is also a rising form of sharing and viewing online. A report by Cisco says that by 2021, 82 percent of all of the world's internet traffic will be online video—a rise from 64 percent in 2014. Social media video is growing in popularity in terms of views and powerful in terms of message.[44] Online video will continue to rise in importance as recent studies indicate that teenagers already spent 34 percent of their total video time watching YouTube, compared to 27 percent watching Netflix, and only 14 percent watching traditional broadcast live TV.[45]

Internet users under the age of thirty-five are most likely to share content (81 percent), followed by those thirty-five to forty-nine years old (70 percent). Women are more likely (74 percent) to share content than men (69 percent), and the likelihood of sharing rises with income and education level.[46] The top reasons people post content are to share interesting things (61 percent), important things (43 percent), and funny things (43 percent). People also want to let others know what they believe in (39 percent), want to recommend a product or service (30 percent), and want to provide support to a cause or organization (30 percent) that they believe in.[47]

These survey results give organizations an idea of the type of content to create that will most likely get shared through social media word-of-mouth. Another important point is to make sure sharing is easy by adding social media share buttons to all content. Take a look at the top media-sharing sites online and on mobile apps to see how YouTube, Instagram, and Snapchat could possibly fit with the organizational objectives, target, or campaign idea.

YouTube

YouTube is a video-sharing website that enables users to upload, view, and share user-generated and corporate-media video. YouTube is the top video-sharing website, with over one billion users or one-third of all people on the internet globally. Founded in 2005, and bought by Google in 2006, the video-sharing site has attributed its most recent growth to increased use among younger audiences. Increased viewing on mobile devices has also fueled growth. YouTube mobile reaches more eighteen- to thirty-four-year-olds than any US cable network. Over a billion hours of video are watched each day.[48]

YouTube generates a lot of the content that is shared on other channels such as Twitter and Facebook, plus embedded in websites and blogs. Similar to other social channels, YouTube is very global, with roughly 80 percent of YouTube traffic coming from outside the US.[49] The introduction of YouTube in 2005, and later Vimeo, drove video use up from 33 percent to 72 percent in less than ten years. Some have dubbed this incredible increase the "YouTube Effect."[50]

Like some other social media platforms, YouTube is mostly used by younger users, with the majority aged eighteen to twenty-nine (82 percent) versus 34 percent of those sixty-five and older.[51] One trend to note is that YouTube video views may shift with the introduction of native video capabilities being added to social networks such as Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram, as well as the introduction of new video-based social networks like Snapchat. YouTube skews slightly toward males (54 percent) over females (46 percent), with average income levels. Most YouTube users earn below $75,000 per year, yet 46 percent earned more than $75,000 a year. They are also educated or currently enrolled in school, with 45 percent having some college education.[52] It is also important to note that YouTube is the world's second-largest search engine and third-most-visited website after Google and Facebook.[53]

More than simply a video-hosting site, YouTube has many of the features and characteristics of a social network. Users have a profile where they can list occupation and hobbies and upload a picture. They upload videos and mark them as public or private. Videos are separated by content that is organized into channels, from brand channels to channels on
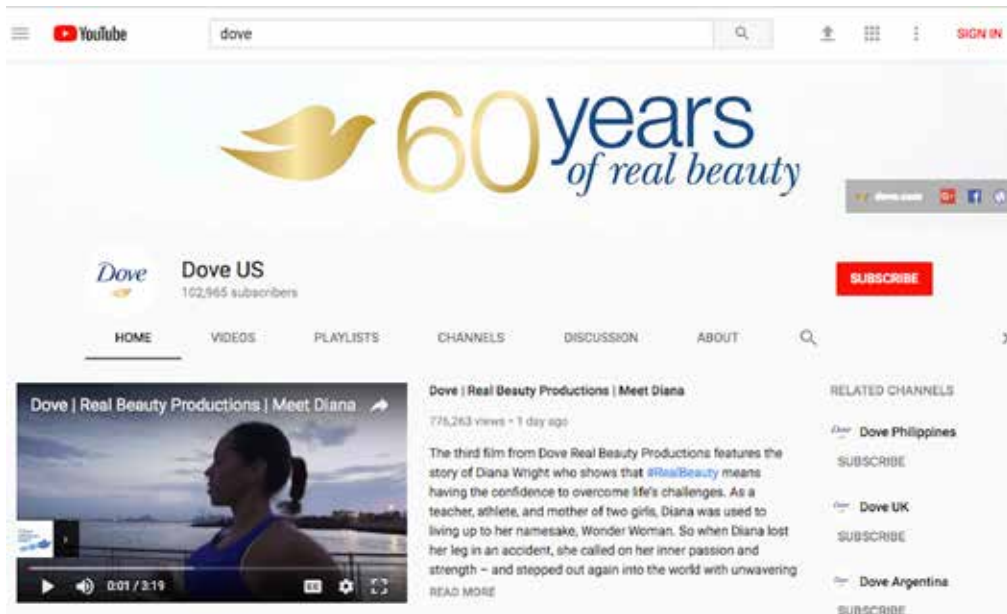
Figure 8.2. Dove's Branded YouTube Channel

interests such as comedy videos, how-to videos, or business videos. Channels also follow other channels with mutual interests and content. Each video allows users to enter a title, description, and category. Popular categories include home improvement, fitness, sketch comedy, travel, beauty, and cooking.[54] The Dove brand has used its YouTube channel to distribute Dove Films for years. These videos draw viewers in and provide positive messages to consumers that are transferred to the beauty brand (see figure 8.2).[55]

What makes a popular brand video one that will go viral? In a study presented at the American Marketing Association Conference, researchers analyzed brand advertising videos collected by viral video firm Unruly. Content analysis of the top-performing videos found that average shares and views were higher for videos that told a story following a five-act dramatic form—stories that have a plot with an introduction, rising action, climax, falling action, and concluding moment.[56] For further insight into this story form, see the "Social Media Story Template" introduced in chapter 5.

In YouTube viewers are able to like or dislike a video as a general rating, enter comments, and offer video shout-outs. People can also reply to commenters directly or add to the general conversation. It is important to note that videos get positive and negative comments, but may also get extremely negative, callous, anonymous remarks. These negative commenters simply enjoy bullying and are called trolls. **Trolls** intentionally post inflammatory, extraneous messages in online communities to provoke emotional responses. YouTube users can engage trolls with witty remarks, block their accounts, or simply ignore them and let other commenters defend them.[57] Note that trolls are not a problem limited only to You-

Tube. Marketers, advertisers, and PR professionals should also watch out for them in forums and in the comments sections of blogs, online articles, and on social network accounts.

A popular video version of blogging has emerged on YouTube. A **video blog,** or vlog, is a combination of video, images, and text that can be thought of as a form of web television. Vloggers talk about anything from politics to pop culture. Some are random personal thoughts and chronicles of their lives. Others are comedy sketches or fictional dramas. Many a vlogger has amassed millions of views and subscribers by doing product and service reviews. It may be worth a marketer's time to find the top reviewers in their category or industry and seek a positive review through outreach.[58] Just make sure to follow the FTC disclosure rules as discussed in chapter 15.

For paid social media, YouTube provides a variety of native advertising and more traditional online ad options. Advertising on YouTube offers in-stream Pre-Roll Ads, Video Ads, and In-Video Overlay, plus Display Ads and Video Mastheads. YouTube bills only for engagement such as views and clicks and allows targeting by age, gender, location, and interest.[59]

YouTube has mobile apps for all major mobile platforms and is accessed on millions of devices. The site reports that 25 percent of all YouTube views happen via a mobile device.[60] YouTube's mobile app is the second-most-used mobile app behind Facebook and above Facebook Messenger.[61] Key performance indicators for YouTube could be views, comments, shares, subscribers, referrals, links, likes, and dislikes. YouTube Analytics also provides information about activity, such as audience retention, demographics, traffic sources, minutes watched, and playback location.

Instagram

Instagram is an online mobile social-networking service that enables users to take photos and videos and share them on a variety of social networking platforms. Instagram was only launched in 2010, but this photo- and video-sharing social-networking service has grown tremendously via its mobile app. Instagram has more than 800 million monthly active users and 500 million daily active users.[62] Nearly one-third (32 percent) of online US adults use Instagram, up from 13 percent in 2012.[63]

Like other social networks, Instagram's amazing growth (200 million users over just eight months in 2017) has come from a global audience, with 80 percent of Instagram users outside the US.[64] Facebook acquired Instagram in 2013, and integration with the popular social network has occurred for users and businesses.

Instagram is very popular with teens and young adults. Of online US adults, half of Instagram users are eighteen to twenty-nine years old (50 percent), with 28 percent in the thirty- to forty-nine-year-old range. From there, older usage drops off quickly. More women than men use Instagram (60 percent versus 40 percent), with the largest group of users having some college education or a college degree (72 percent). Instagram users are not as wealthy as those on other social media channels, with 29 percent earning less than $30,000 a year. Yet this makes sense considering many users are younger, in college or high school. Roughly a quarter each earn annual incomes in the remaining brackets of $30,000

to $49,999 (24 percent), $50,000 to $74,999 (24 percent), and over $75,000 (23 percent). Most Instagram users live in the city (40 percent), with 29 percent in the suburbs and 32 percent in rural areas.[65]

Instagram is unique in that it enables users to take pictures and videos, apply digital filters, and share directly on other social sites, such as Facebook, Twitter, and Tumblr. Instagram is all about quality photos. Initially, these were distinctive in that they were square in shape, similar to the old-time Kodak Instamatic. Later the platform released this restriction, allowing different shape photos. The service also supports video by allowing up to fifteen-second short clips. This feature was added to compete with Twitter's Vine.

Users can create a social media profile with recently shared photos and a biography. Instagram users follow other users, like and comment on their photos, and share them. Instagram also uses hashtags to categorize photos and videos like Twitter does, and added "direct," which allows users to send photos only to a specific user or group, to compete with other popular services such as Snapchat.[66]

As the popularity and ad revenue of Snapchat grew, Instagram became more aggressive in pursuing younger users by adding Snapchat-like features including stories, slideshows, overlaid creative tools, disappearing DMs (direct messages), and even face filters by spring 2017.[67] The TechCrunch article headline announcing selfie filters said, "Instagram launches selfie filters, copying the last big Snapchat feature." Besides reaching a younger audience, Instagram is also known for its high engagement rates and user-generated brand content. However, popularity and growth has made many users' news feeds too crowded so that the social media–sharing channel switched to a timeline of users' photos based on an algorithm versus chronological order. This will reduce organic reach.[68] All of the changes and added features look like they worked as, in a short time, Instagram's 200 million daily stories users quickly outgrew Snapchat's 166 million total users and the number of active advertisers rose from 500,000 to one million in just six months.[69]

Marketers should look at Instagram as a way to reach a younger target audience. From there it can be used in similar ways to YouTube, such as embedding Instagram photos and videos in a blog or website for improved SEO (search engine optimization). Instagram could be used to post photos of products, employees, store environment, or events. Mobile-only Instagram serves as a great channel for engaging photo or video contests to gain user-generated content. If you are creating your own brand video for mobile, you may want to consider square video. Buffer Social points out that square video (1:1 aspect ratio) takes up to 78 percent more space in mobile news feeds than landscape video (16:9 aspect ratio). In content experiments across Instagram, Facebook, and Twitter, Buffer Social found that square video outperformed landscape video in likes, comments, and shares with 30 to 35 percent higher views and 80 to 100 percent increased engagement.

Hashtags matter in Instagram. Trending hashtags relevant to the social media strategy can be found and used to participate in the discussion to gain followers and attention for a brand. Posts with at least one hashtag average over 12 percent more engagement and 75 percent of users take action like visiting a website after viewing an Instagram advertising post.[70] Instagram expert Sue B. Zimmerman says that the key to success is moving beyond the most popular hashtags and focusing on the niches that are relevant to your target audience. She also suggests adding five to twelve hashtags following the acronym CLEEP, which

Figure 8.3. Benefit Cosmetics UK Custom Instagram Photos

Source: "Benefit Cosmetics Instagram Post," Benefit Cosmetics UK Instagram account, accessed September 18, 2017, https://instagram.com/benefitcosmeticsuk.© Benefit Cosmetics LLC.

stands for category, location, emotion, event, and product. Good lighting, composition, and consistent design are important and the biggest mistake is not answering consumer questions. Creating authentic brand stories in Instagram has also become an important strategy.[71] Benefit Cosmetics UK follows best practices creating custom photos for Instagram to attract followers and engagement (see figure 8.3).[72]

Paid social media is available for Instagram. Instagram for Business offers sponsored posts as photo ads, video ads, or carousel ads to increase awareness, leads, sales, store visits, or downloads. Instagram native ads are placed through the Facebook Ads Manager so integrating a

campaign to run on both platforms is seamless. Thus, targeting capabilities similar to those found on Facebook are available including demographics, location, interests, behaviors, looka-like audiences, and custom audiences through CRM data.[73]

Instagram is also unique from other channels discussed in that it started as a mobile-only app and not an online website. There is a website, but it is merely a simpler version of the app. Instagram's mobile app is supported on most devices and is the ninth most-used smartphone app ahead of iTunes and right behind Gmail.[74] Key performance indicators for Instagram could be views, shares, downloads, referrals, links, likes, comments, clicks, and sentiment.

Snapchat

Snapchat is a photo- and video-sharing messaging service in which media and messages are only available for a short time before disappearing. One of the newest social platforms, this mobile app was launched in 2011, but grew quickly in popularity among younger high school– and college-aged users due to the anonymity of messages being deleted after ten seconds.[75] By 2016 Snapchat had reached over 301 million monthly active users with 166 million active daily.[76]

Snapchat is most popular with eighteen- to twenty-four-year-olds (37 percent), with the next-highest age group of users falling into twenty-five- to thirty-four-year-olds (26 percent), followed by thirteen- to seventeen-year-olds (23 percent). Thus, thirteen- to twenty-four-year-olds make up 60 percent of total users.[77] One survey estimates that more women (58 percent) than men use Snapchat (42 percent). Global use of the platform is widespread across the US, Europe, Asia, and the Middle East.[78] Income and education level statistics were not available but are most likely in line with the younger demographics. Snapchat has impressive engagement rates with users active on the app over eighteen times a day spending over thirty minutes with the platform.[79]

Snapchat's interface is different from other social platforms and dubbed by *Wall Street Journal* tech reporter Joanna Stern as "the most confusing social network." This difference may be one of the reasons older users stayed away from the platform early on, which was probably fine with younger users who didn't want their parents and grandparents there anyway. Snaps are vertical photos and ten-second videos sent to one or many friends that disappear after viewing. Stories collect a series of pictures or videos that stay on the app for twenty-four hours, shared with just friends or public for all to see. Special effects or lenses can be added and matched to facial movements. Text and art can also be added with emojis, graphics, and hand-drawn doodles for unique, personalized creations. Multiple filters can be applied to images including add time, temp stamp, or a location theme. Keep swiping to add multiple filters and effects. To add friends in Snapchat, the user must know a person's Snapchat username or already have them in their contacts. However, snapcodes (QR codes) offer a way to promote Snapchat accounts and add friends and are shared on other social channels or in print to be scanned on the phone.[80] A **QR code** is short for quick response code and is a two-dimensional bar code that provides quick and easy access to online infor-mation through a smartphone camera.[81]

One way for brands to succeed on Snapchat is to grow friends organically and create valuable daily content. This does take a lot of effort, but may be worth it for the unique engagement and demographic reach that other social media channels may not deliver. Brands can also screen shot or save content created in Snapchat and post on other channels to be repurposed beyond the twenty-four-hour story expiration. Newer Snapchat features include search to find friends, groups, or stories.[82] Snap Map allows users to share their location and find friends based on their location via a map. Users can view snaps and stories on the Snap Map.[83]

If you don't have the patience or large audience base to draw from on other social channels to grow organically, Snapchat does offer several paid social media or native advertising options. Brands can appear in the Live section under stories, like Chobani which paid to be a part of Snapchat's College Game Day Live story integrated in two slots in the story. Live story aggregates content from a mix of fans to highlight events happening now. Brands can also buy their way into the Discover section under stories. Discover is for publishers, but brands can partner with publishers like Cosmopolitan, CNN, BuzzFeed, or Food Network to co-create story content. Dunkin' Donuts created a campaign with ESPN's Snapchat Discover channel to promote the food chain to football fans with fun, playful shorts.[84]

Snapchat for Business offers a variety of native advertising options. Full-screen Snap Ads provide brands a targeted video with attachments, website links, app installs, or links to long-form video. Sponsored Filters are good for location-specific or event brand opportunities. Sponsored Lenses allow marketers to create fun brand experiences around their products and services. Like Facebook and Instagram campaigns, they are created through Snapchat's Ad Manager with objectives to drive website traffic, increase awareness and engagement, or drive application installs. Audiences can be targeted with predefined audiences based on behavior, demographics like gender, age, income, location, and parental status, lookalike audiences, and custom audiences with brand lists from CRM data. Measurement includes reach, resonance, and reaction.[85]

Sponsored geofilter ads can be bought through Snapchat's advertising API, which enables marketers to pair a sponsored geofilter with a Snap Ad. This enables strategies such as buying a geofilter and then retargeting Snap Ads to people who used it. There is also integration with Snap Ad analytics dashboards to measure performance, and geofilter brand templates can be created that then are easily customized for specific locations.[86]

Early on, this rising social media star had a negative reputation of being a network for seedy activity such as sexting. However, Snapchat's CEO Evan Spiegel told media, "We're building a photo app that doesn't conform to unrealistic notions of beauty or perfection but rather creates a space to be funny, honest or whatever else you might feel like at the moment you take and share a Snap." The intention was to create a fun alternative to Facebook where obsession over perfect selfies, competition for friends and likes, and embarrassing tagged photos become permanent records. Over time the social media sharing and messaging platform shed the seedy image to become a mainstream communications channel for mass media like the *Tonight Show* and ESPN, presidential candidates, and advertisers like Dunkin' Donuts.[87]

Whatever Snapchat's past, today this social network has emerged as a serious consideration for marketers, advertisers, and public relations professionals. The platform also

continues to innovate by adding new features such as 3D lenses that add augmented reality (AR) objects to users' worlds. This was a feature first made popular by the app Pokémon GO. The social platform has also introduced context cards as an attractive feature for brand marketers. Context cards allow users to swipe to learn more about what they are viewing and perform actions like calling an Uber or Lyft, or reserving a table at a restaurant.[88] Snapchat is of course highly mobile, being designed as a social media app, and is the seventeenth-most-popular mobile app in the US behind The Weather Channel and above Netflix.[89] Key performance indicators for Snapchat could be followers, stories, opens, screenshots, views, and sentiment.

Media-Sharing Considerations

Virginia Woolf wanted to reach the "common reader" with her writing. Never since the invention of the printing press has such an explosion in technology enabled more reading and sharing of stories and information. Which of the top three media-sharing channels is right for your audience, message, and big idea?

Other social media–sharing channels to consider are Flickr, Vimeo, SlideShare, and Spark. Flickr, owned by Yahoo, which is now owned by Verizon, has over 112 million members who have uploaded over 11 billion photos.[90] Vimeo, with 170 million viewers, may be a good option for niche video audiences.[91] LinkedIn owned SlideShare, with 80 million users is great for business and content marketing to share presentations and generate leads.[92] In 2017 Amazon started a new service called Spark. Spark is Amazon's mobile-only social feed of Prime member, user-posted images. This new social network was created for the 80 million Amazon Prime customers only, which could make this an attractive option for brands sold through this online retailer. Spark enables posting images tagged with products, interests, links, and comparison polls that elicit feedback for prospective purchases. Users can follow interest categories and people called "enthusiasts" and engage through smiles and comments. When tagged products are clicked, users are taken to the Amazon product page to "add to cart" or buy in one click. In the beginning, brands are not allowed to post but could leverage influencers to created branded content with #sponsored tags.[93] Live-streaming video apps like Periscope and Facebook or Instagram Live will be covered in chapter 9.

Chapter 8 Checklist

Social media can change quickly. Visit PostControlMarketing (http://www.postcontrolmarketing.com) for updates, but also use this chapter checklist to briefly check how social media statistics in this chapter have changed since publication.

- ✓ How have microblogs and media-sharing social media changed? Are Twitter, Pinterest, YouTube, Instagram, and Snapchat still the top platforms?
- ✓ Do a quick search to confirm key statistics for each of the social media channel options covered in this chapter. Go through the list above and update numbers for:

monthly users, global and mobile use, user demographics such as gender, age, educa-tion, and income, plus platform use and new features.

✓ Check for new paid social media opportunities. Have any of the social media plat-forms covered in this chapter added new or further native advertising options?

✺ SOCIAL PLAN PART 8

Choose Most Strategic Content Sharing

Explore and choose content-sharing channels that best fit your social media plan. Consider all the top social media–sharing networks. Research each, looking at the number and makeup of the users to ensure a match with your target audience. Do the brand, product, or service and the big idea fit the type of content that is shared on the channel? How can the organization leverage the real-time, seasonal, and topical characteristics of microblogging? What type of content is ideal for sharing—text, photo, or video? Report all findings and ideas in these areas:

1. Identify microblogs where the target audience is active.
2. Describe the type of content that is shared and popular on each.
3. Find photo- and video-sharing networks that match the target audience.
4. Explain what content the brand could create.

For a condensed version of the social plan see appendix A: Three-Part Social Plan.

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

1. "Tweets per minute" is a measure of total activity on Twitter. It is known to spike during large events, such as the 2013 Super Bowl blackout. How could a brand take advantage of these spikes in Twitter activity?
2. Pinterest is unique in its user base and content. Make a list of brands that would work well on the microblog and a list of brands for which Pinterest is not a good fit. Explain your answers.
3. Everyone talks about viral videos. Do some research and develop a list of characteristics or ingredients that make a video go viral.
4. Look at the difference between Facebook posts, Instagram posts, and Snapchat posts. Do some research and explain how a brand should adjust their content to be popular on each platform.

ADDITIONAL EXERCISES

1. For this exercise, join the top microblogs and get an idea of what is happening in this social space. Follow some industry leaders on Twitter, follow your competition, and search for

some trending topics. What are people doing and saying on the site? Is content mostly text or pictures or are they sharing video? Do they provide links? Do the same for Pinterest. Who knows? You may discover a brilliant business idea, or simply a great new BBQ recipe. Have fun, but also look for strategic business opportunities. How could your business engage consumers, influencers, and the media through microblogging?

2. Jump into the content-sharing sites and look for characteristics your brand, product, or service can leverage. Start with YouTube. You have probably viewed hundreds of videos here, but ask yourself, "What makes a video popular or of interest to me?" Also, consider what type of consumer-oriented video your organization could produce to help meet your plan objectives. Do the same on Instagram, Pinterest, and Snapchat. You are simply exploring here. If these sites are not right for your plan, then don't include them. You want to try them all, but cannot and should not implement them all.

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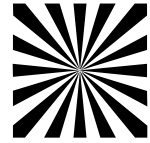
Geosocial, Live Video, Ratings, and Reviews

> Not all those who wander are lost.[1]
>
> —J. R. R. Tolkien

PREVIEW

How transparent has your life become? Do you share your location in social media posts? Do you leave ratings and reviews for products you've bought or restaurants you have been to? Have you gone "live" by video streaming your last birthday party, performance, or workout? Whether you're watching and commenting on other people's lives or sharing your own geolocation, ratings, reviews, and live video, these interactive media features have made everyone's lives more social and more open.

Many people like "checking in" online and giving reviews and ratings. How much of a difference can they make? Business professor Michael Luca set out to measure this in his research, "Reviews, Reputation and Revenue." In a study of Seattle Yelp restaurant reviews from 2003 to 2009, the researcher found that a one-star increase in Yelp rating led to a 5 to 9 percent increase in revenue. However, the increase was only found with independent restaurants, not chain restaurants. In fact, the study found that chain-restaurant market share declined as Yelp penetration increased.[2]

A negative result of this powerful influence on business is that it has created an intense incentive to post fake reviews. Michael Luca teamed up with Georgios Zervas in a follow-up Yelp study. They found that businesses without many existing reviews and those that face intense competition are more likely to engage in review fraud. How big is the overall problem? In a site-wide measurement of suspicious reviews, the researchers found that roughly 16 percent of all reviews are filtered or removed by Yelp for being fake.[3] These findings are important to keep in mind. Where there is money to be made, some will try to cheat the system. Yet marketers, advertisers, and public relations professionals must always consider the ethical consequences. In the end, getting caught is far worse for a business than the initial economic gain.

Geosocial

J. R. R. Tolkien is best known for his fantasy books *The Hobbit* and *Lord of the Rings*, which have since been made into a very successful Hollywood film series. His quote can be applied to social location networks where users discover new adventures and earn rewards for wandering to new locations.

As smartphones have grown in popularity, so has the use of real-time location data, which has enabled sharing a user's location with friends or the public in the form of a check–in. **Check–in** is defined as self-reported positioning to share one's physical location through a social–networking service.[4] A related activity is **geotagging** where geographical identification information is added to media such as a picture, video, or social media post.[5] Foursquare is the big social player and innovator in this category that built a social community around checking in to locations and earning points and badges for doing so. Not to be outdone, many social media services such as Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, Snapchat, and Yelp have added or included location layers to their platforms (see table 9.1).

Roughly 38 percent of all US smartphone owners share their location with social media apps, often called geosocial. **Geosocial** is a type of social networking in which user-submitted location data allow social networks to connect and coordinate users with local people, businesses, or events. Social "checking in" has increased from only 12 percent in 2013.[6] Geosocial networking is also an important part of ratings and reviews, with 90 percent of smartphone owners looking for recommendations based on location. Apps offering more of a direct benefit for location sharing such as driving directions, ordering a pizza for delivery, or finding a restaurant have a higher percentage of owners enabling location services.[7]

Geosocial networking still offers many opportunities for businesses to further engage target consumers and drive participation at physical locations. Foursquare may have been

Table 9.1. Major Social Platforms That Include Location Layers

Facebook	Reddit
Foursquare/Swarm	Snapchat
Google My Business	Twitter
Instagram	TripAdvisor
Periscope	Yelp

the innovator in checking in, but other social services have taken some of this activity from it.[8] The top location-based social services covered in this chapter include Foursquare (Swarm), location layers on Facebook, Instagram, and Snapchat, plus Google My Business. These could be the optimal fit for an organization's objectives, target audience, or big idea.

Foursquare

Foursquare is a personalized local search-and-discovery-service mobile app that enables users to find friends and read recommendations that was founded in 2009. Foursquare is comprised of the Foursquare City Guide app and Foursquare Swarm app. Like Instagram and Snapchat, Foursquare is a social-networking service first developed for mobile devices. Foursquare has 50 million users, with some 9 million check-ins per day. The location service has global participation by users and has more than 105 million venues mapped around the world.[9]

Foursquare's apps have slightly more male (60 percent) than female (40 percent) users. The social media service is most popular with eighteen- to twenty-nine-year-olds (40 percent) who make up the largest age group. They are slightly less affluent than some other social services, with nearly half (49 percent) earning less than $50,000 a year. Forty-three percent of Foursquare app users have some college education and 40 percent have no college education.[10]

Foursquare's community is based on users connecting with friends and checking in at venues to earn points and badges. Different amounts of points are earned for different categories, such as checking in to a place a user has been before versus more points for checking in to a new category. Users who check in the most at a venue become the "mayor," which can become a heated competition. Check-ins can get very specific within certain areas of buildings, and many users indicate participating in a specific activity at the venue. Venue tags are used in Foursquare, as well as private to-do lists and public tips that give suggestions on what to see, eat, and do at a location.[11]

The Explore function allows users to browse locations by category or search words. Foursquare added a like button similar to Facebook, a ratings system similar to Yelp, and a "recently opened" feature. Many marketers have used Foursquare check-ins as a key promotional tool to drive in-store local and regional traffic.

Businesses can offer specials such as discounts and free offers when users check in. A good tool to promote these offers is a Foursquare door sign. Like other social services, Foursquare also allows organizations to create pages of tips and allows users to follow the company to get special tips for checking in. Companies can allow users to unlock badges for completing a specific number of check-ins. Organizations have also included "Add to My Foursquare" buttons on websites to direct visitors to add a location to their to-do lists.[12]

In 2014 Foursquare made a bold move by dividing its social network into two apps based on its two most popular functions: a new version of Foursquare and Swarm. Foursquare Swarm is the more personal app for locating friends and checking into venues. With this update, Foursquare became more focused on mobile local searches and activity recommendations. For business, Foursquare City Guide is still the app for connecting with users.

People check in through the Swarm app, but tips, photos, and location information are based in Foursquare City Guide, so businesses are still able to see a list of active customers.[13] People use Swarm as the personal side of Foursquare to "keep up and meet up" with friends, but can check in to let friends know they are at a business. Businesses show up as a check-in option if a user is nearby (see figure 9.1).[14]

Foursquare has several paid social media options and robust location-specific analytics. Foursquare for Business offers native ads to promote listings and existing messages to be seen first. Or marketers, advertisers, and public relations professionals can create custom messages based on location, time, or action like a check-in. Targeting can be narrowed to location-based keyword search or people who have visited competitors. Businesses only pay per action such as tapping for business information or visiting the brand's website. Foursquare can be a powerful option for brands with physical locations, considering
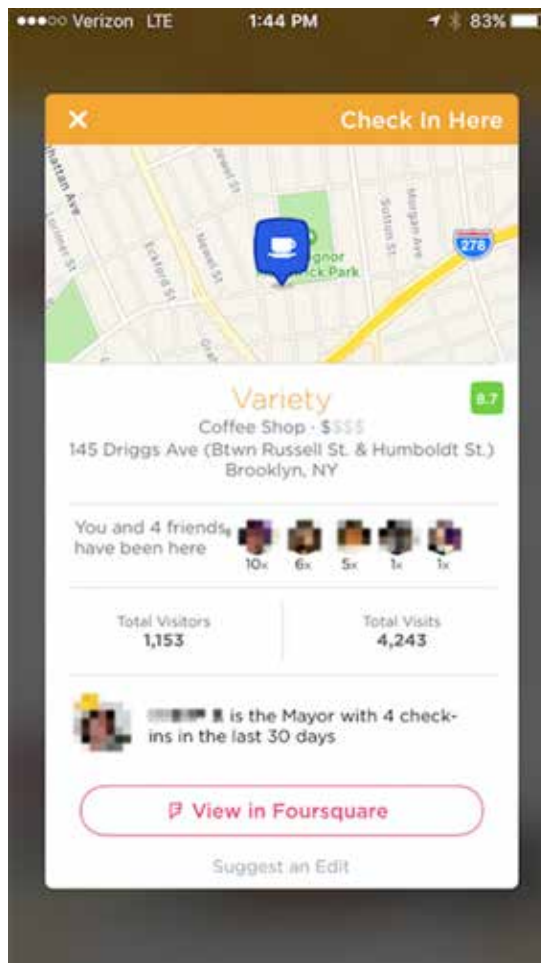
Figure 9.1. Swarm pulls in Foursquare business information.

Source: "Swarm for Business," Foursquare Help Center, accessed November 30, 2017, https://support.foursquare .com/hc/en-us/articles/202005800-Swarm-for-Merchants. © Foursquare.

comScore research that has found 78 percent of people who search locally on their phone make a purchase.[15] Foursquare Location Intelligence is part of their enterprise solutions that offers in-depth campaign measurement based on real offline behavior, the ability to identify target audiences based on the places they go, and to monitor foot traffic in brand and competitor stores.[16]

Foursquare and Swarm mobile apps work on a large variety of platforms. In a smartphone user survey, Foursquare's mobile app was the ninth-most-used mobile app, with 6 percent of people indicating they had used it in the previous month.[17] Foursquare key performance indicators could be views, shares, check-ins, likes, followers, badges, referrals, and sentiment.

Social App Locations

Many of the top social network and social sharing platforms have added location-service features over the years. It is useful to focus on these functions in this section and consider broader geosocial strategies that can be applied to the platforms that offer them including Facebook, Instagram, and Snapchat. In 2017, Reddit also added location tagging for their users powered by Foursquare.[18]

Facebook Places started as a mobile app that is no longer available. Now location-tagging is integrated into Facebook itself. This feature enables users to tag or check in to a specific place or business, which then shows up as a status update, image, or video post and appears in the user's news feed. Facebook users can tag friends in specific locations within an update or post, which then appears in the friends' news feeds. These features were added to emulate the features first available in Foursquare.[19]

Another important feature is that when users click on "check-in," businesses and organizations nearest to their current location will appear as options for the post. Organizations should make sure that the physical location of their business is in their Facebook page description to automatically be included in the Facebook Places directory to show up in search results. A post tagged with the business location will lead those who click it to the business's Facebook page. Location tagging on Facebook adds another way for organizations to appear in news feeds, but also allows businesses to publish promotions and discounts on the Facebook page after users click on the tag in a news feed.[20]

Other Facebook location features take their cue from Yelp. Facebook users can "Recommend This Place" with a description and five-star rating. Users can make reviews to be seen by all and share with friends. Brands should ensure all location, contact, and business hours information is correct.[21] In addition, the "Nearby" tab on the Facebook mobile app can help users find businesses.[22] The addition of these features has pushed Facebook into the area of local search and entertainment discovery. It is good for increasing reach and generating awareness, and has ratings and review features. Be sure to monitor for positive and negative sentiment and check-ins as key additional Facebook KPIs. These features represent ways for an organization to get exposure on the social network through search and news feed distribution.[23]

It's not surprising that Facebook has also brought geosocial features to Instagram Locations. Instagram has added locations with integration to Facebook Places. Both are great

ways to increase exposure for businesses and events for search by location versus hashtag. To create a place in Instagram, you must create it in Facebook Places through the Facebook mobile app. Instagram is a popular app to use during events. If the brand is involved with an event, be sure to create a location tag. For example, the band U2 created a location tag for each city on their Joshua Tree Tour that appeared as an option every time someone went to post from the concert. Instagram has also introduced a new way to discover what is happening around users. A story ring at the top of Explore is now filled with stories happening near them. Stories come from people or brands with location stickers on stories.[24]

Instagram expert Jenn Herman explains that customers who click on a geotag location see all other posts to the geotag, which can showcase brand products and services and help reach new customers through location search. Geotagged posts also allow brands to source user-generated content (UGC). Reposting these publicly shared brand experiences shows customers the brand is listening, appreciates their contributions, and presents an often more believable perspective of the brand. Just ensure you get permission first before sharing.[25] Permissions will be covered in chapter 15.

Two other considerations for geosocial are geocaching and geofencing. **Geocaching** is an outdoor game where people use GPS on a mobile device to hide and then seek containers called geocaches at locations marked by coordinates.[26] In 2013, the publisher Doubleday used geocaching and Facebook to launch John Grisham's book *The Racketeer*. Five thousand golden Grisham Geocoins were distributed in geocaches across the US. People who found the coins re-hid them in new geocache locations to be found via the website. People who found the coins uploaded pictures to Facebook with their coin for a chance to win a real gold bar. Facebook fans voted for the winner and helped increase reach of the campaign 220 percent and boost overall sales 23 percent.[27] A recent version of geocaching used virtual caches instead of physical boxes and virtual reality. Pokémon GO was a location-based augmented reality game that became a global craze in the summer of 2016, becoming one of the most used and profitable mobile apps.[28]

Geofencing is setting up a virtual perimeter for a real-world geographic area and using a smartphone's GPS to trigger a message or customize content.[29] Geofencing must be used via a mobile app with location services turned on or triggered by an event like a geotagged post on social platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, or Twitter. Geofences can also be used to trigger mobile ads on popular apps that sell them.[30] The benefits of geofencing include increasing local sales by pushing notifications to customers in the area, improving analytics by measuring location-based sales, time, and frequency metrics, and adding personalization to highlight offers and messages to local preferences.[31]

Best practices include not making the geofence too large by keeping it to within a five-minute travel time.[32] Be sure to have a call to action that is concise, locally relevant, and requires prompt response. Be transparent about privacy by letting customers know what and how their location information is being used. Also target messaging by context (like relief from downtown crowds), day-part (like lunch-time specials), and retargeting (like customers who haven't visited in a while).[33]

Some geofence strategies come from thinking outside the box. A brand's customers may not be around their store. Thus, other strategies may include building geofences around

competitor locations to attract new customers with special offers or using a geofence around an airport to attract tourists. Or think about using geofences near arenas and events to attract attendees.[34] Advanced geofilter strategies include adding data to make geo messages more relevant. A retailer could use browsing data from an app or website to target a customer who had viewed formal dresses on her phone. When she enters the store, she would receive a formal dress message instead of a general sales or promotion message. In addition, consider more helpful messages that could help increase loyalty. For example, a hotel, shuttle, or rental car app might remind a person to check in online, book their shuttle, or rent a car via the app before leaving an airport.[35]

A final consideration is that when offers or promotions are used, they should be significant and not too frequent. Getting interrupted by a mobile notification to save fifty cents may be more annoying than motivating. Also keep track of frequency so that you do not disturb people. Both of these actions could lead to the customer turning off location services, which prevents further location-based notifications in the future.[36]

Snapchat leverages geofencing with geofilters. This branding opportunity offers marketers, advertisers, and public relations professionals the opportunity to get creative with people's selfies for stores, brands, restaurants, and events. Snapchat Geofilters are paid social media offering native ad opportunities as opposed to free geosocial features in Facebook and Instagram. However, small businesses are able to purchase custom-branded geofilters for as little as five dollars.[37]

Brand Snapchat geofilters are purchased for specific dates, times, and locations—established by drawing a geofence around a location. The exception is Snapchat Geofilters for community events, cities, neighborhoods, schools, and landmarks. If Snapchat reaches the right target audience, paid geofilters can be valuable for creatively driving awareness and engagement.[38] An idea for strategies includes a promotion where customers must post an image with the brand geofilter to win—ensuring they have visited the location.[39]

Google My Business

Google My Business is a listing that ensures that businesses show up in searches and includes social media features like updates, comments, photo sharing, ratings, and reviews. Google My Business gets businesses added to Google location search and Google Maps and includes consumer ratings and reviews. The platform also provides analytics on how customers are finding the business.[40]

How should brands include Google My Business in their social media strategy? The first step is to verify the business by signing up for the service. Verification happens by mailing a verification code to a physical address, which can take up to a week to process. Next, verify that all of the information in the brand listing is accurate, from address, phone, and website to hours and driving directions. Brands should then monitor the five-star ratings, customer reviews, and consumer photos. Businesses can add their own photos and updates and respond to customers' comments.

Google reviews, after a minimum of three, appear next to a business's listing in Maps, Search, Google+, and other Google services. An important consideration is that customers can filter by reviews on advanced Google searches so that businesses with less than four stars are removed from local search listings. Ratings and reviews will be covered more in the next section, but Google My Business reviews can have a great impact on search, so brands should follow up positive customer interactions with requests to leave reviews and try to address the causes of negative reviews.[41]

For brands with locations, this is a very important consideration. Google Search and Google Maps are the fourth- and sixth-most-popular smartphone apps[42] and Google has reported that searches with "near me" have increased thirty-four times since 2011, with 80 percent of those searches coming from mobile.[43] For organizations that leverage location, a Google My Business listing is a valuable tool not to ignore. For Google My Business, an additional KPI to measure could be referrals and shares.

Social Live Video

Live streaming video became big when the Meerkat app was launched in spring 2015 at SXSW (South By Southwest) followed by Periscope a week later. Then in late summer 2015, Blab was introduced, followed by the launch of Facebook Live in spring 2016. Within a short time Meerkat and Blab live video platforms came and went, shutting down in less than two years. No matter which social platform offers it, **live streaming video** is compressed video content sent over the internet and displayed in real time.[44]

Ironically, streaming video had already been around for nearly a decade. Live video streaming websites like Livestream and Ustream (now IBM Cloud Video) both launched in 2007. Why the sudden, more recent interest in live streaming video? The newly released apps and services are designed for mobile phones and smartphone use has increased dramatically. From 2011 to 2016, smartphone ownership in the US alone nearly doubled from 35 percent to 72 percent.[45] Live video apps have also grown dramatically—more quickly than previous social media apps. For example, Instagram Live reached 10 million users in one year while Periscope grew much faster, reaching 10 million users in just five months.[46] Despite this enormous growth, live streaming use is still relatively limited compared to established social activity, yet there is real opportunity for brands to use live video.

After years of declining viewership (ratings), the broadcast TV industry has learned the value of live video programming combined with social commenting. Nielsen research has shown that live TV shows leveraging Twitter can boost TV ratings.[47] There is something about the word "live" that makes consumers want to join in and not miss out. Live combined with social media means participation in consumption of content within a community—a community brands can join. What live really does is break down geographical barriers. Geosocial networking localizes social interaction to build community. Live social media through live tweeting or live video streaming brings everyone watching to that event and location. Consumers are all participating in a local event from hundreds of miles away. Live also builds in a sense of urgency. Some people can't resist tuning in for fear of missing out; they crave the community, shared experience, and direct interaction live video offers.

Live video can also build awareness. Live streaming content is getting preference over other content, with Twitter, Facebook, and Instagram highlighting and even alerting their current social media users that live content is available. Facebook, Instagram, and Periscope send out notices so friends, fans, or followers know a connection is live. Periscope has even added a Periscope channel on Apple TV. Social media expert Kim Garst says people watch her "scopes" like a morning TV show. Facebook Live sends followers a notification of live broadcasts and live videos are given preference in the news feed. These notices are guaranteed to reach your audience, driving up organic reach.[48]

Live video can also help drive conversion. What better way to build rapport than live interaction with a real person? Seeing it in video makes it real. From product demonstration to sharing valuable content and answering questions, live video speeds up the know, like, and trust process and can quicken time to conversion. Salespeople may not be jumping on live video right away, but it could be a key tool to bring the full power of personal sales to social media. Seeing and interacting live with a real person is powerful. Research has indicated that the impact of communication is determined 7 percent by words, 38 percent by voice, and 55 percent by nonverbal communication. Not using live video could mean missing out on up to 93 percent of communication effectiveness.[49]

Live video also allows brands to adjust messages on the fly based on the number of people coming and going, hearts or likes the speaker is receiving, and questions being asked. Of course, not everyone is trained or even comfortable to be in front of a live camera and a lot can go wrong on the fly. Getting the right people, providing the right training, and simply getting comfortable with the idea is a big hurdle for many brands. Public relations professionals may relate it to media training in news media interview situations.

Now that social live video has been out for a couple of years, the landscape of platforms has changed. Early innovators such as Meerkat and Blab have shut down. The remaining platforms offering live video include Periscope, Facebook Live, and Instagram Live.

Periscope is a live video streaming mobile app integrated into the microblogging social media service Twitter. Twitter acquired this live video platform in the development phase before it was publicly launched in 2015, a week after Meerkat. Periscope is also about the broadcast of the individual, but close integration with Twitter is a bonus with Periscope streams viewable live in a person's Twitter stream, the ability to go live from Twitter, and a red live button alerting Twitter users when someone they follow is broadcasting live. Originally all videos disappeared after twenty-four hours, but now users have the ability to choose to keep broadcasts on the platform and save the videos. Periscope also added an app for Apple TV to expand broadcasts from mobile devices to their TVs.[50] The last available Periscope statistics indicate 10 million users, 1.9 million daily active users, and over 200 million broadcasts.[51]

Facebook Live is a live video streaming feature added to the Facebook mobile app for any user to broadcast live video. Six months after the launch of Meerkat and five months after the launch of Periscope in 2015, Facebook Live was first available for celebrities through the Facebook Mentions app. By 2016 the ability to broadcast live video was rolled out to any Facebook user integrated into the Facebook mobile app. In 2017 live video streaming capabilities were extended to the Facebook website through desktops and laptops. The big news here is that any of the over two billion Facebook users can share a live video

stream as easily as making a status update. Like Periscope, Facebook Live videos can be saved for later use on other platforms.[52]

Separate Facebook Live statistics are not available, but live is believed to have contributed to growth in overall Facebook video views of up to 64 billion per day. Early on Facebook paid celebrities to broadcast live on the platform, and most celebrity, media, and brand users have experienced increased exposure and engagement when their accounts use Facebook Live.

The service had its first viral video star when Candace Payne decided to broadcast live on Facebook sharing her excitement after buying a Chewbacca mask at Kohl's department store. The live video attracted over 166 million views and was then reposted on other social networks like YouTube. Kohl's was listening and the department store brand launched several initiatives to take advantage of the exposure.[53] Airbnb leveraged live video for the 100th Anniversary of North America's National Parks. A Facebook Live stream was started from Airbnb houses with beautiful backyards in National Parks. The effort gained over 2.5 million total impressions in twelve hours with 98 percent positive comment sentiment that led to over 260,000 people considering a vacation with Airbnb. Starbucks went live for the first time in the fall of 2016 at Rufus King Park in Jamaica, Queens, New York, for National Voter Registration Day. Starbucks chairman and CEO Howard Schultz talked on a stage about the importance of voting, demonstrating the company's involvement in community. Starbucks employees promoted engagement by encouraging questions from the live Facebook audience.[54]

Instagram Live is a live video streaming feature added to the Instagram mobile app for any user to broadcast live video. This feature was added in late 2016. Unlike Periscope and Facebook Live, Instagram videos disappear in the stream after the live broadcast, creating a greater sense of urgency to watch so users don't miss out. However, a feature has been added allowing the broadcaster to save the stream to their camera roll after the broadcast has ended.[55] TechCrunch described Instagram Live as combining the best of Snapchat and Periscope. It lets users broadcast video to followers live, who can only watch on the platform while they are streaming with no replays. Live video can be found by browsing the Explore page of Instagram Live videos. Users can send live video via direct message. Live videos can also be saved to Stories so they are available to watch for twenty-four hours before they disappear. Snapchat-like features are available as users can add text and draw overlays.[56]

How can brands use live streaming video in social media? There are many possibilities for marketers, advertisers, and public relations professionals. Consider strategies including broadcasting live organization events, making live announcements, holding live interviews, starting a live video blog, and moderating live panel chats.[57] Also consider promoting other brand content, live streaming a discussion about a brand report, white paper, or eBook, or creating a live Q&A session.[58] Other social media live video opportunities include supplementing customer research with real-time feedback, broadcasting live about trending topics and developing stories, or product demonstrations.[59]

There are legal aspects to all social media strategy, but live streaming video brings up even more concerns. Before broadcasting live on one of these live streaming channels, consider the legal implications. In response to this new need, social media law expert Kerry O'Shea Gorgone produced a live streaming legal checklist that includes areas such as con-

siderations in location, privacy, intellectual property, likeness, and contingency plans.[60] Of course, before publishing or broadcasting any social media effort, brands should consult with their own lawyers as individual organization, industry, and country standards vary greatly.

Geosocial and Live Video Considerations

Other geosocial channels to consider include Nextdoor, a private, location-based social network with nearly 114,000 neighborhoods[61] that offers limited paid social media native ad options.[62] Alignable has a more B2B (business to business) focus, connecting more than 20,000 local communities.[63] For social live video, brands may want to consider YouTube's live streaming option. And Twitch is the live streaming video platform owned by Amazon that reaches over 100 million global gamers each month where they broadcast, watch, and talk about video games.[64]

As Foursquare says on its opening screen, geosocial services are all about trying to "keep up & meet up with friends on-the-go." This also applies to broadcasting live video where friends, family, fans, and followers can experience a live event no matter where they are in the world. These services really bridge the gap between fantasy digital worlds and real physical places. J. R. R. Tolkien would probably have been inspired by this combination.

What kind of brand story can the brand tell to engage and encourage participation from the target audience? If driving consumers to a location or broadcasting live video supports the organization's goals, geosocial and social live video may be ideal options in the social media plan.

Ratings and Reviews

Mark Twain once said, "The public is the only critic whose opinion is worth anything at all."[65] Mark Twain wrote *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*, which has been called the great American novel. His quote may be truer today than ever before. As seen in the early chapters of this book, social media has turned every individual into a publisher with the potential influence and reach of a professional. An organization may get a rave review in the *New York Times*, but consumers publishing negative comments through ratings and reviews can stagnate sales.

Reviews are reports that give someone's opinion about the quality of a product, service, or performance. **Ratings** are also a measurement of how good or bad something is, but expressed specifically on a scale that is a relative estimate or evaluation.[66] Five-point rating scales are popular and can be expressed as straight numbers, stars, or even spoons. Reviews are longer descriptions of a critic's opinion of a product or experience with a service. Back in Mark Twain's day, most critics were professional and only a few were published. Here we are talking about social media–powered ratings and reviews where any amateur critic is able to voice his or her opinion on numerous social channels.

How important are social ratings and reviews? According to a survey by Dimensional Research, 90 percent of respondents who remembered reading online reviews said positive online reviews influenced buying decisions and 86 percent said negative reviews influenced their buying. One consumer survey found that reading reviews, comments, and feedback in social media is more influential to online buying than receiving promotional

MINI CASE

McDonald's Q&A

In 2012 McDonald's Canada made a bold move when it launched a Q&A social media campaign that truly embraced transparency. The company knew that consumers were active with ratings and reviews of the restaurant and were asking tough questions online about how the company made its food. They launched a website to answer user-submitted questions head-on about ingredients, prep, food sourcing, and advertising. Answers appeared via text, photos, and video, allowing the brand to address rumors, misinformation, and myths. The campaign was a success, attracting global media attention fielding more than fourteen thousand questions within months and spawning an integrated traditional advertising campaign of TV, digital, and outdoor ads.[a]

In 2014 McDonald's expanded the Q&A campaign to the US with the help of *MythBusters* TV show cohost Grant Imahara. The "Our Food. Your Questions" campaign used TV commercials showing real people's questions and inviting consumers to pose more via social media. The effort also used webisode videos (short online-only TV shows) by Imahara addressing consumers' main doubts and questions about McDonald's food. The brand said this was their first big effort into two-way dialogue with consumers, giving them a behind-the-scenes view of the restaurant chain.[b]

[a] Paula Bernstein, "Would You Like to See How We Make Our Fries with That? Behind McDonald's Big Transparency Play," FastCompany.com, November 6, 2012, http://www.fastcocreate.com/1681832/would-you-like-to-see-how-we-make-our-fries-with-that-behind-mcdonalds-big-transparency-play.

[b] "McDonald's, 'MythBuster' Launch Food Q&A," HuffingtonPost.com, October 13, 2014, http://www.huffingtonpost.com/burgerbusiness/mcdonalds-mythbuster-laun_b_5976250.html.

offerings and viewing ads. If the majority of a marketer's time and budget is spent on promotions and ads while ignoring ratings and reviews, it may be time to adjust strategy.[67] Where do these reviews happen? Reviews can be found on online review sites, retail sites, company sites, and in searches.

Use of ratings and reviews is growing, as 58 percent are more likely to share customer service experiences today than just a couple of years ago. This sharing now occurs more on social media (45 percent) than online review sites (35 percent). Interestingly, nearly 100 percent of those in high–income brackets (over $150,000) said they share customer service experiences with others. What's more, this sharing is not limited only to B2C (business to consumer) goods, with 62 percent saying they purchase more products or services from a B2B (business to business) company after reading a positive review, which is higher than the 42 percent response for B2C.[68]

In a survey conducted during the holiday shopping season, consumers indicated that online ratings and reviews influenced both their online (48 percent) and in–store (37 percent) purchases more than other factors, such as email (35 percent online, 27 percent in–store) and Google search (31 percent online, 20 percent in–store). Display advertising only influenced purchase by 16 percent online and 15 percent in–store. Additionally, respon–dents indicated mobile advertising only influenced 11 percent of online and 9 percent of in–store purchases.[69] Social ratings and reviews can be very influential in purchase decisions.

While organizations cannot and should not directly create reviews and ratings, they need to be monitored, influenced, and optimized to help meet organization goals.

General ratings and review strategies can apply anywhere, but this section will look at an overview of three of the most influential ratings-and-reviews services: Yelp, TripAdvisor, and Amazon. Consider how these channels could possibly fit into a social media plan, depending upon target audience and big idea.

Yelp

Yelp is a website and mobile app that publishes crowdsourced ratings and reviews about local businesses. Yelp is an early innovator in social recommendations, first founded in 2004. Yelp has grown to 188 million unique visitors per month with over 142 million user-generated reviews. Because Yelp is location-specific it has expanded city by city, first starting in the US but now in thirty-two countries around the world. This ratings and review site with geosocial features can be very influential on sales for many businesses. Top categories include shopping, restaurants, home services, beauty, fitness, events, and entertainment.[70]

Yelp users have been more female (54 percent) than male (46 percent).[71] Users are younger, with 39 percent between the ages of eighteen and thirty-four and 36 percent aged thirty-five to fifty-four. Yelp users have higher incomes, with 47 percent earning over $100,000 a year. They are also highly educated, with nearly three-quarters (82 percent) having attended college or graduate school.[72]

Yelp encourages users to review and rate businesses using their five-star rating system. The system filters these ratings and reviews to remove unhelpful, biased, or fraudulent reviews.[73] To encourage and reward good reviews, the service offers a Yelp Elite Squad designation to those who contribute well-written reviews, offer great tips, have a full profile, and communicate nicely with other Yelp users. Yelp emphasizes to businesses that people love to talk about the things they love. Statistics show that 66 percent of all reviews on Yelp are four stars or higher.[74]

Depending on the type of business, Yelp ratings can significantly impact performance. Yelp restaurants in Seattle were found to increase revenue 5 to 9 percent per one-star increase in Yelp rating.[75] Yelp users can review any local business, service, or place, such as restaurants, shops, bars, salons, spas, dentists, mechanics, parks, and museums.

In addition to reviews, Yelp allows users to find local events, from music fests and parties to dance lessons and networking opportunities. Users also submit lists such as top diners, favorite places, wedding venues, or fitness hot spots. In 2010 Yelp added a location-sharing check-in feature that includes badges with rankings and can earn users special offers by businesses.[76]

Businesses can use Yelp's check-in feature for promotions and events, and it can be a great way to jumpstart traffic through public relations. In addition, Yelp has added restaurant reservations as a feature through Yelp Reservations. Yelp also offers local city discussion forums where users can talk about local interests under various categories. To participate, a user must register and create a user profile similar to other social networking sites.

Figure 9.2. Yelp offers incentives to drive traffic to businesses.

Source: Morgan Remmers, "Get Ready for Holiday Shoppers with Yelp Deals and Gift Certificates!," Yelp Blog for Business Owners (blog), October 31, 2014, https://biz.yelp.com/blog/. © Yelp Inc.

A business can set up a free account with a profile to post offers and photos and to directly message customers. Yelp offers robust analytics with an alert system so business owners can respond right away to negative or positive comments. Yelp helps organizations identify where customers are coming from, and also identifies the most vocal fans and critics for outreach.[77]

Yelp does have paid social media options for business. Yelp for Business enables brands to purchase ads to feature businesses first in relevant searches and competitor business pages. Full-service Yelp advertising includes targeted location advertising, competitor ad removal, call-to-action buttons, slideshow, videos, reservation management, plus engagement and lead analytics.[78] Yelp offers businesses ways to entice regular and new customers to purchase with Yelp Deals and Gift Certificates (see figure 9.2).[79]

Yelp started as a website, but over the years it has become increasingly mobile, with 47 percent of Yelp's traffic coming from mobile devices.[80] Yelp mobile apps are available for many devices.[81] Key performance indicators for Yelp could be views, shares, comments, ratings, check-ins, reservations, referrals, lists, number of reviews, and sentiment of reviews.

TripAdvisor

TripAdvisor is an online travel company providing hotel booking and reviews of travel-related content with travel forums. Founded in 2000 as more of a travel guide in the form of professional published guidebooks, newspapers, and magazines, the site included a "Visitors add your own review" button and soon consumer-generated reviews surpassed the official ones, turning the service into a user-generated social media platform.[82] Today this ratings and review site averages 390 million monthly unique visitors with over 500 million reviews covering 7 million accommodations, restaurants, and attractions around the world in 28 languages.[83]

If you are a marketer, advertiser, or public relations professional working on or for a travel and tourism–related brand, TripAdvisor is an important social media platform. Unless

it is a very new location, chances are the business already appears in TripAdvisor. The first step is to claim that listing and take advantage of free tools. Optimize the listing with the latest business description and add photos of key features. Monitor reviews to obtain fast feedback and participate in the conversations with management responses. Brands receive valuable engagement analytics ranked with competitors and can offer private surveys for confidential feedback on hotel stays.

Additional strategies include encouraging more reviews by adding TripAdvisor widgets to websites and adding TripAdvisor reviews to Facebook. TripAdvisor stickers, business cards, magnets, stamps, inserts, and envelopes can also be used at physical locations. Premium accounts like Business Advantage offer enhanced photo tools such as storyboard and slideshow plus instant contact details to influence booking decisions in real time with special offers, announcements, favorite reviews, and mobile click-to-call. Businesses can also upgrade to add a "Book on TripAdvisor" button for instant booking.[84]

Paid social media options are offered as native advertising. TripAdvisor sells sponsored custom content, pages, sweepstakes, advertorials, maps, and forums. The social platform also offers standard display, rich media, and mobile and video ads.[85] Does social media marketing on TripAdvisor work? The platform reports that nearly 90 percent of travelers say reviews are influential in choosing where to book, over 60 percent say management responses make them more likely to book, and properties adding at least one photo to their listings see 138 percent more engagement than properties without a photo.[86]

TripAdvisor has also transitioned from an online website to becoming more mobile-centered. Currently it offers full-feature mobile apps for most devices. A TripAdvisor study found that 42 percent of travelers worldwide use smartphones to plan or book their trips.[87] Key performance indicators for TripAdvisor could be ratings, reviews, links, bookings, referrals, and sentiment.

Amazon

For any brand with significant e-commerce products or a brand in the retail industry, Amazon is hard to ignore. Launched in 1994, Amazon.com was originally an online book retailer but has grown enormously to offer everything from music and electronics to clothing and groceries.[88] Amazon is now the world's eighth-largest retailer.[89] Amazon attracts 80 million monthly visitors, has over 152 million active accounts, and offers over 183 million products.[90] Amazon has also been reported as being the largest single source of internet consumer reviews. As with many services, Amazon has also experienced great growth in mobile. Amazon Mobile is the thirteenth-most-popular smartphone app in the US above Twitter.[91]

Amazon Reviews is a feature on Amazon.com that allows users to submit reviews and ratings to the web page of each product sold on the e-commerce site. Amazon reviewers rate each product on a rating scale of one to five stars. Anyone with an Amazon account can review and rate a product whether or not they purchased it from Amazon. In addition, users may comment and vote on the reviews, indicating whether the review was helpful. Reviews with the most helpful votes appear on the front page of the product. Reviews are attributed

to the real name of the reviewer based on confirmation of their credit card account.[92] In 2015 Amazon introduced a new machine-learning system that analyzes which reviews are most helpful, giving more weight to newer reviews and reviews from verified Amazon purchasers, in addition to the customer vote for being helpful reviews. With the new system, the five-star rating changed from a pure average of all reviews to a weighted average, based on those three criteria, so that star ratings may change more often.[93]

There have been reports of a large market for incentivized positive reviews with free products and services and, in some cases, direct payment. Direct payment for positive reviews has never been allowed, but in 2017 Amazon updated its community guidelines to also disallow incentivized reviews. Previously, vendors could send a free product to a reviewer in exchange for a review as long as this was disclosed. Now this can only still be done for books.[94] Amazon has also fought fake reviews by suing fake review websites.[95]

With the end of incentivized reviews, marketing strategies have changed. Some Amazon marketing experts suggest adding marketing inserts to packages. Such inserts might emphasize the value of the product to the customer and then ask for a review, making it easy by providing a shortened URL directly to the Amazon product review page. (If you have found this book to be valuable in better understanding how to create strategic social media plans, please leave a review at http://bit.ly/2EdSMS.)

Brands can also create an email follow-up sequence that includes a purchase confirmation right away, a purchase follow-up within days, and then an email asking for a product review in a couple of weeks. Amazon also offers a paid option where incentivized reviews can still be offered but brands must pay to access the Amazon Vine program.[96] Other expert practices include publicly responding to negative reviews, but marketers, advertisers, or public relations professionals should not get defensive or emotional. It is best to sympathize with the customer and demonstrate that you really want to address or solve their issue or concern.[97]

Ratings and Reviews Considerations

Other rating and review social channels to consider include Citysearch, which is the online city guide that was one of the earliest review sites but has lost much of its traffic to Yelp. Angie's List started as a paid member review site but has opened up reviews for free so this platform could grow. The Better Business Bureau and online Yellow Pages also have consumer ratings and reviews that may be influential to your target audience.[98] Epinions was the groundbreaking website in this category, but it was closed by owner eBay in 2014.[99] Brands should not forget the ratings and reviews on Google My Business, Facebook Places, and Foursquare, and consider adding ratings and reviews to their own website especially if they offer direct sales. If a marketer's, advertiser's, or public relations professional's product is sold on their own website or other top online retailer websites such as Walmart, Macy's, Best Buy, or Home Depot, ratings and reviews should be monitored there as well.

Mark Twain may have been more right than he knew. The power of public opinion (amateur critics) is undeniable in today's social media environment. Depending on the type of organization, product, and service, ratings-and-reviews social channels should be considered. Where is the brand target audience expressing their opinions about the brand and its competitors? Has the organization optimized its brand presence in that channel, and are they monitoring it, ready to engage both the positive and negative ratings and reviews? Or perhaps the brand doesn't have much of a presence but needs to encourage comments

and content from the most loyal fans. In what ways can happy customers be encouraged to share their opinions? Consider leveraging reviews by displaying them on the brand's website, including them in digital marketing campaigns, and adding them to traditional advertising and displays in-store.[100]

Chapter 9 Checklist

Social media can change quickly. Visit PostControlMarketing (http://www.postcontrolmar keting.com) for updates, but also use this chapter checklist to briefly check how social media statistics in this chapter have changed since publication.

✓ How have geosocial networking, live video, and ratings and reviews in social media changed? Are Foursquare, Google My Business, Facebook Places, Instagram Loca-tions, Snapchat Geofilters, Periscope, Facebook Live, Instagram Live, Yelp, TripAdvi-sor, and Amazon still the top platforms?
✓ Do a quick search to confirm key statistics for each of the social media channel options covered in this chapter. Go through the list above and update numbers for: monthly users, global and mobile use, user demographics such as gender, age, educa-tion, and income, plus platform use and new features.
✓ Check for new paid social media opportunities. Have any of the social media plat-forms covered in this chapter added new or further native advertising options?

SOCIAL PLAN PART 9

Strategic Use of Location, Ratings, and Reviews

Take an in-depth look at geosocial plus live video channels and features in social networking sites. Also analyze ratings and review sites and features on social networks. How can these features benefit the brand and social media plan? Where is the target audience? Are they checking in or looking up ratings and reviews about the products and services? Where are they doing it? What can the brand do to leverage these features and influence conversation and discovery? What type of content (text, photo, video, live video) is needed to best take advantage of these social services? Report all findings and ideas in these areas:

1. Identify geosocial and live video channels or social networks where the target audience is participating.
2. Describe the type of activity and content that is popular on each.
3. Find the rating and review networks where the target audience is most active. In what social networks or retail websites are they discovering ratings and reviews?
4. Discover and explain how the organization can best leverage this information about the brand to help meet business objectives.

For a condensed version of the social plan see appendix A: Three-Part Social Plan.

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

1. Facebook has added geosocial features such as checking in and the "Nearby" tab. How many Facebook members are actually using these features? Is activity large enough to warrant business activity?
2. Conduct additional research into the Foursquare split into two apps with Swarm. Has the split been a success? What do businesses need to know to take advantage of the new features?
3. Yelp can make or break a local business. How accurate are ratings and reviews on the website? Do some research into the real impact of Yelp on local business, both positive and negative.
4. Live video use is expanding. Dig deeper into all aspects of social live video. What are some best practices for organizations to leverage live video? What are some of the negative aspects of live video, considering highly publicized violence, murders, and suicides that have been broadcast on Facebook Live?

ADDITIONAL EXERCISES

1. Go onto Facebook and Instagram and explore their check-in features. Whether you are comfortable checking in yourself or not, see the rich information location-sharing offers. Also, join Foursquare. This network is the innovator and still important. If your organization has a physical location, location-based social media could be a key part of your strategy. Perhaps the business is already on Facebook and Instagram but has not completely taken advantage of location-based features. Take some time and brainstorm ways the brand could use location information for a business advantage.
2. Reviews are powerful. Have you taken the time to read them? Find all the ratings and reviews written about your organization, brand, product, or service. Start with key ratings-and-reviews sites in the industry and then move into the social media channels highlighted here. What did you discover? If there are few reviews, what do you need to do to get people writing? Are the reviews negative? What do you need to fix? Are reviews positive? How do you leverage them in other social channels and encourage more?

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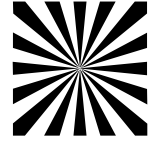
Social Bookmarking and Social Knowledge

Organizing is what you do before you do something, so that when you do it, it is not all mixed up.[1]

—A. A. Milne

PREVIEW

Do you have a favorite topic or hobby that you are very interested in? Is it something you are very familiar with, keep up to date on the latest developments, and love to talk about? Do your friends know you as the _____ person? Perhaps you even belong to a group of people who all care about that same topic as much as you do. You and the other people interested in that topic may be referred to as being "in the know."

What value is there in being perceived as being "in the know"? The concept of **social capital** has been defined as actual or virtual resources collected by an individual or group by mutual association and recognition.[2] Social capital benefits people because they can draw upon resources shared by other members of the social network, such as information and connections for personal and career networking. Belonging to a social network and sharing knowledge benefits both the receiver and giver. As individuals and a group build up social capital, everyone in the network benefits.[3] Perhaps that can partially explain the rise of social bookmarking and social-knowledge sites.

Another reason people like to share knowledge is that it simply makes them feel better. Psychology researchers have found that forms of social capital have been related to well-being, such as increased self-esteem and satisfaction with life.[4] Why do people share information and answer questions online for free? It benefits them personally as well as professionally, and simply makes them feel good.

Social Bookmarking

No one really knows how many web pages make up the internet, but Kevin Kelly, founder of *WIRED* magazine, estimates that there are more individual web pages than our brain has individual neurons. In his 2010 book *What Technology Wants* he wrote, "The Web holds about a trillion pages. The human brain holds about 100 billion neurons."[5] Keeping track of all that information is difficult, to say the least. A. A. Milne, most famous for his *Winnie-the-Pooh* series, understood the importance of organization. A main feature in Pooh books is the map of the Hundred Acre Wood. Without it one might get mixed up in the story. The same can be applied to the internet. The information age can become useless if we have no way of saving and organizing all that data. Bookmarking management systems were developed for this reason.

Social bookmarking is an online service where users can save, comment on, and share bookmarks of web documents or links. These types of services have been around since 1996, but the founding of Del.icio.us in 2003 helped the words "social bookmarking" and "tagging" catch on. **Tagging** is the way social-bookmarking programs organize links to resources.

Tagging in social-bookmarking systems has also created **folksonomy**, which refers to a simple form of shared vocabularies. **Collaborative tagging** can be used to analyze trends and determine popularity of content over time as different sources converge. Examining different social-bookmarking tags can also reveal correlations to identify community or shared vocabularies as a form of crowdsourcing.[6]

Social-bookmarking systems enable users to save links to web pages to access later or share with others. Bookmarks can be viewed via searches, tags (categories), or chronologically. Web feeds enable users to become aware when new bookmark links are saved under specific tags. This activity allows users with similar interests to network and collaborate. Over the years these bookmarking management systems have added comments, ratings, web annotation (layered web-page comments), and groups with social networking features.[7]

For individual users, social bookmarking is useful for collecting bookmarks from various computers, organizing them, and enabling access from anywhere with easy sharing to others. Organizations can use social bookmarking to increase information-sharing between members. Social bookmarking can also benefit organizations in terms of search engine optimization (SEO). When the editor of TheAtlantic.com, Adrienne LaFrance, tried to discover how many websites publish the trillions of individual web pages on the internet, she found estimates around one billion. Despite these vast options, the average person only visits around a hundred (96) separate sites a month.[8] How do people get from one billion possibilities to the one hundred websites they end up visiting? Content curation is one way.

Content curation is a process of gathering information relevant to a specific topic or area of interest to present to others.[9] An organization or social platform can be seen as a resource for valuable information by bookmarking and sharing the top developments on a specific topic. This is different than **news aggregation**, which uses software to collect all new syndicated web content from many newspapers, magazines, and blogs into one page.[10] Considering the trillions of web pages and billions of websites, sorting through millions of possibilities and serving up relevant content is a valuable service.

The social media site Del.icio.us was one of the earliest to popularize social bookmarking and also pioneered tagging, but the three most popular sites by number of users are Reddit, Digg, and StumbleUpon.[11] We will look at these three social-bookmarking sites as possible key channels for brand social media strategy. A key to success in social bookmarking is joining a community and being active. As an organization or an individual, begin by submitting links, writing reviews, rating other stories, and starting to network with others who share the same interests. The more active a user is, the better their reputation and the more trusted their links will become.[12]

Reddit

Reddit is a social news and entertainment company founded in 2005 and acquired by Condé Nast Publications in 2006.[13] Reddit has roughly 250 million visitors a month, making it the top social-bookmarking site.[14] Nearly half of Reddit's traffic comes from the United States (42 percent). The next-largest countries include the United Kingdom (7 percent) and Canada (6 percent.)[15]

Reddit users tend to be overwhelmingly more male than female, with above-average college or graduate school degrees. Most users are accessing Reddit primarily from home, less at work, and not at school.[16] Top Reddit user interests include video games, news and media, social networks, TV and video.[17]

Reddit is often referred to as "the front page of the internet." To be effective on Reddit, organizations must get involved with the community of users called Redditors. This social site is about bookmarking web links, but the most important part is sharing. Users post things they find interesting, cool, horrible, and strange. Then they comment on the posts and upvote or downvote them, which moves items up or down in ranking. Ranking is also based on age of the submission, feedback ratio, and total vote count. From the front page, shared content is organized by Subreddits, which are communities centered on a topic, from Mobile to Minecraft. Brands can create their own Subreddit or participate in others and keep track of updates by subscribing.[18]

Like many communities, Reddit has its own language. OP refers to an original poster. TIL means "today I learned," which is a common abbreviation. Many posts are TIL observations and realizations. Among the most popular abbreviations are IAmA and AMA, referring to an Ask Me Anything thread. Well-known people have done AMAs, including former US president Barack Obama, Canadian astronaut Chris Hadfield, Madonna, and Bill Gates. Obama's AMA was so popular, the increased traffic brought down many parts of the website.[19]

As on other social channels, each Reddit user creates a profile, but here numbers indicate how much Karma a user has earned. Redditors get Karma points for posts and comments

that have been upvoted by other users. Increased link and comment Karma points help boost a user's influence. For a small fee, users can purchase a premium Gold membership to get access to secret Subreddits and other features.[20] In 2017, Reddit added more social network features to go with user profile pages, including the ability to follow other users and location tagging by partnering with Foursquare.[21] Organizations should be aware of the Reddit or Slashdot Effect, when a smaller website suddenly gets a huge influx of traffic due to Reddit. Be prepared so that this immense traffic doesn't crash an organization's website.[22]

Social Media Examiner suggests several ways organizations can use Reddit to grow their businesses. First, find brand enthusiasts through Subreddits or create new ones related to the product or service. Next, encourage user submissions such as pictures. Finally, feature the best submission that week. Reddit is also a place to monitor customer questions, suggestions, and complaints. Be sure to get these customers to the right internal channels for customer service.[23] Richard Edelman of public relations firm Edelman adds that Reddit can help identify leading stories of the day, serve as an early warning for potential brand crises, and help uncover significant consumer insights. For example, insights found in discussion during an AMA led to a new Ben and Jerry's flavor.[24] It is important for marketing, advertising, and public relations professionals to approach this social channel from the right perspective. Reddit cannot be seen simply as another marketing promotion channel. Reddit offers guidelines for successful marketing on Reddit called "brandiquette." Their advice focuses on transparency, genuine engagement, and honest offers (see table 10.1).[25]

Brands can also use Subreddits to keep fans updated with organization news and events. The Philadelphia Phillies Major League Baseball team uses the sidebar to feature an updated team schedule and league ranking board. Brands can also leverage the popularity of AMAs to hold interviews with key employees or supporters of the organization, brand, product, or service.[26]

Reddit has introduced paid social media options, but the platform keeps the options close to native posts. Marketers, advertisers, and public relations professionals can boost organic content already shared by fans with promoted posts and mobile-specific ads. There are low daily budget minimums and campaigns are tracked with analytics reporting tools.[27]

Table 10.1. "Brandiquette" for Advertisers on Reddit

- Respond to comments
- Keep it real!
- Include a thumbnail
- Offer promo codes or special deals for redditors
- Customize a splash page
- Research your brand on Reddit
- Avoid ad fatigue
- Share your promotion
- Have fun!

Source: "Brandiquette," Reddit.com, June 2015, https://www.reddit.com/wiki/brandiquette © Reddit Inc.

How mobile is Reddit? In 2012 Reddit launched a redesigned interface to be more mobile-friendly. In 2016 it launched official mobile apps for the most popular devices.[28] Key performance indicators for Reddit could be views, shares, upvotes, downvotes, ranking, links, referrals, subscribers to a Subreddit, Karma, and sentiment of comments.

Digg

Digg is a social news website that aggregates news and publishers' streams via peer evaluation of voting up content, and also supports easy sharing of content to other social platforms such as Twitter and Facebook.[29] The social channel was founded in 2004 and has risen to 18 million visitors a month. Sixty percent of Digg users come from the United States, followed by Canada (6 percent) and the United Kingdom (4 percent).[30]

Digg users tend to be more men than women, with above-average college or graduate school degrees. Most users are accessing Digg more from work than home, but not at school. Top Digg user interests include news and media, especially in the areas of technology, magazines, ezines, and newspapers.[31]

This social channel lets users discover, share, and recommend website content, describing itself as "What the Internet is talking about right now." Digg members submit a web page on Digg.com and then other members vote the page up to Digg It. Users can easily save stories and share via Twitter or Facebook. Voting also takes place across the web through Digg button widgets added to other websites that allow visitors to vote as they browse. Additional features include categories such as science, business, entertainment, and technology, plus an editorially driven front page. Digg has also enhanced mobile features.[32]

Digg has had a bumpy road from being an early innovator to losing traffic to competitor Reddit. As a result, Digg was torn apart in 2012. The site recreated itself with a new staff, design, and interface. Since the relaunch, Digg has steadily regained users. Stories with the most "Diggs" make their way to the home page, but the Digg Score also factors in Facebook shares and tweets. Digg moderators also add a human factor that consists of Digg Editors who decide what and where stories should appear.[33] The home page has big photos and minimal text, and comments were eliminated.[34] The focus of Digg is on quality content that users want to read, with a goal of highlighting sixty to seventy posts a day. Digg wants the home page to be a calm and clear place that is not noisy.[35]

For organizations Digg represents a way to spot trends, collect and distribute content, and build awareness. Digg is a great way to fuel public relations campaigns by spreading earned media coverage. Publishers like Digg because it drives traffic to their stories. Digg could also drive traffic spikes to organization websites. Open an account and submit links every time an organization creates a new piece of content or is featured in an article from another news source.

The Digg widget button should also be added to business websites and blogs to enable easy Digg voting. Another strategy is to monitor Digg and write blogs, posts, or create content about the topics that have made it to the front page. This can generate search activity from what may be a hot topic but also will provide links to direct traffic

and improve search engine optimization (SEO). Getting popular within the site will boost search engine rankings and referral traffic.[36]

Paid social media is an option for Digg. Marketers, advertisers, and public relations professionals can purchase native advertising by working with brand partners to display and co-create content to be featured on the platform. Campaigns are data-driven and measured for performance, but the social-bookmarking platform makes it clear they are looking for valuable content, describing its paid options as "Digg makes suck-free ads that work."[37]

Digg is mobile-friendly and has mobile apps available for the most popular devices.[38] Key performance indicators for Digg could be views, votes or Diggs, shares, saves, links, and referrals.

StumbleUpon

StumbleUpon is a discovery engine that finds and recommends web content to users that was founded in 2001. The site has social-networking features that allow users to find and rate web pages, photos, and videos via categories of their interests and peer-sourcing.[39] The social site has roughly 12 million visitors a month. Nearly half (48 percent) of StumbleUpon users are from the United States, with the next-largest countries including India (7 percent), the United Kingdom (7 percent), and Canada (5 percent).[40]

StumbleUpon users are significantly more women than men, with some college education or graduate degrees. Most users are accessing StumbleUpon from school rather than from work or home.[41] Top StumbleUpon user interests include news and media, web hosting, and internet and telecom social networks.[42]

StumbleUpon can be thought of as a bookmarking site and search engine that uses collaborative filtering to create communities of web surfers interested in similar topics via the Stumble Button. StumbleUpon automates word-of-mouth sharing of peer-approved websites. Like other social sites, users create a profile with a brief bio and share and rate websites to create peer networks of common interests that distribute content stumbled upon by recommendations. User profiles also include a blog-style record of sites they have rated, but also keep track of likes, lists, following, followers, interests, and channels. Users rate sites with a thumbs-up or thumbs-down and can leave additional comments on the review page, which then appears in the user's blog-style profile.[43]

Types of content can be organized with interest filters such as Home Improvement, Entrepreneurship, or Humor. Content filters can be used to show only stumbles with audio, video, flash, or images. What users stumble upon is influenced by the interests of the people they follow and previous content they have rated as a thumbs-up. In 2006 the social channel launched StumbleUponVideo that allows users to "stumble" through and rate video content from YouTube, Vimeo, CollegeHumor, Google, Myspace, FunnyOrDie, Hulu, and TED.[44]

StumbleUpon allows organizations to curate content, promote their own content, and connect with communities of common interests. The channel can be valuable for business-to-business (B2B) and business-to-consumer (B2C) organizations as long as the content created and shared can entertain, be informative, and connect with the tar-

get audience. *Forbes* uses StumbleUpon as a content feed and as a way to gain followers through their company page or StumbleUpon channel. TV shows, such as *2 Broke Girls*, have used channels to engage fans and draw new viewers.[45] The World Wildlife Fund's tens of thousands of followers stay up to date on the nonprofit's developments, actions, and ways to support their efforts.[46]

Lists are a popular feature with StumbleUpon users and can be a powerful tool. There are millions of lists on the channel with topics from Design Your Space and Body Is a Temple to Places to Go Immediately and Killer Recipes. Getting on these lists could help the brand, product, or service. Organizations should include StumbleUpon widgets on brand websites and blogs for easy sharing. Identify influential StumbleUpon users in the industry, follow them, and get on their radar. A couple of thumbs-up reviews from power users can draw a lot of attention quickly.[47]

StumbleUpon also offers paid social media in the form of native ads. StumbleUpon Ads offers full-page, targeted content distribution. Marketers, advertisers, and public relations professionals can pay to distribute articles, videos, slideshows, and any type of content with a website URL. Content is promoted full screen on this social-bookmarking platform targeted to users by age, gender, location, device, or interests.[48]

StumbleUpon has been redesigned to be mobile-friendly and has a mobile app. The app is available on most devices.[49] Key performance indicators for StumbleUpon could be views, shares, followers, thumbs-up, recommends, likes, links, referrals, and sentiment.

BuzzFeed

BuzzFeed is a social news and entertainment company that collects and creates viral content from around the web that was founded in 2006. BuzzFeed is more on the content-discovery side of this category but has attracted a lot of attention, with over 200 million monthly unique visitors of which 50 percent are eighteen to thirty-four years old. In recent years BuzzFeed has also started creating native video content inside social media networks and platforms such as Facebook and YouTube, generating over 2.2 billion monthly video views.[50]

BuzzFeed originally started as an algorithm created to track stories around the web that showed signs of becoming viral. Over the years the company added content curators, editors, and staff reporters delivering breaking news and in-depth reporting. BuzzFeed is most known for its aggregated listicles, of which it creates hundreds daily. A **listicle** is short-form writing based on an often numerical theme structure with added copy to be published as an article.[51] One example of a trending BuzzFeed listicle is "21 Feel-Good Tweets That Will Make You Feel Better About Everything: Featuring Cute Family Members and Even *Cuter* Pets."[52]

BuzzFeed is also known for its online quizzes, which were created out of the viral success of listicles. Results of identity quizzes like "Which '00s Indie Band Are You?" gives readers the perfect content to want to share with others. They have become so popular that other news publications write about them, such as in a *Slate* article by Heather Schwedel questioning

MINI CASE

Behr Paints BuzzFeed

In 2013 Behr Paints decided to go after a younger crowd by partnering with the social news-content site BuzzFeed. Behr sponsored the new DIY BuzzFeed content vertical to offer household solutions and share ideas. Instead of buying traditional advertising, which millennials are known to be more skeptical of, Behr partnered with BuzzFeed to offer value-added content. Brand-sponsored BuzzFeed articles included "35 Money-Saving Home Décor Knock-offs," and "The 24 Most Colorful Cities in the World.[a]

Behr partnered with public relations firm Burson-Marsteller to create eighteen custom editorial posts about painting and decorating tips and tricks from Behr's director of color marketing, Erika Woelfel. The native advertising effort kicked off with Behr giving the BuzzFeed office a DIY makeover that generated more custom posts. The five-month campaign resulted in nearly 60 million impressions.[b]

[a] Karl Greenberg, "Behr Paints BuzzFeed," MediaPost.com, April 9, 2013, http://www.mediapost.com/publications/article/197671/behr-paints-buzzfeed.html.

[b] "Case Study: Behr's BuzzFeed Campaign," Burson-Marsteller.com, accessed February 18, 2015, http://www.burson-marsteller.com/case-studies/behrs-buzzfeed-campaign.

whether the quizzes may have become too weird now that they have evolved to build quizzes such as "Build A Bowl Of Mac 'N' Cheese and We'll Accurately Guess Your Height."[53]

Content is divided into news, videos, quizzes, tasty (recipes), and thirty additional topic areas. There are a variety of feeds from LOL and win to fail and trending within which users can vote on stories for each category. Many stories are a collection of social media posts curated by BuzzFeed staff and posts have comments like a blog.[54] Anyone can sign up for a BuzzFeed Community account and create their own BuzzFeed posts. It is against community guidelines for businesses to create brand content or any content that is promotional. BuzzFeed also does not sell traditional online advertising such as banner ads.

Paid social media options are available to reach this social platform's large audience. The big opportunity for marketing with BuzzFeed is native advertising. BuzzFeed focuses on advertising partners who help create "custom content worth sharing." Marketers, advertisers, and public relations professionals work with BuzzFeed's creative and video teams to create original content, then distribute audience-targeted, brand-sponsored content across BuzzFeed's website and social accounts. Brands track content performance via a real-time social dashboard. Content options include custom social posts, original video, promotion, and story units to promote the brand content. BuzzFeed's Social Discovery (SoDisco) team also promotes branded content with native ads on social networks like Facebook.[55]

An example of branded content on BuzzFeed is the Macy's-sponsored listicle, "11 Back-To-School Outfits That'll Crush It on Social Media: Get Ready to Have a Fashionable Feed This Fall, Only with Macy's."[56] BuzzFeed has also worked with brands like Staples to create YouTube videos like "6 School Hacks You're Going to Need This Year Presented by

BuzzFeed & Staples."[57] BuzzFeed's website is mobile-friendly and has mobile apps for most devices. In fact, 60 percent of this platform's traffic is mobile.[58] Key performance indicators for BuzzFeed could be views, shares, comments, likes, links, referrals, and sentiment.

Social Bookmarking Considerations

The Hundred Acre Wood was a big place, and readers of *Winnie-the-Pooh* needed a map to get around. A. A. Milne knew a little organization can go a long way. That is the goal of bookmarking sites and news aggregators for dealing with the vast amount of information found on the web. They can help narrow the billions to the under-one-hundred websites that consumers visit each month. Marketing communications professionals can leverage them for brand social media strategies.

Public attention is hard to garner with so much clutter, but a cohesive social-bookmarking strategy could be a way for brands, products, and services to direct that attention their way. In addition to the social channels presented here, also consider Slashdot.org as a niche social-bookmarking site and NowThis for brand marketing video partnerships that create video news to distribute on social network feeds.[59] In 2017 social-bookmarking innovator Del.icio.us was purchased by Pinboard and shut down to new activity. It remains a read-only web archive. Del.icio.us users were invited to migrate their bookmarks over to the paid ($11 a year) social-bookmarking service Pinboard.[60]

Social Knowledge

Brian Eno said, "Every collaboration helps you grow."[61] Brian Eno is an innovator in ambient music, but what most of the public is probably more familiar with is Eno's collaborative efforts with well-known artists such as David Bowie, Talking Heads, U2, Coldplay, and Paul Simon.[62] Collaboration can improve organizations and their social media through wikis and social-knowledge channels that make it easier than ever.

Writing is normally the solo act of a single person collecting knowledge and then individually sharing it with others. This is true for interpersonal communication, articles, books, and even encyclopedias. Yet wikis helped change this. A **wiki** is simply a website that allows collaborative editing by multiple contributors. The word "wiki" comes from **WikiWiki-Web**, which was the first website to use a wiki style of programming in 1995.[63]

Encyclopedia salesmen used to go house-to-house selling parents the key to knowledge for their children to succeed in life. Today, this type of knowledge is no longer held by a few. No matter a person's opinion of the quality and accuracy of Wikipedia, most cannot argue with its influence. Before discussing Wikipedia, it is important to first consider private wikis.

Internal communications can improve organization performance through integrated employee communication. Most businesses are separated into silos that make up the company's collective knowledge. This institutional memory or knowledge can get locked up with specific employees, on individual hard drives, or lost completely when an employee leaves.

Private wikis provide access to a business's most up-to-date collective knowledge. **Company wikis** can bring together global divisions and partners who may not be in the same

building, city, or country.[64] The main reasons an organization would use a wiki include: documentation (19 percent), knowledge base (19 percent), project management (17 percent), tacit knowledge (17 percent), meeting management (14 percent), and encyclopedia (12 percent).[65]

Employee-only wikis can be run on a company's own servers or outsourced to an online wiki provider. The key to success is defining the goal of the wiki. Goals would be to provide or house anything from supply orders and entertainment spots for clients to ways to operate specialized equipment and valuable marketing knowledge about key competitors. Aggregate questions and answers to the public wiki to cut down on answering the same question over and over. The new level of transparency and collaboration will help make efforts much more efficient and timely. Competitive advantage may come from the shared knowledge gained from a corporate wiki. It is working for IBM, which runs 56,000 internal wikis that have more than a million page views a day.[66]

Beyond private wikis, public **social-knowledge platforms** or networks are internet-based information exchanges where users can ask questions and get answers from real people. These services have become social as they base answers on the wisdom of the crowd, user ratings, followers, commenting, and sharing. Users of these services see themselves as influencers making a difference in their areas of expertise.

Here we will look at the top public wiki, Wikipedia, and how it can influence organizations and businesses. Then we will discuss Yahoo! Answers and Quora, two of the top social-knowledge channels. Question-and-answer sites can be an effective way for organizations to connect with a target audience, build a brand, and improve search engine optimization (SEO).

Wikipedia

Wikipedia is a collaboratively edited, free, internet encyclopedia supported by the nonprofit Wikimedia Foundation. Founded in 2001, Wikipedia attracts 374 million unique monthly visitors and has over 70,000 active contributors.[67] There are now over 5 million English-language articles and more than 35 million articles total on Wikipedia. Many of these articles are centered on businesses and organizations.[68] How should marketers, advertisers, and public relations professionals interact with Wikipedia? If they do not already have an article about their brand, should they create one?

First, find out if the business or organization qualifies. Anyone can make a Wikipedia article, but if it does not meet the social site's guidelines, a moderator will delete it. Wikipedia is not a directory, and its guidelines state that businesses must meet certain requirements. The main qualification is reputation. If an organization is a startup or small business, it may not be eligible.[69] High-level media exposure is the main hurdle to having a Wikipedia page, and that requires coverage in large media outlets.

For businesses that do meet the guidelines, a Wikipedia article can help add legitimacy to the organization. Users know the site is not marketing- or advertising-driven and is more factually based. Wikipedia is social media–driven, yet still an encyclopedia. Opinions are not allowed, and a Wikipedia article offers a place to present the facts about an organization. It is also great for exposure, since nearly all Google searches return Wikipedia's listings in the top links.[70]

Figure 10.1. The IBM Talk Page on Wikipedia

Source: "Talk: IBM," Wikipedia.com, accessed September 15, 2017, http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Talk:IBM. © Wikimedia Foundation, Inc.

There are negative aspects to being on Wikipedia. Moderators do not like employees or business owners making updates. Organizations normally need to find someone unassociated with the business to update content and be active on the Talk page.[71] That said, there is little control once an article is up. See figure 10.1 for the IBM Wikipedia Talk page.

Anyone, from disgruntled customers to competitors, can go in and update a business page. This means the page needs to be constantly monitored. A Wikipedia entry can significantly boost the reputation of a business, but can also seriously hurt it through a piece of misinformation.[72] Key performance indicators for Wikipedia could be views, comments, links, referrals, and sentiment.

Yahoo! Answers

Yahoo! Answers is a community question-and-answer website or social-knowledge platform started by Yahoo! in 2005. The site attracts over 317 million visitors a month worldwide. The platform is very global, with the site available in twelve different languages.[73] Top countries of users include Brazil (18 percent), the United States (16 percent), Taiwan (13 percent), Mexico (7 percent), and Italy (5 percent).[74]

Top audience interests include search, education, news and media, chats, and forums. The overall Yahoo.com website tends to have more women

users than men. Users tend to have some or no college education and access the platform mostly from school.[75]

Yahoo! Answers users can ask any question, as long as they do not violate the community guidelines. Contents of answers are owned by users, but Yahoo! has a royalty-free right to publish the information. Misuse or misinformation is monitored by users, who report abuses. Some subject areas are based more on personal opinion, but most answers must be based on fact, and users are required to mention their sources. Posts are removed if a significant number of trusted abuse reports are received. To ask and answer questions, users must have a Yahoo! ID. Questions are assigned to a category and remain open for four to eight days.[76]

Social points encourage users to answer questions and help limit spam. They can receive 10 points for giving the Best Answer designated by the asker of the question or voted by the community. Points are divided from Level 1 (1–249 points) to Level 7 (25,000+ points), which designate how active a user has been and provide more access to the site. Badges are used to designate Yahoo! Answers contributors with Top Contributor, Staff, and Official, which is used for celebrities or government departments. Knowledge Partners badges designate organizations that share their personal knowledge and experience.

It is important to note that Yahoo! Answers has been criticized for its answers not always being factual or very deep. Some claim this stems from a reward system based on activity and not quality. However, the community guidelines do require factual information with sources and users monitor answers that can be removed.[77]

Celebrities have appeared on Yahoo! Answers to promote causes and organizations. During the 2008 US presidential campaign, Hillary Clinton, John McCain, Barack Obama, and Mitt Romney posted questions. For a nonprofit awareness campaign, UNICEF ambassadors asked questions to garner support.[78] In 2013, a new version of the site was released and promoted as being better, faster, and simpler. Features include a personalized home page, content activity streams, and the ability to add photos and video.[79]

Participation in Yahoo! Answers can help organizations drive traffic, generate awareness, or establish a brand reputation. Providing helpful, significant answers can help generate qualified leads. Monitoring questions in key categories is also a great consumer-research tool. Knowing what people are looking for can help improve business offerings.[80]

How can a brand integrate this social media platform into their strategy? Have an employee or multiple key employees open accounts and fill in the user profile with a website link and bio that emphasizes expertise in a specific area. Find a niche by answering questions that can be answered well to build authority and drive traffic. Including a website link in every answer could be labeled as spam. Deliver real value and users will find the organization via the account bio.[81] Contribute to the community. Don't just add content. The individual must also engage with other users. Vote on other contributors' answers and make helpful comments. Take off the "marketing, advertising, or PR hat" to start connecting, leading, and influencing. Contributing highly valued answers builds credibility and boosts image as an industry leader.

Search engines try to find the best answer to questions typed in the search box. Even Google returns a high number of Yahoo! Answers pages. This can lead to high visibility for

an organization to build brand awareness and traffic.[82] Paid social media options for Yahoo! Answers are not available.

The Yahoo! Answers website is designed to be mobile-friendly, but the question-and-answer website launched its first mobile app in late 2016. The Yahoo! Answers Now mobile app has improved features such as notifications and questions sent to experts in categories for better answers.[83] Key performance indicators for Yahoo! Answers could be views, shares, follows, links, referrals, points, Best Answers, questions, and top contributors.

Quora

Quora is a question-and-answer website where questions are submitted and answered by its community of users. This social-knowledge channel was founded in 2009 and grew quickly[84] to more than 200 million unique visitors a month,[85] with nearly a third (29 percent) of traffic coming from the United States and one-fifth from India (21 percent). Other top countries include the United Kingdom (6 percent), Canada (3 percent), and Australia (2 percent).[86]

There are significantly more men Quora users than women and users are highly educated, with the majority most likely to have graduate degrees. Access to the question-and-answer platform happens mostly from work or home, but not school.[87] Top audience interests include news and media, search engines, social networks, and education.[88]

Quora was started by two former Facebook employees to build a better question-and-answer site. Promoted as "Your best source for knowledge," this social site collects user-submitted questions and answers. Content is organized into more than 400,000 topics for information discovery and easier navigation. Users collaborate by editing questions and suggesting edits to other users' answers like they do on Wikipedia. Users can also upvote or downvote answers.

Quora includes full-text search and a blogging platform to create and follow blogs.[89] Quora also has a Stats feature described as a dashboard for authors. The Quora question-and-answer site and blogging platform was built to enable anyone sharing great content to gain a big audience.

Like Digg, Quora's home page highlights content from across the service rather than just people users follow. As TechCrunch says, "You don't have to be a celebrity or have built up a personal following to make a splash." Quora Stats helps track that traffic through views on questions, answers, and blog posts over time. It also tracks upvotes and shares.[90]

Quora requires users to register with their real name versus a screen name. Despite being a newer question-and-answer site, when it first came out it attracted attention quickly. High-profile users such as Jimmy Wales, Michael Dell, Steve Case, Marc Andreessen, and Ashton Kutcher were early adopters and the social channel grew with positive stories in the high-profile press.[91]

Quora attracts a higher quality of experts than other question-and-answer sites. Big-name CEOs, Hollywood producers, and well-known journalists have been answering questions, but people don't need to be famous to get big exposure on Quora. Users vote for quality answers. Make sure contributions are thoughtful, intelligent, and interesting.

For success on Quora, company representatives should start by establishing credibility by announcing who they are, what their background is, and their job titles. Instead of giving a predictable, straightforward response, try to take answers in a unique yet related direction. People love stories. Stats are great, but support an opinion with a story that brings it to life, is entertaining to read, and makes the answer memorable.[92]

Quora offers an opportunity to build a brand as an expert or thought leader in an industry. Set up an account for a key employee and fill out the bio section that also connects the account to jobs the individual had, educational institutions attended, and cities where he or she has lived. Include a link to the company website or blog.[93]

Answering questions increases links and search engine optimization. By keying in on relevant topics, an organization can reach its target audiences and engage them where they are looking for solutions. Helpful, informed answers can generate qualified leads. Yet don't be pushy, or contributions could be labeled as spam.[94]

Since its launch, Quora has added features including a new editor to create more visible and organized answers. In late 2015 the platform added Writing Sessions, which is live Q&A sessions with experts in different fields. This was seen as a way to create high-profile events much like Reddit's "Ask Me Anything" service (AMAs). Some Writing Sessions have featured entrepreneur "angel" investor David Rose, president of Planned Parenthood Cecile Richards, and Facebook COO Sheryl Sandberg.[95] Quora also added Knowledge Prizes as incentives for experts to answer important questions in different areas or industries. Answers benefit a lot of people and cash prizes can be kept by experts or donated to charity.[96]

Paid Quora social media options are also available. Through Quora Business, marketers, advertisers, and public relations professionals can purchase ads that appear below relevant questions. The promoted answers are similar to Google pay-per-click (PPC) ads that are based on a real-time bidding auction system. Ads contain a headline, description text, landing page URL, and call to action. With these cost-per-click (CPC) ads, brands only pay when someone clicks. Quora ads are targeted by topic, platform, and location. An example of Quora native ads would be a website such as LawTrades.com offering up to 60 percent off on lawyers' fees to help set up a business appearing below the question, "How do I hire a business lawyer?" Results of campaigns can track conversion with pixels or integration with outside analytics programs.[97]

Quora is mobile with official mobile apps for most devices.[98] Key performance indicators could be views, shares, upvotes, downvotes, comments, links, referrals, and sentiment.

Social Knowledge Considerations

There are numerous social-knowledge platforms and networks on the internet, from Wikipedia to question-and-answer websites. In addition to the websites covered here, also consider Answers.com, ChaCha, Ask.com, and WikiAnswers (now part of Answers.com). New entrants to this category include Ask.fm, which is a global social network focused on asking and answering questions. Whale is a video Q&A service attracting a younger audience. As with other social media channels, no marketer, advertiser, or public relations professional can do it all. The key to success is to choose one or two, contribute quality content, and build real engagement. The next section will cover a topic related to social knowledge. Podcasts and RSS feeds enable social knowledge to be sent automatically to subscribers.

Podcasts

George Carlin said, "The reason I talk to myself is that I'm the only one whose answers I accept."[99] Yet podcasts have grown immensely based on the truth that we do like to hear answers, insights, and stories from others. Whether it is delivering comedy skits, newscasts, poetry, or business tips, a **podcast** is a series of episodes of audio or video content delivered digitally. Podcasts are subscribed to and downloaded through web syndication or streamed online through a computer or mobile device.[100]

Instead of a user checking for new content, new episodes are automatically delivered when released. The term *podcast* is a combination of *broadcast* and *pod,* referring to the iPod as the main delivery device of audio podcasts. Files are user-selected and downloaded onto the device, and then can be taken anywhere for listening or viewing later offline.[101]

Podcasting follows the main characteristic of social media in that it bypasses the traditional gatekeepers in broadcast media such as radio stations. No one owns the technology and it is free to create and listen to content. Considering the broad array of devices that can use the medium, another generic term that can be used is netcasting. Podcasting was around before, but gained its big start in 2005 when Apple released iTunes 4.9 with native support for podcasts. A version of podcasts is a **video podcast**, which is a series of video clips or web television series delivered digitally that are often subscribed to and downloaded or streamed online through a computer or mobile device. Video podcasts are now delivered via iTunes, but can also refer to video distributed through the internet on websites or social channels such as YouTube.[102]

In the summer of 2013, Apple announced that it had surpassed one billion subscriptions for podcasts via its iTunes app, and today one thousand new podcasts are premiered in iTunes each week. *USA TODAY* has reported a resurgence in podcast contributors and listeners and *Marketing News* has announced that the age of the podcast has arrived.[103] The mainstream is heading to podcasting, with actors and comedians such as Alec Baldwin, Ice-T, and Tom Green starting shows along with CBS, NBC, ABC, FOX, and NPR, which are now offering audio versions of their TV news shows. Top podcasts are attracting millions of listeners, but marketers and advertisers can be successful with a smaller number by attracting the right niche.[104] Edison Research reports one-quarter of US consumers are monthly podcast listeners up from just 12 percent in 2013. The number of people who have ever listened to a podcast has grown steadily since 2013 (see figure 10.2).[105]

There are slightly more men (56 percent) than women (44 percent) listeners of monthly podcasts. Nearly half are eighteen to thirty-four years old (44 percent) and a third (33 percent) are aged thirty-five to fifty-four. Podcast listeners tend to be high earners and highly educated. Nearly half (45 percent) earn $75,000 or more a year and they are more likely to have a graduate degree or college degree than the general population.[106]

Podcasting has also grown past its iTunes roots to reach new audiences on apps such as TuneIn Radio, SoundCloud, Stitcher, and iHeartRadio. Amazon-owned Audible is known for audio books but has added podcast content. With the growth of smartphones and Bluetooth in cars, audiences for all podcasts should continue to grow and some see podcasts as a serious threat to traditional broadcast radio. Clear Channel, the largest radio broadcaster in the US, responded by allowing consumers to record their own podcasts and submit them to iHeartRadio alongside professional shows from ABC, NPR, and Ryan Seacrest. While
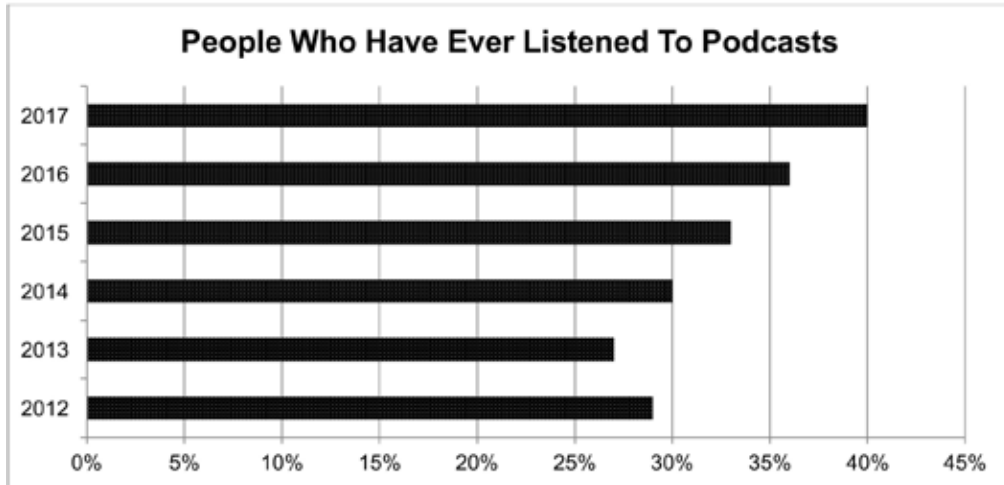
Figure 10.2. Number of People Who Have Listened to a Podcast 2012–2017

Source: "Podcast Consumer 2017," April 18, 2017, Edison Research, http://www.edisonresearch.com/the-pod-cast–consumer-2017.

iHeartRadio used to call them Shows On Demand, it now embraces the term *podcast*.[107] SoundCloud boasts 175 million unique monthly listeners and podcasts can play anywhere on the web, on Sonos, Google Chromecast, Xbox One, and in podcast apps.[108] Stitcher allows users to "stitch" together their favorite radio shows and podcasts from over 65,000 options into custom playlists for everything from workouts to weekends. Stitcher also has editors who create lists such as Top 20 Comedy or Top 20 News & Politics shows.[109] Another option is TuneIn, which has 75 million users and 5.7 million podcasts.[110] Anyone can produce a hit show and the outlets for distribution are growing. Podcasts can be a great engagement tool and distribution channel for content marketing efforts.

RSS Feeds

RSS or rich site summary is a convenient way for people to listen to and read what others are saying and writing. RSS, also known as "really simple syndication," uses standard web feed formats to publish frequently updated information including blog entries, news, audio, and video. Feeds started as early as the late 1990s, but the now-ubiquitous RSS icon was created in 2004 for use first in Mozilla's Firefox browser.[111]

RSS channels or feeds contain full or summarized text and metadata such as author and date information. RSS allows authors to syndicate or publish content automatically to subscribers who want to receive current updates from favorite websites on their computers or mobile devices. This makes it easier for users since they do not have to check a site to see if new content is available and it enables new aggregation. Users subscribe by entering their feed's URL into their RSS reader or by clicking the feed icon. The important consideration for business use of RSS is to make sure organization of content is easy to share and easier to collect.[112]

Brand websites and blogs should offer an RSS feed to ensure updated content is automatically delivered via email or a feed reader. A feed reader is also a convenient way to keep up to date on competitor activity and industry developments.

With the shutdown of the popular Google Reader in 2013, millions of RSS users had to switch to alternatives. Readers are available to use on computers and mobile apps. Top RSS readers include Feedly, NewsBlur, Inoreader, G2Reader, and Feeder.[113] It is also useful to mention Friendster founder Jonathan Abrams, featured at the beginning of chapter 7, who started the news reading app Nuzzel. Nuzzel acts like a RSS feed but curates content based on what users' friends are sharing in other social media.[114]

iTunes

iTunes is the Apple media player used to play, download, and organize digital audio and video on computers in the macOS and Microsoft Windows operating systems and mobile devices, including iPhone, iPod touch, and iPad. First released in 2001, iTunes has grown to over 800 million iTunes accounts.[115] Podcasts through iTunes are now available in more than 150 countries worldwide, making iTunes the top podcast distributor in the US and the world.[116] Some estimate there are over 200,000 podcasts on iTunes—a number that has doubled since 2013.[117]

Beyond using a quality microphone and recording and editing equipment, a good podcast has "intros" and "outros," with music and voice-overs announcing the show title, host, organization, and call to action to drive traffic to other social channels or corporate websites and blogs. In the beginning, podcasts should tell the audience what they can expect in terms of content, frequency, and format. Consider having guest interviews of employees or industry experts to keep content fresh and interesting.[118]

In each episode, enter the title, artist, and album information, including keywords as relevant tags to be found in searches. The iTunes format divides podcasts into sixteen categories, from business and health to government and technology. List podcasts in the right categories to be discovered by the target audience. Social features of iTunes include ratings and reviews, so it is a good idea to regularly ask listeners to rate and review the podcast to help new listeners discover it.

Podcasting can be a useful channel for a business to connect with target audience members on a personal level in their car, in the gym, or in the office while they are performing other activities. Podcasting is really a one-on-one medium that can build engagement with existing clients and draw in potential consumers. Typically, measuring this engagement and performance has been a challenge, with the only data available being total downloads. But Apple has announced updates to the Podcast app that will allow marketers, advertisers, and public relations professionals to ascertain how long an episode was played and what parts of the episode were listened to.[119]

To grow a podcast's audience, use other social channels to encourage sharing via Twitter and Facebook. Deliver relevant, helpful content to a niche group of consumers.[120] A podcast does not need a large subscriber base to be successful; it just needs the right subscribers—a relevant target audience. One way to ensure the podcast delivers relevant, engaging content

is to review the main question-and-answer social channels to see what questions users are asking in an organization's category.

Native advertising also applies to podcasting. Many top podcasters sell sponsored ads inside the shows, which are mostly host-read. These can be highly influential because they can be seen as endorsements. IAB reports that 60 percent of podcast ads are read by the host with talking points provided by the advertiser. Most hosts will only accept ads from products and services they believe in, which adds to the credibility of the message. Podcast advertising is on the rise, with 228 percent growth since 2015.[121]

The key advantage of iTunes and podcasts is their ability to be taken anywhere to listen to anytime. In that respect, podcasts were an early innovator in mobile use. Key performance indicators for iTunes podcasts could be downloads, subscriptions, links, referrals, ratings, reviews, and sentiment of reviews.

Podcast Considerations

Despite George Carlin's quote earlier in the chapter, people like to hear others talk and do accept their answers. In fact, comedians now use podcasting as a marketing tool. Podcasting is growing and could be an important part of an organization's social media strategy. Take a look again at target audience, objectives, and social media big idea. Could podcasting be the ideal channel to implement the social strategy for the business or organization?

Feeling Overwhelmed Is Natural

As we conclude the social channel section of this book (part III), many may feel overwhelmed. That is okay and not cause for worry. The amount of social channels and platforms covered in this section may have been eye-opening. Don't let the sheer number of options cause a paralysis of analysis. **Analysis paralysis** is when a decision is never made because there are too many options or it is thought of as overcomplicated.[122] Social media marketing is not complicated with a strategic planning process. The key to success is realizing that a brand or organization does not have to be in every social media channel to see real results—just the right ones.

Keep focused on the strategic framework developed in part II and select a few choice social media channels to deliver that strategy based on business objectives, target audience, insight, and big idea. Start small or optimize the social presence the organization already has by closing unproductive social channels and adding promising channels that support existing activity.

Yet remember that social media goes beyond marketing communications to impact many other areas of business operation. Social media has significantly changed the practice of product development, customer service, human resources, and more. Part IV of this book takes a deeper look at how marketing needs to integrate with other important areas of business function.[123]

One last consideration for this part of the book is that there are social media channels that are more popular in specific countries. This collection was based on global traffic, but if a brand is active in specific countries, conduct additional research on usage by country.

As noted in chapter 7, consider social media with more country-specific platforms such as Qzone, WeChat, VKontakte, Odnoklassniki, and others.

Chapter 10 Checklist

Social media can change quickly. Visit PostControlMarketing (http://www.postcontrolmar keting.com) for updates, but also use this chapter checklist to briefly check how social media statistics in this chapter have changed since publication.

- ✓ How has social bookmarking and social knowledge changed? Are Reddit, Digg, StumbleUpon, BuzzFeed, Wikipedia, Yahoo Answers!, Quora, and iTunes still the top platforms?
- ✓ Do a quick search to confirm key statistics for each of the social media channel options covered in this chapter. Go through the list above and update numbers for: monthly users, global and mobile use, user demographics such as gender, age, educa-tion, and income, plus platform use and new features.
- ✓ Check for new paid social media opportunities. Have any of the social media plat-forms covered in this chapter added new or further native advertising options?

SOCIAL PLAN PART 10

Buzz Building and Knowledge Sharing

People love to share knowledge. Look at the major social-bookmarking and social-knowledge channels. What valuable information or partnerships can the brand form? What questions can the organization answer? How does knowledge sharing fit with the social media insight and big idea? Which users of social-bookmarking and knowledge channels match most closely with the target audience? Also take an in-depth look at podcasts. Is there an opportunity to start a brand podcast or partner with an existing program? Is the target audience actively lis-tening to podcasts and looking for the type of insight and information the brand can deliver? Report all findings and ideas in these areas:

1. Identify the major social-bookmarking and knowledge-sharing sites where the target audience is active.
2. Describe the type of activity and content that is popular on each, and list the type of con-tent the brand could provide that matches the social media plan's big idea.
3. Find the top podcasts to which the target audience is listening, and on which platform they are most active.
4. List and explain possible new podcast shows the brand could create or current shows the brand could contribute to and sponsor.

For a condensed version of the social plan see appendix A: Three-Part Social Plan.

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

1. Go onto one of the social-bookmarking sites such as Reddit, Digg, or StumbleUpon. Find an example of a brand that is "doing it right" and an example of a brand that is "doing it wrong."
2. Find a story that has gone viral on one of the social-bookmarking sites. Analyze characteristics such as topic, timing, copy, pictures, and headline. Try to determine what made the story go viral versus other stories.
3. Question-and-answer sites are all about delivering value to others by answering their questions. Which of the Q&A social websites are most appropriate for your brand and target audience?
4. Research the top viral posts on BuzzFeed. Identify the structure and characteristics and topics. Are there common threads? Based on what you found, pick a brand and write a sponsor BuzzFeed listicle or quiz.

ADDITIONAL EXERCISES

1. Social bookmarking is all about contributing and building into a community before taking out. The goal of this exercise is to join and explore the three social-bookmarking sites and then meaningfully contribute to one and earn a reputation as a value creator. This will pay off down the road, when you start sharing your own more promotion-oriented content. What happens if you don't invest the time up front? You could get banned from the community for sharing too many promotional links or messages. In which social-bookmarking community do you see the most potential? Become a valued member and it could provide an enormous amount of traffic and awareness.
2. You may not have checked out a podcast in a long time. Now is the time. In this exercise go to iTunes and explore all the podcasts. Don't just look at the top overall shows. Explore the different topic categories such as marketing and management, society and culture, and technology. Is there a show that is related to your brand and targets your customers? Can you envision starting a new show for a brand or organization? Be sure to explore both audio and video podcasts. Some marketers are now even creating limited podcast series for new product or service introductions. Whether you see a place for podcasts in your strategy or not, you may find some useful podcasts that will help optimize your time and keep you up to date on the latest developments in the industry.

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PART

IV
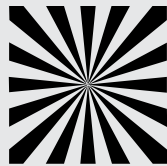
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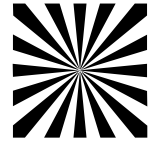
Social Media Insights and Crowdsourcing

Money won't buy happiness, but it will pay the salaries of a large research staff to study the problem.[1]

—Bill Vaughan

PREVIEW

When facing a decision, do you ever ask your friends for advice? You could ask one, but then you might want a second opinion and then another. Eventually you may seek advice from a group of friends to see what the majority thinks. Perhaps you have done this with what clothes to wear to a job interview or special occasion. Perhaps you have sought advice from several friends on what color to paint a room. Do you feel your friends have always given the right advice?

Another way to seek advice is to seek the wisdom of the crowd. In *Science* magazine, Ralph Hertwig tells us that since the late nineteenth century, psychology research has associated the group or crowd with unparalleled wisdom and magical creativity or inferior decision-making and disastrous outcomes. Yet, Hertwig says, "the key to benefiting from other minds is to know when to rely on the group and when to walk alone."[2] Leveraging the wisdom of the crowd has been the focus of research for many years.

As early as 1907 researcher Francis Galton published "Vox Populi (The Wisdom of Crowds)" in the magazine *Nature.* Galton found evidence that the median estimate of a group can be

more accurate than estimates of experts.[3] This wisdom-of-the-crowd effect has been more recently supported in experiments involving areas from stock markets and political elections to quiz shows. Thus **wisdom-of-the-crowd** is the collective opinion of a group rather than a single expert.[4]

Yet researchers Jan Lorenz, Heiko Rauhut, Frank Schweitzer, and Dirk Helbing found that social influence can undermine the wisdom of a crowd. In their experiment, subjects reconsidered responses to factual questions after receiving the average or full information of the responses of others. Groups were initially "wise," but knowledge about estimates of others narrowed the diversity of opinions, creating a "social influence effect."[5] Other studies indicate that the accuracy of the wisdom of a crowd can diminish when more confident members in a group dominate decisions.[6] These findings should be kept in mind when exploring social research and crowdsourcing as sources of market intelligence.

Leveraging Social Media Insights

Bill Vaughan was an American columnist and author known for his folksy approach and no-nonsense opinions. His quote at the beginning of this chapter is especially relevant for those who have ever had to pay for consumer research studies. Traditional research is expensive. Fortunately, today marketers have a vibrant research alternative that is inexpensive, efficient, and responsive. Social media can be a way to collect business insights for large corporations, startups, and small businesses alike. Traditional research can also be slow. It can take three to six months to develop, field, and obtain results. On the other hand, social media listening can capture real-time consumer insight for continuous brand, product, and service optimization. This is not to say that organizations should eliminate traditional research altogether. It is a valuable tool and provides much information and accuracy that social research cannot.

Despite all the hype over social media, gathering social media insight has not been a serious part of most companies' research efforts. A 2009 study of forty global companies found that nearly 90 percent used more-traditional research approaches, such as focus groups and telephone surveys.[7] By 2012, Wharton Customer Analytics still reported a social media research imbalance. US companies spent more than $10 billion a year on consumer research, yet were using traditional methods more than three decades old. Many organizations rely predominantly on focus groups and customer surveys, despite declining customer participation and long turnaround times.[8] There are signs that organizations are coming around and indications that social research is growing. One report expects the global social media analytics market to grow from $1.6 billion in 2015 to $5.4 billion by 2020. That is an annual growth rate of 28 percent.[9]

Traditional market research involves face-to-face or traditional media methods, such as focus groups, in-depth interviews, shop-alongs, ethnographic observation, intercepts, and telephone and mail surveys. **Digital market research** involves using new digital media to collect results through methods such as online surveys, online focus groups, online communities, bulletin boards, and social media sites.[10] Marketers, advertisers, and public relations professionals can benefit from adding digital market-research methods to more-traditional

research, thereby gaining valuable cross-discipline insight from the real-time intelligence that social media can provide. **Social media research** involves using various tools and techniques to collect and analyze data from social media networks or platforms.[11]

Think about all the information that is generated online every day about brands, products, services, competitors, and industry. Research today should be about leveraging that constant flow of real-time data generated from website analytics, individual-level customer data, and social media conversations. Consumer data can come in many forms, such as polls on organization websites, questions on Facebook pages, or tests of advertising and product ideas on corporate blogs. The idea is to use any digital tool available to leverage research insight from the enormous amount of social data. Misia Tramp, Vice President of Customer Experience Strategy and Insight at Metia digital marketing group in London, describes social data as "just simply the world's best ethnography." She goes on to argue that marketers shouldn't think in terms of traditional versus social. Research should instead be "data-agnostic."[12]

A simple example of leveraging social insights is when Barclays bank launched the first person-to-person mobile payments app in the UK, called Pingit. A traditional new product development approach would follow a process of creating prototypes, conducting a series of focus groups, and then fielding test markets before fully introducing the new product into the market. This process can take up to eighteen months, which is an eternity when trying to launch a new, competitive tech product, service, or feature.

Instead, Barclays released the app sooner and then used real-time social media analysis to significantly improve the product. Through sentiment analysis, they saw the app was received well, but there was still a small percentage of negative mentions. Zeroing in on those comments led to an insight that teens and their parents were upset that the new money-transfer app did not give access to account owners under eighteen.

For example, one tweet said, "Pingit disappointment—sent money to both kids, but it didn't work because they are under 18 (even though they are both Barclays customers)." Barclays was responsive, adjusting access requirements quickly. This helped public relations efforts by avoiding news stories picking up the negative feature and making it a significant part of the earned media coverage of the launch.[13] Today the app is a success, receiving more than fifteen thousand reviews in the Android Apps store and with an average rating of four out of five stars.[14]

As seen in the Barclays example, the real power of this research is that it occurs in real time. Data can be collected by monitoring social channels for product issues or brand perception, or can be collected in closed brand communities. Getting this close to the consumer experience provides rich insight. Companies such as SurveyMonkey make social research easy by offering a free app to embed polls, surveys, and questionnaires into Facebook. Marketers can leverage a large group of Facebook fans to improve marketing efforts, product features, and service delivery. This is an attractive tool versus email surveys, considering the difficulty of obtaining email lists and the potential of a network of friends or fans sharing the survey on their respective networks for more and faster response.[15] There are many options across numerous social media channels. For example, Instagram has added interactive poll stickers for Instagram Stories.[16]

Jim Tobin, President of Ignite Social Media, explains how they use social insight, "We create 100, 150, 200 pieces of content around a brand and a product, put it out on the social

web, see which 15, 20 pieces do really well and then syndicate it."[17] The global social listening platform Synthesio summarizes the areas in which research can gain insights from social analytics: audience segmentation and profiling, traditional research validation, new product development, marketing optimization, trend tracking, and competitive intelligence.[18]

New social media research companies have also emerged as social analytics specialists to help brands optimize their social media strategies working with top marketers, advertising agencies, and public relations firms. Many collect and look for insights in the trillions of posts that create the vast amounts of unstructured social media data. This data and benchmarking helps deliver marketing insights to improve social media content and performance. Crimson Hexagon, Brandwatch, and NetBase are some of these social analytics firms.[19] Other companies specialize in more specific areas. For example, Unmetric collects brand social media data from tens of thousands of leading brands across platforms and analyzes it with artificial intelligence.[20] Another company, Unruly, specializes in viral advertising video insights collected across social platforms.[21]

Social Media Research Process

Social media research should not just be a series of random questions or polls. To achieve optimum results, conduct a social search with the same formal conventions and processes as traditional consumer marketing research. Yean Cheong, head of digital at Mediabrands, suggests using these steps:[a]

- Identify the target audience.
- Post open-ended information-gathering questions.
- Engage in social conversations.
- Categorize and analyze threads.
- Determine feedback patterns.
- Connect trends to develop insights.

[a] "Insight: Media Debate-planning—Social Media's Role in Real-Time Research," *Campaign Asia-Pacific* 56 (2012).

Even one social channel can provide valuable insight with not much effort. Instead of simply monitoring for positive and negative comments like Barclays, the marketers at Nabisco took a more direct approach. The Oreo brand engaged its Facebook fans by asking, "How would you describe Oreo cookies to someone who never tasted them?" In response, the brand page received more than 3,600 replies in just six days.[22] Powerful insight was obtained quickly from loyal consumers. In just a few days the marketer and its advertising and public relations partners had obtained a valuable outside perspective from their target audience into the most important aspects of its product and brand.

No matter what process marketers use to conduct social media research, it is essential to collect data beyond the narrow scope of the company or organization. Also gather information about competitors and the overall industry. Looking at the broader context adds valuable background and perspective that can make the difference in real insight. Yet no matter how powerful it may be, social media research cannot and should not completely replace traditional research. Traditional research methods are still valid and provide valuable information social media research cannot collect. View social research as a way to augment traditional research data and methodologies.

How else can social data be used? Another example involves the hotel industry. The Synthesis agency set up global, regional, and hotel-specific dashboards for Accor hotels to monitor its properties and key competitors. Measurement was based on many factors, from open-ended comments in social media to rating scores on ratings-and-reviews sites such as TripAdvisor. The system allowed Accor to identify underperforming locations in real time and act on negative comments quickly. Traditional research may take months or up to a year to report these findings and could result in a large amount of lost bookings. Accor management said that the social media–monitoring research system resulted in a rise in brand equity, satisfaction, and bookings.[23]

These examples demonstrate that social research is good for business-to-consumer (B2C) relationships, but is social media research also effective for business-to-business (B2B) organizations? Research does indicate that there are enough social conversations about B2B firms to monitor for brand, product, and service optimization. A study in the *World Journal of Social Sciences* reported robust social conversation about two B2B manufacturing companies in Europe. Using social media–monitoring software, these B2B manufacturers found they generated more than sixty mentions a day. This was a large and significant number in terms of total buzz for the industry sector.[24] Conducting social research for organization-to-organization selling also provides valuable insight that can help meet business objectives.

Social analytics company Crimson Hexagon says that social data analysis can be used for brand management, corporate communications, product development, consumer insights, customer care, and digital marketing. One example is a social analysis Crimson Hexagon performed for the Nespresso coffee maker to uncover brand-specific audience interests. In a comparison of Nespresso and competitor Keurig's social media audience data, they discovered that Nespresso's audience had a strong interest in hotels and resorts. The brand leveraged this information into a placement strategy of forming partnerships with multiple hotels. Resulting social listening revealed that consumers loved the brand's new hotel collaborations upon discovering the machines in their rooms.[25]

Some have taken this method of research further to form a new discipline combining the more academic study of conversation analysis and ethnomethodology with new software in online text analysis. **Social conversation analysis** is the study of the group talk produced in ordinary human interactions collected from the vast amounts of social media conversation data.[26] The Conversation Research Institute (CRI) was founded to promote and advance this type of research that goes beyond what can be found in simple social media listening algorithms. Here, human analysis is employed to more thoroughly examine the data beyond simple keywords to determine all the phrases used in natural conversation about a topic and to focus on the most relevant conversations. From there, those conversations are

further parsed out into subcategories that may be actionable across many business units from marketing to product development, operations, human resources, and customer service.[27]

CRI co-founder and chief instigator Jason Falls suggests that social conversation analysis research needs to go beyond just tracking what consumers are saying about a brand and its competitors. It also needs to look at the broader, nonbrand-specific conversations happening in the category. This can lead to new ideas but is also especially important in categories where brands may not be as relevant in the conversation. For example, in the senior care industry, where customers tend to not mention specific brands, CRI was able to analyze over 1,200 relevant conversations to map out the senior care buyer's journey.[28]

Once an organization has implemented a continuous monitoring program, consider expanding what is being tracked. In addition to following opinions, complaints, and questions that could influence product design, customer service, marketing messaging, and social media outreach, use trend analysis to track perception and sentiment over time. Look for rises in positive or negative comments to learn what should be repeated or avoided.[29] Don't forget to track competitor actions through social data. Real-time social media research can improve lead generation, new products, and new product launches, and provide insight into potential customers and their decision processes.

Crowdsourcing the Wisdom of the Crowd

Elvis Presley said, "A live concert to me is exciting because of all the electricity that is generated in the crowd and on stage. It's my favorite part of the business, live concerts."[30] Marketers, advertisers, and public relations professionals may not consider themselves to be rock stars, but there is something that can be learned from Elvis's observation. Except for personal sales and events, much of business, marketing, advertising, and public relations happens away from the action and results are delayed. Think of a musician spending weeks in a recording studio and waiting months to release a record before getting fan feedback and interaction. Social media can bring a level of real-time crowd interaction to a marketer like a live concert to a musician. Interacting with an organization's target audience at this level of engagement is called crowdsourcing.

Crowdsourcing takes a job normally performed by a professional, such as an employee, and outsources it to a large group of people through an open call.[31] What makes crowdsourcing so influential today is that it is empowered through social media—especially in the areas of product development or improvement. It can make these business functions more efficient and effective. Crowdsourcing has also been used in other areas, such as developing taglines and logos and even advertising materials like television commercials. Which industries are most likely to use crowdsourcing competitions? In a global survey online crowdsourcing and co-creation platform eYeka (see figure 11.1) found food companies are the most likely to use crowdsourcing competitions followed by household, electronics, finance, beauty, and beverage companies.[32]

Carl Esposti, founder of Crowdsourcing.org, says the benefit of crowdsourcing is that it enables companies to bypass restrictions, such as limited resources. This is an especially useful tool for startups and small businesses to obtain low-cost feedback. For larger corpora-

Crowdsourcing Competitions by Industry

Industry	Percentage
Food	100%
Household	50%
Electronics	40%
Finance	35%
Beauty	32%
Beverage	30%
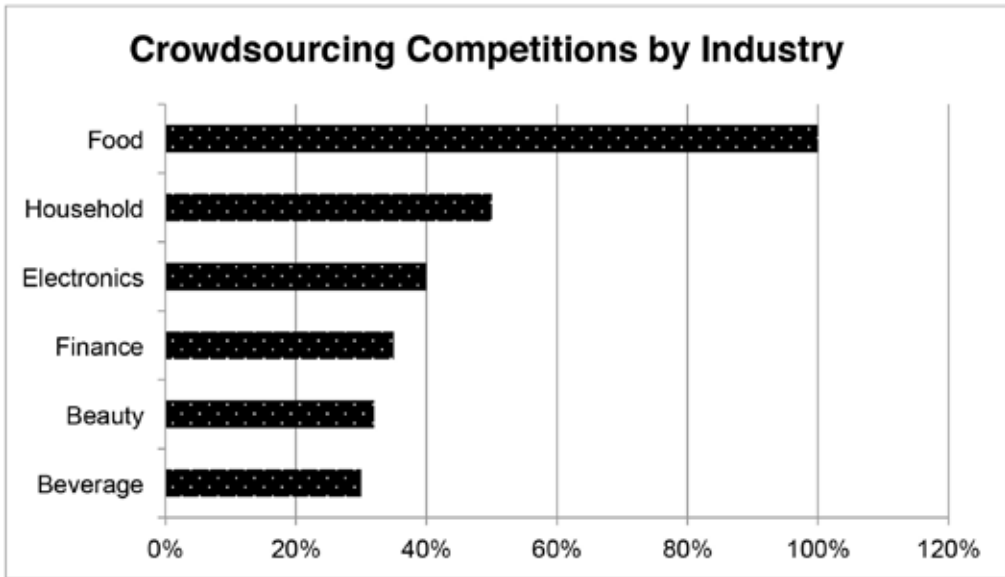
Figure 11.1. Crowdsourcing Competitions by Industry

Source: François Pétavy, "The State of Crowdsourcing in 2017: The Age of Ideation," eYeka, 2017, https://en.eyeka .com/resources/reports?download=cs_report_2017.pdf.

tions, crowdsourcing jumpstarts thinking outside the box of a confining corporate structure or culture. It can drive innovation and gratifies a consumer's desire to be heard.[33] Instead of fighting negative social media comments, brands can leverage them to make a better product or service. Better product or service delivery, in turn, creates more positive social media buzz. *Marketing Week* called this a move from firefighting to co-creation, where an organization leverages the crowd for everything from consumer-goods ideas to advertising concepts and executions.[34] Thus social media can become a part of traditional **research and development (R&D),** which is the process where often departments of engineers or scientists are charged with new product development and design.

Crowdsourcing can also be much more cost-effective. Innovation can occur at a lower cost than with traditional research or development process methods. Research by Thomas Malone, Robert Laubacher, and Tammy Johns found that design competitions run by Top-Coder often provided clients with development work previously obtained by traditional means for as little as 25 percent of the cost.[35] Not only can crowdsourcing deliver lower costs, but it often provides a unique outside perspective that is hard to maintain working from within an organization.

Crowdsourcing has been used to design everything from cars to gaming tablets. Fiat engaged the crowd beyond its team of designers and engineers to crowdsource the design of the Fiat Mio. Fiat received more than seventeen thousand suggestions via Twitter and Facebook from people in more than 160 countries to help create a concept car that was met with rave reviews.[36] Fiat also leveraged the crowd by asking Facebook users to vote on a logo design for the American launch of the 500.[37] The company continues crowdsourcing efforts to this day where Facebook and other social media insights fuel features and design decisions on new models.

MINI CASE

Fiat Mio

In 2009 Fiat Brazil wanted to create a new product and engage consumers. Their idea was to co-create a car with internet users. To emphasize that the product belonged to consumers, they named it *Fiat Mio* or "My Fiat." Designing an entire car is complicated and takes expertise, so this crowdsourcing project was not created as a competition to find the best idea and award a winner. Instead, consumers were invited to share their firsthand experience with cars to bring novel ideas that may never have occurred to design and production experts.[a]

In twelve months, Fiat's online platform received suggestions from more than seventeen thousand people across 160 countries. Suggestions covered various areas including internal and external design, gadget integration, electronic security, and economy. Ideas were screened by the Fiat research and development design team and then decisions were communicated through the online platform. The result was the world's first crowdsourced car, launched at the Sao Paulo Automotive Show. The company achieved strong brand engagement.[b] Today the company continues to include its consumers by soliciting ideas for new features on all its cars via its website and social media channels.

[a] Fabio Prado Saldanha, Patrick Cohendet, and Marlei Pozzebon, "Challenging the Stage-Gate Model in Crowdsourcing: The Case of Fiat Mio in Brazil," *Technological Innovation Management Review* (September 2014), http://timreview.ca/article/829.

[b] "Creation of the Fiat Mio Concept Car," Aegis Group, accessed January 18, 2015, http://files.investis.com/aegis/annualreport2010/business_review/case_studies/case_study_01.html.

In another crowdsourcing example, two hundred artists (editors, artists, DJs, musicians, and audiophiles) designed the V-MODA Crossfade M-100 headphones, and then more than ten thousand music fans voted on the final design. Razer designed the "Razer Edge" Windows 8 gaming tablet by asking gamers to tweet or post on Facebook specs they would want in a gaming tablet. Again, more than ten thousand responded with suggestions on options such as the game chipset, weight, thickness, and price they would be willing to pay.[38]

Yet crowdsourcing is not only for consumer crowds and consumer products. Mobile tech firm Psion has created an online forum called Ingenuity Working. This community of more than fifteen thousand customers, partners, employers, and resellers visit the site more than six thousand times a month to exchange ideas, support each other, design product and feature solutions, and evaluate choices.[39] Imagine the value of getting everyone in the supply chain offering suggestions for improvement in a continuous feedback cycle.

Cisco held its first online idea competition in 2007 when it collected more than 2,500 ideas from 104 countries for an innovative IT network solution. The winning idea for energy efficiency became a new business unit launched with a $10 million investment.[40]

Crowdsourcing does not always have to be a formal competition with a winner. Dell turned years of negative social media comments into a product design community called IdeaStorm. Within a year, nine of its laptops and desktops featured innovations generated from consumers in the community.[41] Dell captured more than ten thousand ideas, ultimately

implementing more than four hundred of them.[42] This helped Dell greatly improve their product and customers' perception of the company in the marketplace. IdeaStorm is still co-creating with brand fans today. By 2017 over sixteen thousand ideas had been submitted with over five hundred implemented.[43]

Lay's potato chips came up with a clever crowdsourcing campaign that not only drove new product flavor ideas but also fan engagement and a viral spread of awareness. Lay's "Do Us A Flavor" contest asked consumers to submit ideas for the next potato chip flavor. The third year of the campaign tapped local interests and tastes generating ideas such as Philly Cheesesteak, Buffalo Chicken Wing, and Chicago Deep Dish. Four finalists were made and sold across the US and votes were collected to name the winner. Southern Biscuits and Gravy beat out New York Reuben, Greektown Gyro, and West Coast Truffle Fries.[44] The first year of the campaign, Lay's estimated they would receive one million votes. By the third year they were up to 14 million votes cast in the campaign.[45] See figure 11.2 for the latest "Do Us A Flavor" winner.[46]

Why continue to guess what features and products consumers want when marketers can simply ask? Start working with customers to develop better goods and services to fit their needs. David Bratvold, the founder of Dailycrowdsource.com, sums it up by saying, "Your actual customers are telling you how to sell to them and what they like." Perhaps it is time to start treating customers more like coauthors of the brand and less like targets.

There are many other uses of crowdsourcing beyond marketing and product development. For example, Facebook faced an enormous challenge of translating its website into seventy languages, so it created a website to mobilize the crowd into helping. The crowd responded by translating Facebook's French site in a day using three hundred thousand volunteers.[47]

Figure 11.2. Lay's crowdsources flavors and attention for their potato chips.

Source: "'Do Us A Flavor' Homepage," accessed October 31, 2017, https://www.dousaflavor.com/. © 2017 Frito-Lay North America, Inc. a Division of PepsiCo.

The bottom line is that businesses can benefit from seeking their customers' wisdom and not just what's in their wallets. A summary of reasons organizations should crowdsource via social media include: customer input can improve products, it wins customer loyalty and positive word-of-mouth, it's less expensive, and customers can create content for you.

The outdoor retailer REI took advantage of this last reason with their 1440 Project. Tasked with generating engaging messages and images to promote the store in social media, they crowdsourced brand content.[48] REI asked fans to upload photos of themselves enjoying the outdoors to social media sites like Instagram tagged with #REI1440Project. A website was created to represent all 1,440 minutes in a day based on the time stamps of consumer-generated photos. Within months REI collected more than ten thousand photos and five hundred thousand website visitors.[49] Today REI crowdsources local outdoor adventures for customers to #OptOutside on their website, pulling in consumer-created, -suggested, and -rated hikes, mountain bike routes, climbs, trail runs, and ski/board locations.[50]

Theoretically Speaking: Local Search Constrains R&D

In 1996, Toby Stuart and Joel Podolny looked at the evolutionary changes occurring in corporate research due to technological advances. Research into industry innovation found that "local search" constricts the direction of corporate research and development.[51] Organizations that initiate R&D (research and development) projects with the same technological content and outcomes of their prior searches limit possibilities. Using the same technologies and relying on previous thinking may hold back innovative solutions. For true innovation, organizations need a method outside their current processes and previous solutions.

Mary Tripsas and Giovanni Gavetti furthered this line of thought in their research, indicating that existing technological capabilities, set in routines and procedures, limit adaptive intelligence. In other words, Tripsas and Gavetti say, "A firm's prior history inhibits its future behavior in that learning tends to be premised on local processes of search."[52] When firms need to innovate, they can fall into traps where core competencies actually become limitations.[53] Whether organizations are researching and developing a new product or a new marketing, advertising, or public relations campaign, social media research and crowdsourcing offer new ways to avoid these competency traps. Firms constrained to their traditional research methods may be limiting possibilities when opening up processes to outsiders through social media could increase innovation.

Chapter 11 Checklist

Social media can change quickly. Visit PostControlMarketing (http://www.postcontrolmar keting.com) for updates, but also use this chapter checklist to briefly check how social media statistics in this chapter have changed since publication.

✓ How has social media research and crowdsourcing changed? Are more organizations leveraging the insights from social media data or analytics? Does traditional research still claim the majority of research budgets?

✓ Do a quick search to find the top data analytics firms. What are the latest types of research they are finding for their clients? What are some recent examples or case studies of brands leveraging social media insight including social conversation analysis?

✓ Check for new crowdsourcing opportunities. What are the latest examples like Fiat and REI? How are brands leveraging the crowd for their brands today?

SOCIAL PLAN PART 11

Adding Crowdsourcing into a Campaign

Take the social media plan beyond marketing promotion and communication to other aspects of the Four Ps or Four Cs. What social media data does the organization need or could it benefit from? Are they launching a new product? Perhaps the brand could use social media insight into existing products or services for improvement. Or maybe the brand could use additional insight from consumers to create advertising, public relations, or social media content. What specific project could create a crowdsourcing campaign? Report all thoughts, plans, and ideas in these areas:

1. Identify needs traditional research is currently serving at the organization, and list how social media research could support those efforts.
2. Does the brand have an ongoing social media–monitoring system in place? What formal social research plan could be put in place?
3. List marketing projects, such as product design and advertising creation, or brand-content creation currently done in-house.
4. Of the list above, identify the top projects that could benefit from crowdsourcing. Explain how and why.

For a condensed version of the social plan see appendix A: Three-Part Social Plan.

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

1. What is your point of view on the concept of the wisdom of the crowd? Is the collective opinion of a crowd always right or better than individual ideas or thoughts? Find examples or research to support your opinion.
2. The real advantage of social media monitoring is real-time insight and intelligence. Find an example of a brand that, through real-time social media monitoring, either took advantage of an opportunity or avoided a public relations crisis with quick action.
3. What role does traditional research play, such as focus groups and surveys? What cannot be accomplished or gained solely through social media research?
4. Mary Tripsas and Giovanni Gavetti say, "A firm's prior history constrains its future behavior." How can crowdsourcing ideas lead to greater innovation and possible competitive advantage for an organization?

ADDITIONAL EXERCISES

1. In this exercise, explore the options for social media service. Besides specific research efforts, organizations should put in place a program of continuous social media monitoring that goes beyond the initial social media audit. This is made easier through numerous social media–monitoring services. Refer to chapter 4 on the social media audit to find top free and paid social media–monitoring methods and services. Some services, such as Hootsuite, allow marketers and students to try them out for free. Research these and others and report the best option for your brand and organization.

2. Plan a crowdsourcing effort for your brand. What does the organization need done that is traditionally handled by a small group of people inside the organization? To ensure a successful crowdsourcing effort, James Euchner, of *Research Technology Management*, suggests starting with: a well-defined problem, a large population of experienced problem-solvers, feedback to the crowd for ideas to evolve, a policy for intellectual property, and a person or group to filter ideas.[54] The last action should especially be considered. Some aspects of social media are free, like media costs, but the real cost to an organization is time. Before launching crowdsourcing content or a campaign, allocate dedicated resources for analysis and implementation of hundreds or even thousands of ideas.

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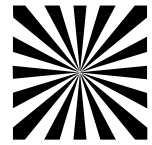
Content Marketing and Influencer Marketing

Engaging with the audience lets them know I'm approachable.[1]

—Sheila E.

PREVIEW

What's your favorite meme? Evil Kermit, Caveman SpongeBob, Damn Daniel, Harambe, Ken Bone? Or perhaps you like old-school memes such as Rebecca Black's Friday, Grumpy Cat, Gangnam Style, ALS Ice Bucket Challenge, The dress? Maybe you have another. Whatever comes to mind for you, these moments in cultural history are shared memories that touched off worldwide sensations. Would your organization love to become a popular meme like ALS or Kony 2012 that was discussed in chapter 1?

In 2013 Abigail Posner, head of Google's Agency Strategic Planning team, started the Engagement Project to find meaning in memes. **Memes** are ideas expressed as visuals, words, and/or videos that spread on the internet from person to person. To study memes and how they spread, Posner partnered with cultural anthropologists, psychologists, and creators of digital content to determine what motivates creating, curating, and connecting across the web. What makes one particular idea or concept more likely to be picked up and shared on a mass scale versus other pieces of content?

People are attracted to the fascinating familiar. On the web, everyday moments that are framed in a different way or juxtaposed for a new perspective elevate those regular moments by tapping into imagination and discovery. Our brains love synaptic play. We also love the freedom of the visual web where different, unrelated images and clips can come together in a childlike way. Online, cats play keyboards and babies ride roller skates easily, connecting random components in our brains to form synapses. This is the basis of creative joy. We love the energy of exchange with other humans. Sharing is caring, but also amplifies our own pleasure. Sharing a picture or video on the web is really about sharing the emotional response to the object. The sharing of the object becomes a gift or movement of pleasure that bonds us together.[2]

Facebook has also conducted research into memes. Their data scientists found that adding the words "please post this" or "copy and paste" makes a meme twice as likely to go viral. In addition, researchers found phrases that are easy to agree or identify with, like "if you love your" or "share if you agree," drive content sharing. Brands that understand these factors can increase their chances for social media marketing success.[3]

Engagement through Content Marketing

Sheila E. is a Grammy-nominated singer and drummer with a long, successful music career on her own and in collaboration with other famous artists such as Lionel Richie, Prince, Jennifer Lopez, Beyoncé, and Kanye West. Sheila E. and many other artists know that one secret to success is engaging with their audience. Marketers, advertisers, and public relations professionals must ask themselves if their organization is engaging their target audience. Traditional paid advertising and promotional sales messages are not engaging. Remember that in social media, the audience has to choose to spend time with the brand; the brand cannot buy their attention. If you gain their attention with something they find interesting, they will share it with friends.

How can marketers gain the attention of their audience in social media? Create valuable content that the target audience will find entertaining or useful. The Content Marketing Institute defines **content marketing** as "a strategic marketing approach focused on creating and distributing valuable, relevant, and consistent content to attract and retain a clearly defined audience—and, ultimately, to drive profitable customer action."[4]

Quality brand-sponsored content will draw consumers to an organization. BMW was an early innovator in content marketing. In 2001, they took $25 million normally spent on Super Bowl commercials and produced online short films with Hollywood directors and actors. The films were excellent stories in and of themselves that happened to take place around the brand's cars. These brand films were a great example of telling a story as discussed in chapter 5. The car manufacturer's busy target audience no longer had time or interest for traditional media. Within a year, more than 21 million people downloaded the first film, and the effort delivered the most successful sales year in BMW's history. In 2002, three more films were added, with a download total of 100 million. One million customers even bought a DVD of all eight of the BMW marketing films.[5] For the fifteenth anniversary of this effort, the brand brought back BMW Films in late 2016 with the original actor Clive

Figure 12.1. Red Bull Media House is a content-marketing powerhouse.

Source: "Red Bull Media House Homepage," RedBull.com, accessed September 15, 2017, http://www.redbullmedia house.com. Red Bull's marks are registered trademarks of Red Bull GmbH. © Red Bull GmbH, all rights reserved.

Owen starring in "The Escape." In addition to BMWFilms.com, this time the film was also able to be distributed on YouTube.[6]

Today, we call this type of strategy content marketing or branded content. A more recent star in content marketing has been Red Bull (see figure 12.1).[7] Red Bull was the original energy drink, but has managed to maintain its dominance despite many competitors entering the market. Red Bull is still the top brand, controlling 43 percent of market share.[8] Red Bull has done little traditional advertising over the years. Instead they created Red Bull Media House (RBMH) with more than 135 employees, which produces extreme-lifestyle content in print, online, on TV, and in feature films.

Red Bull's sports magazine *Red Bulletin* has a circulation equal to *Sports Illustrated*. Red Bull has distributed thousands of videos and photos free of charge, and they show up in the news on MSNBC and ESPN and in TV shows. Red Bull TV is distributed through their website but also on mobile phones, Amazon Fire TV, Apple TV, Chromecast, Kindle Fire, Xbox 360, and certain Smart TVs. Rebecca Lieb, analyst at Altimeter Group, observes, "Nobody is going to go to a website and spend 45 minutes looking at video about a drink. But Red Bull has aligned its brand . . . with extreme sports and action." It is working. They are selling nearly five billion cans a year doing it.[9]

Content marketing is powerful, even in the business–to–business (B2B) context. Research by the Content Marketing Institute reports that 89 percent of B2B marketers use content marketing.[10] Why are they moving money from traditional advertising? B2B

marketers indicate that content marketing improves engagement with important audiences; enhances trust; delivers faster, more relevant touch points; and improves search engine optimization (SEO).[11] Showcasing expertise and improving trust can go a long way toward building a B2B sale.

In the travel industry, Google research found that 84 percent of travelers use the internet as a planning resource and visit an average of twenty-two websites before booking. The more branded content a company publishes across social media channels, the more likely it is that people planning trips will come across it. Branded content using SEO tags on social platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, and Instagram can deliver multiple hits per search versus a single hit for a brand website.[12] Creating content around a related subject ultimately can help drive more customers to an organization's website for conversion.

On mobile devices, content marketing is even more effective because of small screens that limit traditional display advertising. The news aggregation app Pulse published mobile content for marketers by distributing messages that "don't feel like advertising." Users of the Pulse mobile reading app were 25 percent more likely to share the branded stories, or native advertising, than they were to share actual news articles. Pulse was eventually bought by LinkedIn and integrated into the LinkedIn website and app.[13] Today even readers of the *New York Times* are spending just as much time with paid articles as editorial.[14]

Remember that native advertising is different from content marketing in that it is paid media. However, sponsored posts or articles on sites like *Forbes*, BuzzFeed, and the *Huffington Post* are growing in popularity as a way to reach a larger audience more quickly. As discussed in part III of this book, many of the social platforms have added paid social media options where brand content can either be created for the platform or boosted for additional exposure as sponsored posts. Another option for native advertising is to boost reach of content through content recommendation engines that appear at the ends of articles such as "From the Web" listings on media sites like Fast Company.

With the growing demand for branded content, some organizations are hiring in-house departments full of former journalists. That is what Nick Panayi of Computer Sciences Corporation did. Besides website and social media content, his company publishes Infographic Central to showcase the latest industry research, Success Story Briefing Center to highlight case studies, and Ingenious Minds for employees to help them solve important IT problems.[15] He is creating valuable content that keeps current customers happy and attracts new customers looking for another provider.

Unfortunately, some organizations get into content marketing as a result of high-profile failures. In 2007, an *MSN Money* journalist wrote a column criticizing Home Depot for horrible customer service. More than seven thousand people agreed and posted mostly negative comments. Boldly, Frank Blake, Home Depot's CEO, responded with his own comment to the blog post offering an apology and a promise to change. Social media became a key component in that change. Today, Home Depot uses store associates to produce valuable social media content with how-to videos on a branded YouTube channel. Store associates also provide home improvement advice and tips on Home Depot's Facebook and Twitter accounts.[16] Home Depot's strategy has expanded beyond orange-aproned sales associates and DIY content. Senior Director, Agile Marketing (and previously Senior Director of Social Media) Melanie Babcock says they also work with the public relations department to create

MINI CASE

Dove Real Beauty Sketches

Dove originally launched the Campaign for Real Beauty in 2004 in reaction to a study that found the definition of beauty had become limiting and unattainable, with overly thin models setting an impossible standard. Dove released the short film *Evolution* on YouTube in 2006, and it became a viral success. Thus, Dove films started a global conversation.[a]

Nearly ten years after the campaign began, the brand kept it fresh with *Dove Real Beauty Sketches*. This short film documented a social experiment where an FBI-trained sketch artist drew women's portraits, one according to her own self-description and another according to a stranger's description of her. The contrast struck an emotional chord, resulting in the most viewed online video ad of all time with more than 163 million global views. Additionally, the campaign generated more than 4.6 billion public relations and blogger media impressions and more than one million likes on the Dove Facebook page, reaching one out of every ten Facebook users. The campaign was awarded a Titanium Grand Prix at the Cannes Lions Festival.[b]

[a] Kiley Skene, "A PR Case Study: Dove Real Beauty Campaign," Tuning In (blog), April 11, 2014, http://www.newsgeneration.com/2014/04/11/pr-case-study-dove-real-beauty.

[b] "Real Beauty Shines Through: Dove Wins Titanium Grand Prix, 163 Million Views on YouTube," Thinkwith Google.com, June 2013, https://www.thinkwithgoogle.com/case-studies/dove-real-beauty-sketches.html.

a variety of stories about Home Depot's history, inspiring happenings around each store, and corporate communication.[17]

How do brands create content? In *EContent*, Ahava Leibtag suggests marketers first consider the format.[18] The most popular social channels for business to business (B2B) are Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, YouTube, and SlideShare, but don't rule out apps and games. For business to consumer (B2C), an organization should study the target audience's social media patterns and create content to engage consumers where they are talking about the brand, product, or service. Are they asking questions? Create articles, videos, and tips that answer them. Plan when and where to distribute this brand content with a content calendar, which will be discussed in chapter 14.

Enterprise software company SAP has found success with content marketing in the B2B space. SAP has managed to create a customized content marketing strategy for nineteen customer segments in twelve industries across the globe. The brand maintains a consistent look and feel while delivering valuable content around popular topics in each industry relevant to customer segments. Content is distributed among traditional marketing channels and social media including blog posts, tweets, LinkedIn updates, and posts in the SAP Community Network. Over 3.6 million marketing-generated opportunities have been created by the effort.[19] What is most remarkable is that SAP started this effort with a minimal budget and volunteer contributors writing articles to answer their customers' top questions.[20]

In content marketing, treat the customer or potential customer as a friend rather than a target. Magazines and newspaper publications have readers, not target audiences. They

deliver valuable information to a community with shared interests. In content marketing, marketers, advertisers, and public relations professionals must do the same to succeed. Joe Pulizzi, founder of the Content Marketing Institute, says, "Marketers need to take off their sales hats and put on publisher hats."[21] Like Sheila E. says, being approachable is the only way to be engaging. Look for collaboration opportunities with content providers and consumers or start a new brand or organization content delivery vehicle.

Supercharge Word-of-Mouth

Facebook founder Mark Zuckerberg said, "But it's really all about how people are spreading Facebook around the world in all these different countries. And that's what's so amazing about the scale that it's at today."[22] Mark Zuckerberg may have built a new and unique online network, but the really amazing part is how Facebook simply spread via people to more than two billion users around the world. That is the power of Web 2.0 customer evangelism. This process doesn't have to happen all on its own. Organizations can deliberately recruit and equip loyal fans to be word-of-mouth brand ambassadors. **Evangelism marketing** is a form of word-of-mouth marketing in which marketers develop relationships with customers who strongly believe in a product or service and who voluntarily advocate for the brand.[23] This is also sometimes called advocate marketing.

Social media, such as Facebook, turns fans into media vehicles for companies, especially considering the average Facebook user has 338 friends.[24] In addition, research reports that consumers trust other people more than advertising. Brand evangelists have enormous potential to greatly impact the demand and perception of a product or service.[25] Knowing how to tap into these consumers presents an opportunity to tap into enormous marketing potential. A Salesforce survey of US internet users found that the most-trusted sources of accurate product information were online reviewers (31 percent) and friends, family, and colleagues (23 percent), ahead of the brand itself (20 percent). These numbers skew higher when limited to the millennial generation, which trusts online reviewers first (40 percent), followed by friends, family, and colleagues at nearly a quarter (25 percent), and the brand itself at only 19 percent.[26]

Procter & Gamble (P&G) knows how to supercharge word-of-mouth. They set up a website community called Vocalpoint for influential mothers. These mothers share their experiences with new P&G products, and they often reach out to social networks outside of Vocalpoint with remarkable results. P&G found markets, or cities, with active Vocalpoint online community influencers were found to produce revenue twice the amount of that in markets without Vocalpoint.[27] Word-of-mouth supercharged P&G's traditional marketing, advertising, and public relations efforts. A similar P&G brand community is BeingGirl, which offers community and valuable content to teenage girls.

Yet a business doesn't have to be a big corporation to benefit from social media evangelism. For example, Kurt Walchle launched Survival Straps through social media. In six years of business, his company found that nearly 50 percent of its sales came from word-of-mouth social media efforts. This helped him grow from a home-based business into a thriving company with more than fifty employees.[28]
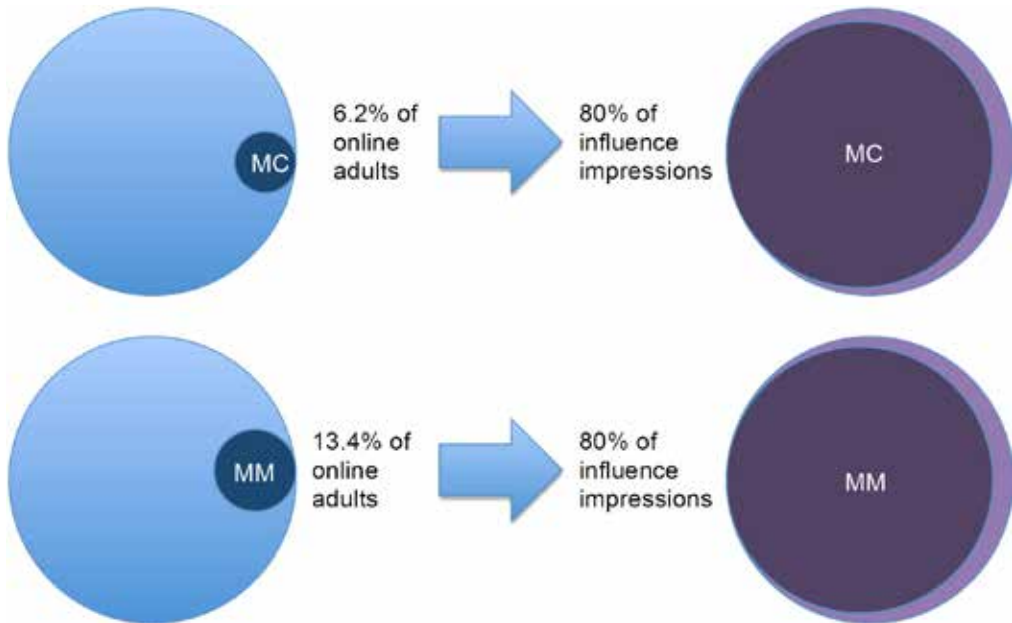
Figure 12.2. Mass influencers such as Mass Connectors (MC) and Mass Mavens (MM) create 80 percent of the product and service impressions each year.

Source: Josh Bernoff, "Spotting the Creators of Peer Influence," AdAge.com, April 20, 2010, http://adage.com/article/digitalnext/marketing-spotting-creators-peer-influence/143372.

In *The Tipping Point*, Malcolm Gladwell advises that marketers should find "Connectors"—the people who seem to know everyone and have the ability to reach and influence a variety of consumers. When influenced by a "Market Maven," someone Gladwell depicts as knowing a lot about products, a Connector follows trends in specific areas and shares this information with others, joining consumers and brands together.[29] Figure 12.2 shows how this small group of mass influencers is responsible for 80 percent of the more than 500 billion online impressions made about products and services every year.[30]

Is there a way to measure how influential potential ambassadors will be? In *Return on Influence*, Mark Schaefer explains that influence has become the new currency of the social media age, and there are tools to measure this influence and calculate return. Services such as Klout use algorithms to measure online power and influence, taking into account various online and offline factors. With these tools, marketers can identify and quantify social media influencers who can drive demand for products and services.[31]

However, it is important to note that measuring influence has evolved. Klout measures overall mass influence across many channels, but many brands today are looking for people with influence in a specific field or with a specific group. An influencer who has built their influence on one social platform may have less mass appeal but has high engagement with a specific community that trusts their suggestions and views, which can be powerful for a brand. Don't just consider the celebrities with mass appeal and the huge follower counts. Look for influencers on individual social platforms and look for high engagement rates with smaller communities for more authentic influence.[32]

How to Find a Brand Evangelist

In the book *Evangelist Marketing*, Alex Goldfayn suggests that you should find the average consumer who is a "hyper-repeat customer."[a] In order to turn these customers into evangelists, marketers and advertisers have to leverage the organization's strengths. The blog Scripted explains how to find brand evangelists through these five steps:[b]

1. *Excel at service.* When someone has a great experience they want to tell everyone about it.
2. *Show appreciation for repeating customers.* Give them special deals or offers.
3. *Listen and respond to complaints.* Admitting a mistake and fixing it also gives customers something to talk about.
4. *Leverage employees.* Train and reward employees who spread the brand message.
5. *Focus on quality, not quantity.* Relationships take time, so concentrate efforts on a smaller group of influential customers or clients to make the effort more manageable.

[a] Alan K., "How to Find Evangelists in Your Audience," Scripted (blog), November 18, 2013, http://scripted.com/content-marketing-2/how-to-find-evangelists.
[b] Malcolm Gladwell, *The Tipping Point: How Little Things Can Make a Big Difference* (Boston: Little, Brown, 2000).

Betsy Weber is chief evangelist of the software development company TechSmith. She creates and cultivates relationships with key customers through roughly four hundred chats per month via email, instant messaging, phone, private forums, and in-person meetings. Weber keeps brand evangelists happy by replying to every email, forwarding problems or complaints to product specialists, and inviting brand advocates to join beta-testing groups. She also sends occasional free products and promotional items.[33]

A much larger brand-advocated effort was Coca-Cola's Expedition 206. This campaign sent three Open Happiness Ambassadors to visit all 206 countries where Coca-Cola is sold. The ambassadors were sent to blog, post video, and tweet their experiences. Ambassadors were recruited by identifying sixty social media users from Coca-Cola's fan base, which was narrowed down to eighteen, who were then interviewed in person. The nine remaining candidates were divided into three teams who promoted themselves via Twitter and Facebook to be voted as the winning ambassadors.[34] The campaign ended up generating 650 million media impressions and engaging billions of individuals both on- and offline.[35]

Another example of a consumer evangelist program built around passionate product enthusiasts is Lego Ambassadors. Lego drives word-of-mouth by placing the company's most enthusiastic adult fans into an exclusive club. Members get previews about upcoming products, which they in turn share with their personal networks. Not everyone gets in. Enthusiasts must vie with one another to be chosen. The competition for limited membership energizes fans to become brand spokespeople.[36]
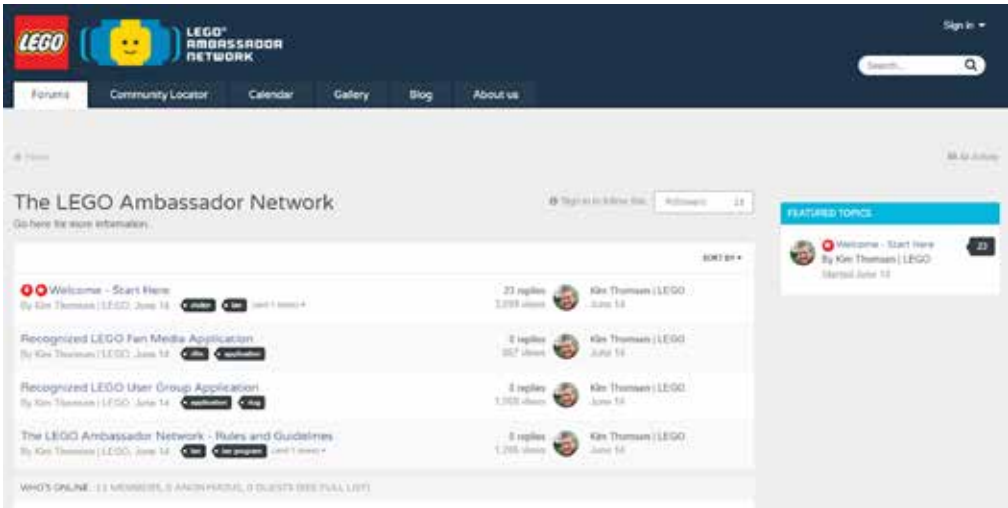
Figure 12.3. The LEGO Ambassador Network (LAN) has grown into 300 communities.

Source: "The LEGO Ambassador Network," Lan.Lego.com, accessed September 15, 2017, https://lan.lego.com/. © LEGO.

In 2014 Lego expanded the ambassador program into the LEGO Ambassador Network (LAN), which has grown into LAN Ambassadors representing three hundred communities divided into Lego user groups and fan media. Lego describes the network as a place where "LAN Ambassadors engage in joint activities and discussions, help each other, and share information. They build relationships that enable them to learn from each other to the benefit of their role as LAN Ambassadors and the community they represent." (see figure 12.3).[37]

Other brand community examples include Sephora's Beauty Talk, the SAP Community Network, PlayStation Community, and Harley Owners Group.[38] Global leadership consulting company GiANT Worldwide improved the engagement and website traffic generated from their social media content by leveraging personal profiles to amplify their company's social media posts. Forty associates began posting company content and that resulted in a 120 percent increase in engagement and increases in website sessions, time on site, and leads from social media.[39] Think of ways an organization can motivate and excite its most active fans, perhaps even on an amazing scale such as Mark Zuckerberg described.[40] That is the unlimited power of viral marketing.

Influencer Marketing

A related form of word-of-mouth or evangelism marketing focuses on people with a high level of influence and persuasion and relies more on payment for specific campaigns.[41] As first defined in chapter 6, **influencer marketing** focuses on leveraging key leaders to advocate on behalf of a brand to reach the larger market. Influencer marketing software company TapInfluence explains that influencer campaigns either have the influencer create content for the brand or the brand creates the content for the influencer to share via their

social channels.[42] Influencers can simply be people with a large social following in specific areas of interest or industries or they could be celebrities such as sports stars, musicians, or Hollywood actors.

This type of social media word-of-mouth can take the form of earned influencer marketing, in which existing relationships are leveraged to promote the brand, and paid influencer marketing campaigns that pay influencers to promote the brand.[43] The type of brand message can vary from full-blown testimonials to subtle mentions. Either way, influencer marketing is a growing strategy, with 84 percent of global marketing and communications professionals indicating they would run at least one influencer marketing campaign in 2016.[44]

To create an influencer marketing campaign, marketers, advertisers, and public relations professionals can leverage existing sponsorship deals with influencers, find influencers themselves and negotiate a campaign, or use one of the influencer marketing agencies and automated systems that can find, deliver, and pay dozens or even hundreds of influencers for the brand. Influencer marketing can work for any brand, but the fashion and beauty industry has especially taken advantage of these types of campaigns with high-profile celebrities such as Kylie Jenner.[45] Sports brands have also had success with their sponsored athletes promoting products in their social media channels.

However, don't think that a brand needs a high-profile celebrity to succeed. Research has revealed that noncelebrity influencers may be ten times more likely to drive in-store purchases. Collective Bias conducted a survey of US online consumers and found that 30 percent were more likely to purchase a product endorsed by a noncelebrity blogger than by a celebrity. Of that number, 70 percent of eighteen- to thirty-four-year-olds had the highest preference for "peer" endorsement.[46]

Based on these results, a new concept of influencer marketing has arisen called micro-influencer marketing. **Micro-influencer marketing** is when brands partner with people who have smaller followings on social media to promote products in an authentic way versus sponsored ads. Micro-influencers may have smaller groups of followers numbering in the thousands, but they have super-engaged audiences. HubSpot gives the example of LaCroix Sparkling Water using micro-influencers on Instagram with the hashtag #Live LaCroix to build "realness" and awareness for the brand.[47]

No matter which influencer campaign a brand runs, from earned to paid or celebrity to micro-influencer, the law requires influencers to disclose their financial relationship with the brand. This will be discussed further in chapter 15. Another consideration is risk versus reward. Carefully research the content and perspective of influencers to ensure that their views match the values of the brand. High-profile celebrity sponsorships get executive-level consideration and considerable vetting. Yet a micro-influencer may simply pass through a media buyer and not get much thought.[48] A high-profile example was when a Disney affiliate, Maker Studios, terminated a joint venture with YouTube star Felix Kjellberg, known as PewDiePie, over anti-Semitic content.[49]

Finally, marketers, advertisers, and public relations professionals should consider the value of brand content created and shared by consumers in social media. **User-generated content** is any photo, video, post, or comment published through a social media platform by an unpaid contributor.[50] User-generated content (UGC) can be a powerful tool for brands in

social media. Garmin Fitness was able to grow their Instagram account from one thousand to two hundred fifty thousand with a core strategy of UGC. Through social media listening, they discovered a lot of runners who are passionate about the Garmin brand sharing photos of the stats on their watches after runs in beautiful locations. Carla Meyer, Global Digital Advertising and Social Media Manager at Garmin, said many agree for the brand to share their photos, called wristies, and UGC has become an important addition to brand-created content. In part, they grew the community by sharing the community's own content.[51]

UGC can be powerful. A Mavrck analysis of user-generated Facebook posts found that user-generated content featuring a brand achieved 6.9 times higher engagement than brand-generated content.[52] Outdoor clothing and equipment retailer REI has run a Black Friday campaign that promotes UGC by closing its stores and encouraging its employees and customers to opt to spend time outside instead of braving the crowds at shopping malls. In two years, nearly 8 million people posted photos to the hashtag #OptOutside. In 2017 the brand created an "experiential search engine" at REI.com/opt-outside that shows user-generated #OptOutside images from Instagram and adds real-time information such as the hiking trail name, difficulty rating, trailhead directions, and user reviews.[53] Whether organizations monitor for existing brand UGC and seek permission to share it like Garmin or create a specific campaign calling for it like REI, UGC should be a consideration for any social media strategy.

Theoretically Speaking: Consumer-Brand Relationships

Can a person have a relationship with a product? This is a question researchers have been asking themselves for decades. As early as 1959, Sidney Levy proposed that products and brands can go beyond their utilitarian value and can be used as symbols with social meaning.[54] When a consumer displays or uses a product, the brand meaning is transferred to the consumer.[55] Branded products contribute to and communicate a consumer's self-image and personality, thus creating product attachment. A close relationship with the brand is formed because repeated usage satisfies the consumer's needs.

Kurt Matzler, Elisabeth Pichler, Johann Füller, and Todd Mooradian took this theory one step further to brand communities. Consumers identify with other consumers who use the same products and brands. In their study, they found that both attachment to the product and ties to a brand community led to greater brand trust and loyalty.[56] Other researchers, Hyejune Park and Young-Kyung Kim, proved this theory with a study on Facebook published in the *Journal of Retailing & Consumer Services*. They found that a brand's social network can positively influence a consumer's perception of the investment the brand has made in the consumer relationship. This contributes to both brand relationship quality and the willingness to spread good words about the brand through social networks, further advancing the consumer-brand relationship.[57]

Investing in social media strengthens a consumer attachment to a product and builds stronger ties with the brand community, leading to the consumer sharing brand social content and increasing brand trust and loyalty. It seems that consumers can have a relationship with a brand and that social media is enabling this to happen even more.

Chapter 12 Checklist

Social media can change quickly. Visit PostControlMarketing (http://www.postcontrolmar keting.com) for updates, but also use this chapter checklist to briefly check how social media statistics in this chapter have changed since publication.

- ✓ How has content marketing changed? Are brands continuing to increase the amount of brand content they are creating? What are the latest statistics? Are brands getting better results or are results decreasing because of content clutter?
- ✓ How has influencer marketing changed? Are there new terms for this strategy besides evangelism, advocate, ambassador, and influencer? Are brands increasing their use of both "mass" and "micro" influencers? What are the top influencer marketing firms?
- ✓ Check for the latest way to measure social influence. Has a new method emerged? Is there a new platform like Klout that measures micro-influence?

SOCIAL PLAN PART 12

Creating Brand Content and Motivating Brand Evangelists

Take the social media strategy, consumer insight, and big idea to the next level with branded content and brand evangelism. What content is the target audience looking for? What type of content do they tend to view and share? Develop ideas for educational as well as entertaining text, photo, and video content. Will the content be brand-generated or co-created? Where will it be distributed? Also, devise a strategy and policy to engage and reward brand evangelists. What information, products, promotional trips, or events can the organization offer the most loyal and outspoken fans? Set guidelines in terms of scale and scope for the evangelists and the reward program. Finally, also consider influencer campaigns—sometimes motivation is payment. Would influencer marketing help in the plan effort? Report all thoughts, plans, and ideas in these areas:

1. Identify the information and entertainment needs of the target audience. List the main types of content they view and share.
2. Explain the types of content the brand can create to match target audience interests. Plan content to be brand-generated, consumer-generated, or co-created.
3. Research and identify the organization's most active customers in social media.
4. Create a brand evangelist program to both engage and reward the brand advocates. Spell out specific policies, promotions, and events. Alternatively, or in addition, detail an influencer campaign for social media promotion.

For a condensed version of the social plan see appendix A: Three-Part Social Plan.

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

1. What is the difference between content marketing and journalism? Research both editorial and advertorial content. List guidelines for writing each.
2. Is all branded content or native advertising ethical? Find an example of branded content that you feel may cross ethical or legal constraints on commercial speech. Support your opinion with research.
3. The Dove Real Beauty campaign is over ten years old. What could the brand do next to sustain attention and drive further viral success? How do you know when it's time to quit a campaign and start something new?
4. Tom Webster from the Marketing Companion podcast with Mark Schaefer suggests searching #spon to find sponsored content on social media. Do this for Twitter or Instagram. What do you find? What is the quality of the content? Are brands getting what they pay for? Are there best practices you would suggest?[58]

ADDITIONAL EXERCISES

1. For this exercise, remove your marketing hat and put on your publisher hat. Make a list of possible content you could create for your brand's customers, potential customers, or influencers. What common problems does your customer face? Can you provide tips, advice, or solutions? Do you have existing content somewhere that is not being accessed or used to its full potential? Also consider delivering value in other ways. An entertaining video or story can be just as engaging to a consumer audience. After you generate a list of ideas, go back and look for real opportunity to generate real value for your customers while meeting social media strategy objectives.
2. For this exercise, think about ways you can energize your brand evangelists. Customer evangelism doesn't always require big programs. Tap the power of evangelists simply by creating opportunities for customers to participate in the brand. Think about creating experiences they will in turn share with their social networks. Parties, openings, product launches, and cause-related events are ways to include brand enthusiasts and generate sharable content including videos, pictures, blog posts, and evites. Sponsoring an event or cause that a target audience cares about can really motivate evangelists to participate and spread the word. What is possible with your product or service?

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Social Care and Social Selling

> Right or wrong, the customer is always right.[1]
>
> —Marshall Field

PREVIEW

When was the last time you had a customer service issue with a product or service you purchased? How did you handle it? Where did you go first? What were your expectations? If you are like many people today, your first instinct when you have a problem is not to call the customer service number. You may complain on social media, or contact the brand on their social media account, or chat or message with the company. In a similar fashion, if you have more of a business-related issue or decision to make, your first step is probably not picking up the phone to call a sales rep. If a sales rep calls you, chances are you avoid them. Customer service and sales have changed significantly in a short amount of time. Both have become more social.

Providing customer service has a lot to do with the systems it uses. A **customer service system** is a combination of technological structure and organizational networks designed to provide services that satisfy customers.[2] This term is used in and by service management, operations, marketing, engineering, and design. Service systems provide value that can improve customer service and create competitive advantage, especially within industries where there is much parity in products. How did we get to today's current state of customer service operations?

In the beginning, customer service was limited. If a person had a problem with a product, they either fixed it themselves or physically returned it to the store owner. With the invention of

the telephone in the late 1800s came direct ways to contact stores and companies from home or office. However, early telephone switchboards and rotary-dial technology still made it challenging to contact companies and thus limited customer complaints. As technology improved through touch-tone dialing and the introduction of the 1-800 number, more customers began to call companies. This increase in demand led to the creation of the call center, and call centers evolved into customer service departments.

In the 1970s and 1980s, customer support departments began using interactive voice response technology to improve efficiency and created automated responses that led customers through complex phone trees. At the end of the 1980s, formal customer service strategies emerged, and outsourcing customer service functions to other countries became a mainstream practice to help meet increased demand from customers in more cost-effective ways.[3]

In the 1990s and early 2000s, customer service changed dramatically with the introduction of the internet as a new channel of contact, leading to the development of customer service email, instant messaging, and live chat as well as integrated customer service management systems. Thus the story of customer service is tied directly to the development of technology. Now organizations are faced with the new communications technology of social media. When a new avenue opens to contact companies, customers will use it, customer service expectations will change, and customer service systems must evolve to follow suit. Yet this evolution is not only occurring in the customer service department. Similar changes are happening in sales departments as business-to-business (B2B) customers' preferred methods of contacting sales representatives and the type of information they are seeking has changed with increased adoption of social media for business use.

The Customer Is Always Right

Marshall Field of Chicago department store fame is credited with the saying, "The customer is always right." If this saying applied in the 1800s before digital media, it most certainly applies even more today. Now even "wrong" customers, with the power of social media, can turn a single complaint into a movement against a company.

Molly Katchpole, who was discussed in chapter 2, provides just one example. Through a social media campaign using Facebook, Twitter, and Change.org, she was able to get Bank of America to revoke a $5 debit–card fee.[4] In chapter 4, Dave Carroll demonstrated how he indirectly used his voice, YouTube, and Twitter to cause United Airlines' stock to drop 10 percent.[5] A similar incident happed ten years later with Dr. David Dao and United Flight 3411.[6] The consumer voice is more powerful today than it has ever been, and customer demands on customer service quality and delivery are increasing.

Whether an organization is big or small, customer service is at the heart of keeping current customers happy and attracting new ones. Business is built on reputation and relationships through care, honesty, and trust that can be nurtured through social media.[7] In 2008, Frank Eliason of Comcast figured this out and went on to become the most famous customer service manager in the US. Eliason grew tired of all the negative talk that was occurring on social media about his cable company. Instead of sitting back and letting it occur, Eliason got the idea to use Twitter to interact with those Comcast cable customers.

Instead of making the customer come to him, he decided to engage the customers where they were having the conversations.

Eliason's idea was so effective that today Comcast provides real-time customer service on Twitter and Facebook with a full-time dedicated social media staff. Cable customers love the immediate online results, compared to fruitless hours spent on the phone.[8] Comcast's Social Care team has worked. As a result, Comcast Cable's J. D. Power Overall Satisfaction score has improved.[9] The beginning of this improvement was based on the simple idea of delivering service on the customer's terms, not the corporation's. According to Comcast's executive director of digital care, Jared Schultheis, in just ten years social customer care has scaled up to a cross-country staff of over 230 representatives handling a million social media customer interactions a year.[10]

Despite its social media customer service success, Comcast is still working on improving customer service delivered over the phone. This lack of progress was evidenced by a recent recorded service call that went viral in social media. After mass media attention, the company was forced to apologize for a customer service representative who held a customer captive on the phone for nearly twenty minutes despite the customer's simple request. The phone representative was considered by many to be aggressive and rude, refusing to cancel the customer's service. The customer recorded the call and put it on SoundCloud, where it was listened to millions of times and picked up by major media such as *Time* magazine, NPR, and *Good Morning America*.[11] Even companies that deliver social media customer service well may be forced through the power of social media to make changes to policies in their older, more-traditional service delivery channels.

A survey by *CRM* magazine reports that 31 percent of all customer interactions today are conducted via the web, with an additional 9 percent conducted via mobile devices. Only 46 percent of all interactions are conducted via phone.[12] An additional survey of worldwide companies also reports that the second-most-used social media activity behind marketing is customer service. As customer service activity moves to social media, companies must be prepared. To be effective, marketing and its advertising and public relations partners must work with customer service. The customer doesn't distinguish between company departments and business disciplines and will seek engagement with all in the same channel. As early as 2012, customer service was the second-most-used business activity in social media behind marketing (see figure 13.1).[13]

Today, smart organizations are using social media to manage customer relationships. Social media can help increase customer retention by finding complaints early and making the service personal. It can also uncover mismatches in advertising promises and product or service delivery and serve as an early warning system for public relations crisis communication. Social media customer relationship management can also reduce operational costs because providing online customer service is generally less expensive than providing service over the phone.[14] In *Groundswell*, Charlene Li and Josh Bernoff estimate that the average call to a company's call center costs $6 or $7 and technical support calls can cost as much as $10 to $20.[15] In contrast, Incite reports that a social media interaction costs only $1.[16] Social media support can cost a lot less as representatives are able to handle several customers at once and take advantage of many automated tasks and information.

Social Media Business Activities

Marketing
Customer Service
Public Relations
Contact Center
Sales
Executive Communication

0% 10% 20% 30% 40% 50% 60% 70% 80%
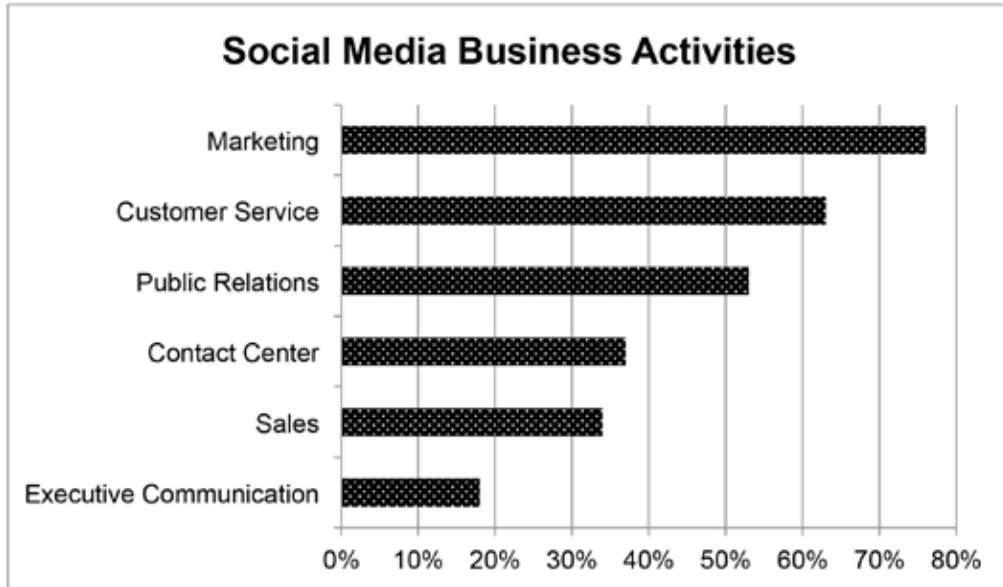
Figure 13.1. By 2012 customer service was the second-most-used social media activity.

Source: Donna Fluss, "Using Social Media for Customer Service," *CRM Magazine* 16, no. 4 (2012): 10.

Resolving issues in public view has other advantages as well. Solving one customer's problem or answering a question in the public social media stream enables everyone to benefit from the response. Often people can solve their problems on their own before contacting customer service. Solving a problem in a real-time stream within public view can also stop negative conversation before it spreads to more permanent links like blogs, forums, an article, or even a book.[17] This happened with airline JetBlue when a customer started numerous complaints on social media about their new $50 fee for checking small bikes. Before it got out of hand, they changed the policy and dropped the fee for all customers. Then JetBlue manager of corporate communications and social media strategy Morgan Johnston said, "We fixed the policy, and in fact, fixed it before the negative story gained [a] larger audience from customer advocacy sites, turning it into a positive one."[18]

Fixing customer service problems or appeasing disgruntled customers in social media is one consideration, but sometimes a negative comment can turn into a big public relations disaster. Social media crisis communication is now a large part of public relations practice. How should an organization handle a complaint or issue that could quickly get out of control? Marketing specialist Rob Stokes suggests a few rules:[19]

- *Be humble.* Listen before acting. Get an understanding of the scale and scope of the problem and how consumer complaints evolved.
- *Act right away.* Responding quickly by acknowledging a wrong and promising to correct it can wipe out a brand attack before it gets started.
- *Keep negative pages out of search engines.* Add positive content and links to drive negative links off the first page of search results.

MINI CASE

Hertz 24/7 Social Care

In 2014 Hertz Rent-a-Car announced 24/7 global social customer care. Hertz's director of service excellence, Laura Smith, said the company was shifting from a marketing-oriented view of social media to a customer-oriented view. Prior to this initiative, marketing was the owner of social media and customer complaints. Because of this former structure, customer complaints in social media were filtered through marketing staff, who would in turn email the complaints to customer service agents. The customer service agents would then often take days to respond. The new Hertz 24/7 social care system includes customer service in its social media monitoring for improved efficiency and quicker response. Now the cross-discipline departments work together.[a]

When only Hertz marketing was monitoring social media, service was limited to Monday through Friday. Marketing would forward social media posts, customer service would reply via email, and then marketing would post the responses on social media. For the new system, Hertz partnered with software vendor Conversocial to give customer service a seat at the social media–monitoring table. The company reports that responding to customer service issues in real time via social media has influenced other users and is increasing customer loyalty, which contributes to customer lifetime value.[b] The new Hertz cross-departmental social care system has enabled the company to exceed expectations. They are able to respond within seventy-five minutes to more than one thousand unique customers per week.[c]

[a] Lloyd Waldo, "Hertz Hands the Social Media Keys over from Marketing, to Customer Care," *Future Care Today*, October 31, 2014, http://futurecare.today/news/hertz-hands-the-social-media-keys-over-from-mar keting-to-customer-care.
[b] "Video: How Hertz Provides 24/7 Social Customer Service Globally," WhySatisfy.com, October 10, 2014, http://whysatisfy.com/video-how-hertz-provides-247-social-customer-service-globally.
[c] "Hertz's Cross-Departmental Collaboration Helps It Delight and Retain Its Customers," *Future Care Today*, September 24, 2014, http://futurecare.today/downloads/case-studies/hertzs-cross-departmental -collaboration-helps-it-delight-and-retain-its-customers.

- *Respond via blogs and industry forums.* This will help to present the organization's side of the story.
- *Care about the customer.* Show them the organization truly cares about their concerns. Treat them with kindness and respect.

Remember that when a business enters social media, it must act like an individual. Practice good personal skills, the same that would be used in a face-to-face conversation. Encourage social media employees to think of the customer first and try to treat them the way they would want to be treated. These simple practices can go a long way. No one expects perfection, but they do expect empathy, apology, and corrective action.

Public relations experts Steve Goldstein and Ann Marie van den Hurk suggest several ways to integrate social media into every crisis scenario for crisis communication plans. First,

brands must remember to not censor criticism on their social media channels. Removing a negative comment most likely leads to worse comments. Remember that tone matters. Leave the corporate tone for other outlets. Social media responses should be personal and polite and not dismissive. Quick response is important, but be sure to listen and take time to really understand what the person wants. Then respond directly and publicly. Customize messages for each channel. Social media platforms have unique tones and messages need to be customized to fit the environment. Consistency is important, but the official statement given on the website should not simply be copied and pasted on every channel over and over again. All channels need to be updated 24/7. During a crisis, customers will turn to all channels for current information and expect a timely response in social media. Finally, don't be afraid to professionally present the brand's side of the story. Address real concerns but also don't allow the brand to be bullied in social media if the accusations are unfounded.[20]

Social Care Is No Longer a Choice

Organizations may no longer have a choice on whether or not to provide social media customer service. Customer expectations for service and response in this new medium are rising. A Sprout Social survey of Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram users found 90 percent had used social media to directly communicate with a brand and that social media was the first place they turned when they had a problem instead of phone and email. The survey also found that the number of messages requiring a response continues to increase yet brands reply to only 11 percent of customers. Brands are increasing messages sent but they are mostly promotional—sending an average of twenty-three promotional messages for every one response. In addition, the survey found that people expect a four-hour response, yet average brand response time is ten hours.[21]

This gap represents a real opportunity for competitive advantage to the companies who take the time to respond. A simple response can make a happy customer who, in social media, can easily share that happiness with others and can influence their future purchase decisions. Applied Marketing Science research indicates that timely responses can increase revenue. When customers tweet a business and receive a response, they're willing to spend from 3 to 20 percent more on a future product or service from that business. What's more, they are also 44 percent more likely to share their experience online and offline, 30 percent more likely to recommend the business, and they rate the business a point higher on customer satisfaction surveys.[22] Providing excellent customer service on social media becomes a marketing activity that contributes directly to marketing, public relations, and business objectives.

Customers have high expectations for engagement online. In the past, businesses have had to make adjustments by offering customer service via telephone service, email, and live chat. Now demand for that customer service is shifting to social media networks, and organizations must follow.

The impact of social media is why companies such as Comcast, Dell, Best Buy, and United Airlines monitor Twitter, Facebook, and other social platforms to find references to their brands and to resolve customer issues with social care teams. **Social care** is the

> **Types of Social Information Impacting Customer Service**
>
> Customer service provided via social media can deal with multiple issues in many areas. What are those possibilities? According to DMG Consulting, five out of the top six types of information gained from social media engagement directly impact customer service:[a]
>
> 1. Positive or negative sentiment
> 2. Issues with products
> 3. Complaints or follow-ups for previous customer service interactions
> 4. Issues with procedures
> 5. Crisis identification
>
> [a] "Social Media: Guide for Building a Customer Support Strategy," DMG Consulting, July 7, 2010, http://www.dmgconsult.com/publications/whitepapers.asp.

efforts employees make through social media to care for customers.[23] Many companies now have dedicated social care employees. American Airlines Social Media Hub now has thirty employees dedicated to social customer service, with more focused on social engagement and others assigned to social insights.[24] They are presenting a uniform cross-discipline social media presence to their customers.

In the definition of social care and the American Airlines example, notice that social care is not limited to traditional contact center agents working in customer service departments. Many companies are empowering customer service representatives, engineers, product managers, and executives to provide positive customer service on social media.[25] Another airline, JetBlue, staffs their @JetBlue account with team members from marketing, corporate communications, and customer service.[26] Good customer service can also help meet marketing, advertising, public relations, and sales goals. A good social care team requires cross–business unit integration. This is yet another reason to do some silo smashing in an organization.

In a white paper on social care, TELUS International authors Kim Keating and Dave Evans suggest many strategies for forming a successful social care program. One of the best practices is to start by defining the vision and objectives of the social care effort. Once vision and objectives are in place, recruit a cross-functional team that includes employees from all departments. It is important to ensure the team is working toward a common goal and that all departments are represented, but it is equally important to be sure that each individual has a defined role. Following a strategic structure from the beginning will more likely lead to a successful social care program. See table 13.1 for an example of cross-functional social care team organization and responsibilities.[27] Even with a common vision, core objectives, and defined roles, frequently one of the biggest social care challenges is getting everyone on the same system. Each department may be working with different social media software and have their own legacy CRM systems that do not integrate well.

Table 13.1. Cross-Functional Social Care Team Organization and Responsibilities

Department	Responsibility
Customer Service	Set up to be the main point of contact for service-related issues
Marketing	Promote social support and provide brand briefing on communication style
Corporate Communication/PR	Develop crisis and stakeholder communication plans
Legal	Define social media policies that govern agent responses
Human Resources	Define hiring profiles and set training standards for social agents

Source: Kim Keating and Dave Evans, "Benchmarking Social Media Customer Service: Uncovering Opportunities & Best Practices for Social Care," TELUS International, accessed February 20, 2015, http://www.telusinternational.com/ social_care_study.

Bianca Buckridee, vice president of social media operations for JPMorgan Chase, says that an advantage she sees in social customer service is that customers can go to Chase's Twitter page and see the person they are chatting with. This restores some of the intimacy and comfort lost in a phone conversation. She has seen Chase customers returning to social media saying, "Hey, let me know when Theo gets in" or "I want to talk to Danni; she knows exactly where I'm at and what I'm going through." Social media can help bring back that personal connection once found in the small-town marketplace.

The Chase customer service team also crosses lines of business so that customers can tweet one handle and get help for a retail account, credit card, mortgage, auto loan, student loan, or investment.[28] This is an excellent example of the transition in thinking from the Four Ps of product, price, promotion, and place to the Four Cs of consumer, cost, convenience, and communication. Rather than social media being a burden, it simplifies the process for companies and customers alike. It is also a good example of social media tearing down silos and cutting down on phone transfers to other departments that simply waste everyone's time.

The marketing department can and should take the lead in social media monitoring and strive to remove functional silos, but marketing professionals must also remember there is still value in discipline-specific expertise. Jonathan Salem Baskin reminds marketers of this in his *Ad Age* article "Customer Service Belongs to Operations, Not Marketing: How Apple Turned Problem-Fixing Into a Promotional Tool." He explains that the core capability of fixing customer product or service problems is not a communications solution that marketers or their advertising and public relations partners can provide.

Marketers, advertisers, and public relations professionals cannot reboot routers, install software patches, send replacement parts, or answer billing problems. Providing service belongs to operations. Social monitoring can reveal how bad operations issues may be and how the public is reacting to them, but operations people are the ones who actually need to fix the problems. On the other hand, when operations provides excellent service, the service can be a driver of the brand and enable marketing.[29] A key component of the

brand Zappos.com brand is its customer service and exceptional employees who deliver that service via traditional and social customer service channels.

Dividing social media responsibility between relevant departments across an organization can increase efficiency and effectiveness and make one-on-one customer response more scalable.[30] The gourmet burger chain Five Guys leverages a cross-functional social care team with corporate marketers running the main brand account but also utilizes frontline employees to market local promotions and events on specific location accounts. These local employees also provide customer service where it makes more sense to respond at the local level for an issue with a particular store. Not only does this make brand engagement more personal and sincere, it also enables quicker response by dividing the task between over 1,200 individual franchisees.[31]

Hewlett-Packard (HP) divided the task of customer care a different way in creating HP Support Forums where HP customers can ask questions and get help from other customers. This branded, managed community has enabled HP to quickly scale social care. Kriti Kapoor, global director of HP social customer care, says that each accepted solution on the forum gets viewed forty times on average compared to a phone interaction which only solves one customer problem at a time. Kapoor works with cross-functional teams from marketing, product research-and-development, and information technology to meet common HP goals. One important consideration when setting up a customer support forum is to ensure that there are community guidelines in place. Hewlett-Packard does this with a rules page titled "HP Support Forum: Rules of Participation."[32]

Many companies run consumer customer support forums such as the Apple Support Communities, Oracle Community, and H&R Block "Get Answers."[33] As discussed in the beginning of the chapter, support forums allow customers to help themselves by answering common questions and resolving issues making customer service more efficient. Taking the idea of support forums one step further, the social customer service provider Conversocial has added a new capability called CROWDS that extends this peer-to-peer resolution to social networks. Social conversations can be routed to brand experts across multiple community channels. Experts are also rewarded and recognized, earning points and appearing on a leader board.[34]

As discussed in chapter 7, another important consideration is the move to messenger apps. For example, 67 percent of people expect to be using social messaging like Facebook Messenger for communicating with businesses.[35] As consumers make this shift, brands should also consider following with a customer service presence in top messaging apps like Facebook Messenger, WhatsApp, and WeChat. KLM Royal Dutch Airlines has used messenger apps to improve their social media customer service. They have a Facebook Messenger chatbot that streamlines sending boarding passes, flight information, and updates along with customer support and travel directions. Customer service is also provided through WeChat. KLM's social media efforts have been credited with helping to improve their Net Promoter Score from 35 in 2015 to 43 by 2016.[36]

Remember that someone is watching an organization's every tweet, post, and update. Marshall Field understood this on a smaller scale. Field's department store employees were always instructed not to push products on uninterested customers and to know that even

when the customer was wrong, they were right. Perhaps marketers and advertisers could benefit from that nineteenth-century personal sales wisdom in this twenty-first-century social interaction technology.

Social Selling Is Integral to B2B Sales Strategy

Social media has caused major disruptions in strategy and practice for advertising and public relations firms and marketing and customer service departments. The sales department has not been immune to these changes either. Statistics indicate traditional sales processes are becoming less effective. Sales prospects are taking control of their path to purchase, seeking information on their own. Gartner research has found that the average business-to-business (B2B) buyer is now over halfway (57 percent) through the purchase decision before engaging a supplier sales representative.[37] Plus, traditional sales strategies like cold calls and cold emails are becoming less effective. Other research reveals that it now takes eighteen calls to connect with a single buyer, call-back rates are under 1 percent, and under a quarter (24 percent) of sales emails are ever opened.[38]

Yet more than 62 percent of B2B buyers say they respond to salespeople who connect with them in social media to share insights and opportunities relevant to their businesses.[39] What's more, 92 percent of B2B buyers are willing to engage with a sales professional who is known as an industry thought leader[40]—an identity that Hootsuite's Christina Newberry explains can be established by posting consistently valuable and relevant content in social media.[41] Buyers are seeking solutions yet many salespeople are still stuck in a sales-only mentality. Successful sales professionals who have added social media to their sales strategies are leveraging what is called social selling.[42]

Social selling is a process of developing relationships through social media as part of the sales process.[43] One of the key challenges for salespeople in adopting a social selling strategy is that it often takes longer to see results. Social selling is about building long-term relationships with prospective customers in social media. Finding prospects, connecting with them, creating and sharing valuable content, and answering their questions can take a longer investment of time.[44] Yet the longer sales process is worth the wait because ultimately it pays off. For example, a LinkedIn survey found that 90 percent of top salespeople use social selling compared to only 71 percent of all salespeople. What's more, sales professionals who use social selling tools such as LinkedIn, Twitter, and Facebook view them as having the highest impact on revenue. Salespeople who leverage social selling generate more sales opportunities and ultimately are 51 percent more likely to meet their quotas.[45]

B2B buyers have changed the way they make purchase decisions, altering the sales process, and thus requiring new sales strategies. An IDC survey found that 75 percent of B2B buyers and 84 percent of C-level/VP executives use social media to make purchase decisions. Professional social media networks are the top place to seek information in the final stage of the buying process and social media is seen as helping to provide greater confidence in their decisions.[46] Social selling and B2B content marketing will grow in importance with the new European Union (EU) **General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)**, which sets legal protection guidelines for any company that collects and processes the personal data of EU citizens.[47]

Effective spring 2018, GDPR impacts any business that has customers in the EU. Among other things, the GDPR sets higher standards for opt-ins and makes it easier for consumers to opt-out of receiving electronic communication. This puts a greater emphasis on providing more value in content. It also limits the ability to buy direct marketing lists, creating a greater need for businesses to build their own lists through value creation and opt-ins through permission marketing.[48] **Permission marketing** is when sales prospects must first explicitly agree to receive marketing communication.[49] This concept was first introduced in 1999 by business author Seth Godin in his book *Permission Marketing.* Then it applied to opt-in email but the concept has since become applicable to social media as well.[50]

How can sales departments integrate social media into their sales strategies and processes? One of the keys is integration into other social media activities of the brand. Marketing and sales should collaborate on social media content, techniques, and best practices by joining advertising, public relations, and customer service as part of the social care team. Marketing can help train salespeople in social media. All departments should set common goals and metrics and meet regularly to have a common social media vision.[51] Other best practices include integrating software systems and creating a content portal.

Who has integrated social media into sales and marketing? B2B firm BMC Software has set up a portal with Sprinklr called BMC BeSocial where timely, brand-relevant social media content and brand social media guides are housed for social media managers, salespeople, and employees (see figure 13.2).[52] Mack Trucks built a similar resource hub where

Figure 13.2. BMC created a B2B employee and salesperson social media portal.

Source: "BMC BeSocial Team," accessed September 15, 2017, https://besocial-bmc.sprinklr.com/. © Copyright 2017 BMC Software, Inc.

they publish company videos and aggregate all brand social channels and posts where salespeople can easily access it. The content is segmented by product and easy to share on sales professionals' social channels.[53] Another example is Bryan E. Jones, vice president of commercial marketing in North America for Dell Technologies. He requires all staff to go through internal social media training to become Social Media and Community University or SMaC U-certified. Since starting the program in 2010, Dell has graduated and certified over fifteen thousand SMaC U team members who are leveraging social media best practices to increase sales, improve customer service, and bolster talent acquisition.[54]

For salespeople looking to leverage social media, Hootsuite suggests several best practices. First, salespeople must be present on the social channels and engage in an authentic personal way to build relationships. They should also use social media to identify prospect needs by listening. Prospective buyers in social media are asking questions, sharing their struggles, and seeking solutions. Resist launching into a sales script right away. Take time to listen and really understand their true needs. Next, provide value. Help prospects with their questions and needs. Give them the insights they need when they need them. Start with solutions over features. Bring the specific product or service up later after the salesperson has proven their value. Finally, salespeople should not forget their prospects over time. Monitor contacts' social media activities and keep in touch with them by looking for opportunities to like and comment on content. Congratulate contacts on promotions or job changes. Continue to be of value so that the next time they are ready to purchase, they will think of contacting the salesperson who has already been helping them.[55]

A company that has had success with inbound B2B sales is Fisher Tank Company, which is one of the leading manufacturers of above-ground, welded steel tanks in the US. They switched to an inbound strategy after sixty years of cold calling. Their new content marketing strategy included an updated website with an integrated blog and social sharing. Free downloadable content was created to provide valuable information to prospects. The effort reportedly increased web traffic by 119 percent, traffic from social media by 4,800 percent, lead conversions by 3,900 percent, quote requests by 500 percent, and new qualified sales opportunities by $3.4 million.[56]

Tim Washer, creative director at Cisco, has taken a different approach to B2B sales in social media by creating comedy videos. He says that as more content marketing clutter fills the digital space, enterprise brands need to stand out and grab attention. Comedy also has the power of getting people to let their guard down and open up to messages. He suggests targeting clients' pain points and heightening that situation to see the humor in it. This shows empathy for their situation. Also try putting the business situation into another context such as comparing product attributes to a dating app like Tinder.[57] Another comedy tool is to juxtapose two seemingly unrelated objects, as he did for an award-winning IBM video that compared a million-dollar mainframe to a barn.[58] When Cisco sees influencers and thought leaders in their target industries sharing the videos, they know they are working.

For B2B social sales, the obvious social channel choices are platforms like LinkedIn, Twitter, and SlideShare, but many organizations have had success on other channels such as Facebook, YouTube, and Instagram. No matter what type of social selling content is developed, from eBook to humorous video, ensure that it is valuable to the prospect. As

you conclude the social media plan, consider what role personal sales has in the business or organization and what type of social sales is appropriate for the target audience, big idea, and social channel selections.

Theoretically Speaking: Word-of-Mouth in a Service Context

Most agree that word-of-mouth marketing is powerful, but few have delved deeper into why that is. Researchers focusing on word-of-mouth (WOM) have contended that it is one of the most powerful forms of marketing because consumers rely on personal communication sources in making purchase decisions over organizational sources such as advertising campaigns. The sender of the information generally has nothing to gain from the receiver's actions, so the opinion is seen as unbiased and more credible.[59] WOM in a service context is unique because it offers special solutions to the problem of intangibility of services. Before service consumption, a consumer might seek WOM information from an experienced source.[60] Thus, WOM is also important in shaping expectations of service and becomes especially important within the purchase decision.[61]

How can marketers, advertisers, and public relations professionals improve WOM? Researchers Harvir Bansal and Peter Voyer conducted a study that found marketers should initiate WOM messages that try to focus on ties between the sender and the receiver in their target audience. In other words, company communications should not only emphasize the attributes of the product and service but also suggest consumers seek information from other people in the target audience who they consider "friends." This is called tie-strength. The closer the relationship or the more a person can relate to the person offering the WOM communication, the more impact it has in the decision-making process. Marketers and their advertising and public relations partners should also encourage happy customers in the target audience to share their positive experiences through social media WOM so that others can discover the company.[62] This is important in both B2C and B2B contexts. Ratings and reviews are one of the first places consumers turn when making a purchase decision. But research also indicates that word-of-mouth recommendations from peers influence over 90 percent of all B2B buying decisions.[63]

Chapter 13 Checklist

Social media can change quickly. Visit PostControlMarketing (http://www.postcontrolmarketing.com) for updates, but also use this chapter checklist to briefly check how social media statistics in this chapter have changed since publication.

✓ How has customer service in social media changed? Are more brands providing customer service in social media and what percentage are using social messaging apps? Has progress been made in integration of cross-discipline social care teams? How have consumer expectations changed and are brands keeping pace?

✓ How has social sales changed? Are more salespeople using social media as a sales tool? What are the latest statistics? Are there new best practices for social sales techniques and integration?

✓ Have brand response rates and times improved in social media? Are brands overall being more responsive to consumer comments in social media? Are certain brands leveraging this as competitive advantage? Is it making a difference in their business objectives?

![] **SOCIAL PLAN PART 13**

Creating Cross-Functional Social Care and Social Sales

If the organization does not have an active social care program, now is the time to plan it. First investigate and analyze the existing system that is in place. Is there a customer service department? How do they currently find out about customer needs? What systems are they using? Is customer service limited by delivery method or hours? Is the organization conducting social media monitoring? If so, who is doing it? Are other departments involved? What about sales? Are salespeople using social selling? How can the sales department be integrated into the overall social strategy and social care team? Table 13.1 describes a plan for a cross-functional social care team. Report all thoughts, plans, and ideas in these areas:

1. Identify the current system. Explain what kind of social media monitoring is occurring. Is it 24/7 or intermittent? What systems are being used?
2. Identify the employees responsible for social media monitoring. What department are they from? Is the team cross-functional?
3. Plan a structure for a new cross-functional social care team that can address all areas of social information efficiently and effectively. What systems are needed?
4. Plan the marketing, advertising, and public relations responsibility in a cross-functional social care team by explaining how each will provide social support. Also provide a briefing on the brand communication style and big idea for the social media plan.

For a condensed version of the social plan see appendix A: Three-Part Social Plan.

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

1. Must all organizations, brands, products, services, or industries provide customer service via social media? Can you name a company or industry that does not need to build a social care team? Why or why not?
2. Revisit the Comcast Cable example of the viral audio of a customer service representative being difficult on the phone. Why do you think there is such a disparity between Comcast Cable's social media service and its customer service via telephone? What can Comcast do to fix the issue?

3. Hertz Rent-a-Car's 24/7 social care response is impressive, but what can a small business or startup do with fewer resources? Is there a software system or employee response that can help? Should expectations be lowered or not given at all?

4. Social sales is a new strategy for sales professionals to leverage social media as one of their key sales tools. What software tools or systems exist to help make social selling more efficient and automate some processes?

ADDITIONAL EXERCISES

1. For this exercise, go on Twitter and make comments and requests to the handles or hashtags of several companies. Note how long it takes to get a response, who responds, and how they respond. Compare the different company actions. From what you observe, try to determine what type of social care plan the organization is running. Do they have a plan? Is one department, such as marketing, obviously running it without the other departments being involved? Or is there truly a cross-functional social care system in place? Pick one of the companies and ask the same question or try to solve the same issue via another communication channel, such as the telephone or email. Do you notice a difference in response time, quality, and content?

2. For this exercise, think about worst-case scenarios. In social media, brand attacks can spring up instantly for reasons you can't always predict. What should an organization do? Make a list of some of the bad situations in which the organization could find itself. Think of horrible customer service experiences, product failures and recalls, environmental disasters, scandals, and accidents. How should a company react when social media is lighting up with activity? How should these social media crisis strategies integrate with overall crisis communication plans?

Notes

1. "Marshall Field," BrainyQuote.com, accessed February 20, 2015, http://www.brainyquote.com/quotes/quotes/m/marshallfi379060.html.

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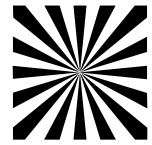
Pulling It All Together

Write Your Plan, Plan Your Sell

Even when you have gone as far as you can, and everything hurts, and you are staring at the specter of self-doubt, you can find a bit more strength deep inside you, if you look closely enough.[1]

—Hal Higdon

PREVIEW

Do you sometimes have trouble seeing the big picture? Perhaps you get so caught up in today's deadlines or due dates that you can't see tomorrow. Then tomorrow comes with its own set of tasks. So you end up just taking on each day's "to do" list, reacting to what is immediately in front of you. Yet those daily lists never end and you spend little time looking and planning ahead to the next week, next month, or next year.

"Being unable to see the forest for the trees" is a phrase familiar to many. It was first recorded in John Heywood's 1546 collection of proverbs. It means getting so caught up in the small details that a person fails to understand the bigger picture. Yet the ability to discern an overall pattern from a mass of details is a valuable skill.[2] This skill is at the heart of strategies that plan and marshal organizational resources to meet and exceed business goals. This ability is seen as very valuable.

Management Research Group (MRG) conducted a global study of more than sixty thousand managers that accessed more than twenty leadership practices and twenty measures of effectiveness. Practices included innovation, persuasion, communication, and results orientation.

Effectiveness measures included future potential, credibility, business aptitude, and people skills. Results of the study found that having a strategic approach was ten times more important to effectiveness than other leadership behaviors, and almost fifty times more important than tactical behaviors. In a follow-up study, ten thousand senior executives were asked to select the leadership behaviors most critical to an organization's success. "Strategic" was chosen 97 percent of the time.[3]

Strategic thinking means taking a broad, long-range approach and thinking systematically. Most people may agree that this skill is very important, yet thinking strategically is not easy. Strategic thinking is especially hard when immediate demands are often rewarded over long-term vision and planning. When faced with more than eight hundred social media sites, apps, and services with hundreds of possible tactics and tools, being able to focus on a long-term approach and systematic thinking is necessary for action. Seeing the forest for the trees is more than a mindset. It is a leadership quality that is a necessity for success.[4]

Slow and Steady Wins the Race

Hal Higdon is a famous marathon runner, and the longest-contributing writer to *Runner's World* magazine (more than forty years), who has written more than thirty marathon-training books. Yet what he says about training for a marathon can easily be applied to social media strategy and planning. Training for a marathon is long. Most marathon-training programs last four months and only begin after months of setting a solid base of twenty to thirty miles a week.[5]

The marathon itself is long. The beginning is exciting with the crowd, the newness, and the scenery. Then somewhere after the halfway point, away from the spectators, the novelty wears off. The excitement is gone and is simply replaced with grueling mile after mile. This is when doubt sets in for many runners. "Why am I doing this?" "I can't do this!" "What was I thinking?" Then around mile twenty, runners hit "the wall." At the wall, all energy is used up and it feels as if one cannot continue.

Yet if they pop some energy gels and will themselves to the end, most runners discover running the marathon is more than worth it. The *Baltimore Sun* captured that feeling appropriately in an article following the Baltimore Marathon. The article described a runner who crossed the marathon finish line, vomited, and then said, "That was the best time of my life!"

Social media can be like this. Not necessarily the vomiting part, but more the day-to-day posting, monitoring, content generation, and curation. The grueling post after post and comment after comment can be draining. Despite all the talk about ROI and immediate measurement, the majority of social media strategies don't give immediate significant return like a new traditional media campaign that can spike retail sales the weekend that a marketer, advertiser, or public relations professional launches it. Viral hits are the exception, and overnight successes are rare. Many marketers, advertisers, public relations professionals, and entrepreneurs are jumping into the social media race, but they must be in for the long haul to see real results.[6] Take a step back to see the forest of the hundreds of social media trees.

Social media expert Jay Baer captured this mindset well in his blog post "Are You Slow Enough to Succeed in Social Media?" He observes that social media adoption is quick, but

interacting and engaging with customers and prospects happens on a one-to-one or one-to-few basis, and that takes time. Social media is also built on trust, and building trust is a longer process. Baer likens this process to recruiting a volunteer marketing army, one soldier at a time. This is something that doesn't happen overnight.[7] If marketers, advertisers, and public relations professionals are accustomed to mass audience attention through traditional methods, the slow burn of social media could require some adjustment time. It also could require explanation to organization management to set up realistic expectations.

Reading the trade press, case studies, and white papers on social media efforts can be deceiving. From these accounts, marketers, advertisers, and public relations professionals may think social growth and success can happen overnight if they simply hit the right formula. We read about social media stars, but many of those articles tend to skip over the backstory and the years of groundwork. The Dove Real Beauty campaign is one example. Before Dove turned to social media with its online films, the campaign started as a traditional advertising campaign. They proved success in small steps at first, and built trust with company management before the campaign became the viral-success case study we see now. This type of example happens in the music industry all the time. A band will be positioned in the press as an overnight success, but upon further inspection, readers may find that the band is actually on its fifth or sixth album release and has been playing small venues for a decade.

Seth Godin is a great example of this long-term thinking. He has been publishing a blog post every day since 2002. For over fifteen years, he has faithfully put out daily social media content. Highly successful now, his blog did not always have a mass audience. Godin's first post, "Death of a Myth?," to this day only has one tweet and four likes. Yet a more recent post, "Trading Favors," received 1,162 tweets and 568 likes.[8] Marketers, advertisers, and public relations professionals should keep this long-term perspective in mind as they complete a social media strategy and start to execute the plan. Success may not take fifteen years, but it also may not happen in fifteen days. Once the social media plan is finished, the real race and real work have just begun.

Content Creation Takes Time and Focus

A survey of social media professionals investigated in which areas they spent most of their time. The results revealed that only 12 percent of social media staff's time was spent on strategy development, and the majority of their time (60 percent) was devoted to content creation. In social media, content development takes up nearly six times the amount of time as strategy development, posting content, listening and monitoring, measuring, responding to fans and followers, and reporting results to leadership (see figure 14.1).[9] After putting the social media plan together and completing the social media strategy process, be prepared to spend the majority of time on content development, followed by engagement, measurement, and reporting.

Yet for those who have patience and daily persistence, social media does deliver results. As stated before, it may not take fifteen years, but it may take longer than some expect. NASCAR is a good example of social media strategic thinking on the right time scale. David Higdon is NASCAR's IMC managing director. At an integrated marketing

Distribution of Social Media Time Investment
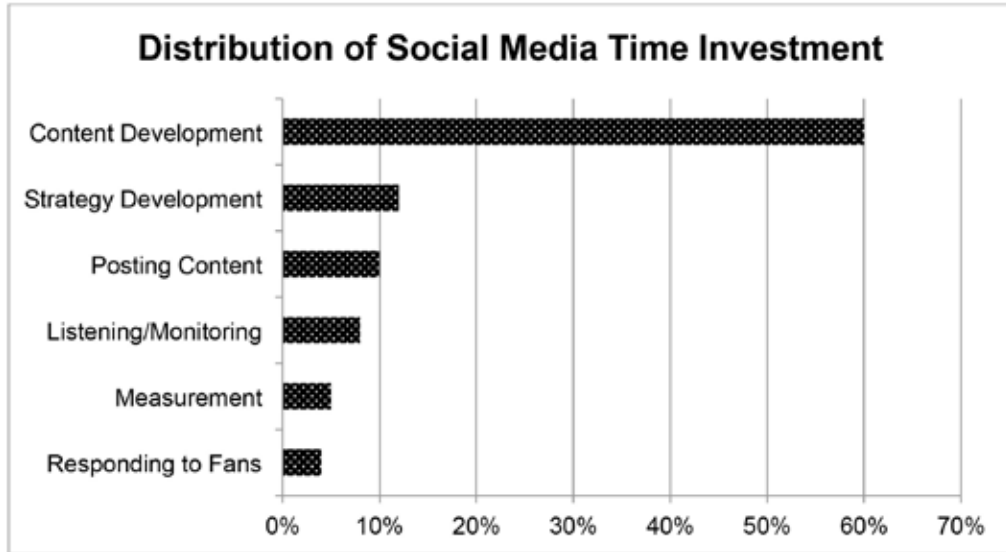
Figure 14.1. Social Media Areas that Require the Biggest Investment of Time

Source: "Top Areas of Social Media Time Investment," MarketingCharts.com, May 2014, http://www.marketing charts.com/online/social-media-marketings-main-expense-is-staff-how-do-they-spend-their-time-42651/attachment/smmu-top-areas-social-media-time-investment-may2014.

communications conference, he spoke about the brand's remarkable overhaul that came from a focus on a younger audience and a commitment to reach them in the social channels where they participate.

NASCAR's social media effort can be seen as successful. After the new strategy was implemented, sponsorship deals rose 8 percent and 23 percent of Fortune 500 brands became a part of NASCAR, an increase of 20 percent.[10] A consumer survey also found that 61 percent of eighteen- to thirty-four-year-old avid fans were more interested in NASCAR than the previous year, and 65 percent of those had been fans for fewer than five years. This increase in fan interest was attributed to NASCAR's social media engagement efforts.[11] However, the real insight into NASCAR's success is that these results came after an eighteen-month review and then a three- to five-year integrated marketing communications plan to achieve those successful results.

How does a three- to five-year timeline work in a business culture where the average CMO is ousted every two to three years? Culture simply must change. Trying to apply old strategies and expectations in this new social media–empowered consumer environment does not work. Social media marketing is a different game with different rules. Push marketing and all its perceptions and expectations do not apply.[12] Perhaps David Higdon of NASCAR learned the new rules from his father Hal Higdon of marathon fame. Did the father's marathon strategy influence the son's social media strategy? Shortsighted sales results are slowly giving way to consumer lifetime value, and the increasing importance of social media consumer engagement may be helping to drive that change. **Consumer lifetime value** is a concept that shifts focus from short-term profit to long-term profit from the continuing relationship with a customer.[13]

Tom Martin from Converse Digital polled digital marketers and asked how long it takes to see results from social media marketing. Most respondents felt six months was a fair average if you were doing it right. Others thought time frames of nine to eighteen months were more appropriate.[14] Why do social media results take so long? Some answer that question with another question. How long does it take to create a loyal following? Social media is about engagement, relationships, and listening. It can take months to curate a community by targeting them with articles, pictures, videos, and other content to foster engagement.[15]

Social Media Content Calendar

When and where should you distribute all of this brand social content? A main tool for moving forward with content creation is a social media content calendar. A **content calendar** is a way to plan and visualize how content will be distributed during a specified time period.[16] See table 14.1 for an example social media content calendar template.

On the left side of the calendar, marketers, advertisers, and public relations professionals should place the social media channel and list the target audience or persona. If the social media strategy calls for multiple target audiences, the calendar should list each one individually and include all social channels being used to communicate with that target audience. Also note that one social channel may be used to communicate with multiple target audiences. For example, a college may use Facebook to communicate with both prospective students and their parents, so it may want to plan different content accordingly.

Next on the calendar, indicate which content will be distributed on which day, at what time, and identify the title or theme of the effort such as Saucony's "Find Your Strong," Dove's "Real Beauty," or REI's "1440 Project." Assets specify what is needed for the post including which images, videos, or links go with each post. Finally, indicate the hashtags and keywords that need to be included, from campaign and brand hashtags to trending topics. By researching best practices and by tracking brand results for days, times, themes, assets, hashtags/keywords, and repetition, content should be optimized for the greatest response. Perform a Google search on phrases such as "How often to post on _____ (insert each social media platform)?" or "When is the best time to post on _____ (insert each social media platform)?" to start with a research-informed schedule. As you execute the social media plan and measure results over time, you will discover your own best frequencies and times customized to your industry, target audience, and brand.

The example content calendar is set for one week but content calendars can be easily replicated to cover longer periods from a month or quarter up to an entire year. When developing a content calendar of the social media strategy, there are key questions to consider. What content is the target audience looking for? When are they most likely looking for it? What questions are they asking that the brand can answer? Consider educational and entertaining text, photo, and video content that delivers value. Which content will be brand-generated versus consumer-generated? Where will it be best delivered and how often? All decisions should be optimized by target and channel. Craft different versions of content for each social platform. Plan messages ahead of time, but also be flexible enough to fit in live, unscripted interactions with individual customers and to address emerging topics.

Table 14.1. Social Media Content Calendar

Social Media Channel Target/Persona:	Mon. (time) Title/Theme: Assets: Tags/Keywords:	Tues. (time) Title/Theme: Assets: Tags/Keywords:	Wed. (time) Title/Theme: Assets: Tags/Keywords:	Thur. (time) Title/Theme: Assets: Tags/Keywords:	Fri. (time) Title/Theme: Assets: Tags/Keywords:	Sat. (time) Title/Theme: Assets: Tags/Keywords:	Sun. (time) Title/Theme: Assets: Tags/Keywords:

Content calendars can also become automated through various social media software that will select best days and times for you. For a list of content-scheduling software, see appendix B: Social Media Tools and Resources.

Content creation also takes a laser focus on the customer and their changing needs. As you move into the content development stage, practice a customer-centric approach. When developing content, flip from a brand-first to customer-first mindset. Consumers' needs and behaviors are different when they're not actively seeking to buy, when they become interested in buying, and after they have become customers—different stages of the buying cycle. Marketers, advertisers, and public relations professionals should create content for the prepurchase, purchase, and post-purchase consumer.[17]

Rosalia Cefalu of HubSpot suggests that different employees from various departments are best suited for communicating with customers in these different stages. Distributing social responsibilities across departments to the most relevant people makes communication more effective and efficient, making one-on-one social media engagement more scalable. As discussed in chapter 13, setting up a cross-department social care team can help generate customer engagement throughout the buying cycle to gain new customers, repeat purchases, loyalty, and brand advocates.[18] How can brands optimize each of these stages with social media monitoring through active listening, publishing, and response?

For the prepurchase stage, seek consumers who are in the market to buy but who have not yet purchased. Listen to social media for people using the right keywords, such as mentions of the brand, competitors, industry, or specific products and services. Marketing and advertising professionals could create relevant messages and valuable content to attract fans and followers and monitor conversations to engage with those responding. Public relations or corporate communications professionals could be looking for larger industry or corporate issues and identify journalists or bloggers for media outreach. As explained in chapter 13, social selling has become an important part of sales strategy. Thus, for a business-to-business (B2B) company, sales professionals could leverage this stage by creating and sharing valuable content and answering questions to generate leads.

In the purchase stage, look for consumers seeking purchase information. Marketing, advertising, and public relations professionals could help answer questions and provide additional information, but sales representatives may be better suited to deliver more relevant engagement. In a business-to-consumer (B2C) company, the sales team may interact with customers on social media to facilitate a sale. With a B2B brand, salespeople could address the question of qualified leads, helping them toward conversion.

In the post-purchase stage, brands want to keep current customers happy. Listen for brand customers seeking help. Marketing, advertising, or public relations people can play a role, but resolving product and service issues is best addressed by customer service representatives. As explained in chapter 13, these satisfied customers are likely to share their positive experiences, leave ratings and reviews, or make additional purchases, all of which help turn customer service into a marketing function. In B2B, sales representatives should follow up with existing customers, ensuring that they are happy and thus encouraging referrals and additional sales.

Customizing listening and response with cross-discipline teams in social media can help scale social media engagement. Meeting the different needs of consumers through all stages of the buying cycle can help businesses to achieve their marketing, advertising, public relations, sales, and overall business goals more effectively and efficiently.[19]

Yet increased mobile use has created an even more fragmented buyer's journey. Google calls these micro-moments. **Micro-moments** are the hundreds of real-time, goal-oriented, mobile actions that influence consumer decisions and preferences.[20] They occur frequently as we instinctively turn to mobile devices to act on a need, learn something, do something, discover something, watch something, or buy something. Decisions are made and preferences are shaped as people check their phones up to 150 times a day.[21] Google's research indicates that there are four mobile moments marketers should consider: "I want to know," "I want to go," "I want to do," and "I want to buy." A brand that creates the right social content in those moments could influence consumer decisions. In planning the social media content calendar, ensure that the brand is regularly creating content that addresses each of these mobile micro-moments.

In "I want to know" moments, consumers are researching and exploring. Consider educational content that informs and inspires. For example, a company that sells outdoor gear could provide reviews of new equipment or tips and guides to enjoy the outdoors or tackle a tough mountain hike. A tax service could create content about retirement plans or itemized deductions. Let customers know you are here to help.

In "I want to go" moments, use geo-targeting with unique location-based messages. The example outdoor brand could inform customers of local events such as group kayak tours or store locations that carry the brand. A tax service might highlight locations, workshops, and extended hours as the tax deadline approaches. Let customers know you are near.

With "I want to do" moments, customers are trying to figure something out and are looking for answers. This is where good how-to content can fill the gap. An outdoor brand could create a series on climbing knots or methods for purifying water while camping. The tax service might post quick answers to common tax questions such as tax brackets and standard deductions. Help customers and potential customers with what they are trying to do.

In "I want to buy" moments, consumers are ready to buy but may not know exactly what, how, or from whom. These moments are about more than promotions and sales messages. This may require getting customer service, B2C sales representatives, or B2B sales professionals involved. The example outdoor brand may sell group tours and have sales managers monitoring social media to provide answers to secure a booking. The tax service may have tax advisers monitoring social media, providing real-time answers, and building relationships that lead to a tax prep purchase.

Who has leveraged micro-moments? The credit repair company Progrexion found that customers in their "I want to know" moment needed education and began directing mobile traffic directly to their salespeople, resulting in a 221 percent increase in mobile sales. The car company Fiat made "I want to go" moments a part of an integrated marketing campaign by focusing mobile content on the nearest dealers to help grow unaided recall by 127 percent. The Home Depot has leveraged "I want to do" moments into 43 million views by expanding their "how-to" collection as more DIYers turn to their YouTube app while they work on home projects.[22] Red Roof Inn leveraged a big "I want to" micro-moment when they uncovered research that said flight delays affect 90,000 people in the US every day. The hotel chain began to track real-time flight delay and cancellation information from a flight schedules database. From that data, they sent out relevant geo-targeted ads near airports with stranded passengers, such as "Flight AA234 cancelled? Come stay with us!" The real-time relevance of

the effort resulted in a 60 percent increase in revenue. Although executed with search ads, this same strategy could easily be supplemented with real-time, targeted social media content.[23]

Google and Ipsos research indicates that 90 percent of smartphone users are not certain of the specific brand they want to buy when they are looking for information online. Further, one in three purchases of a brand other than the one users originally intended to buy are due to information found at the moment they needed it. If you are not considering consumer mobile micro-moments to create brand social media content, you may be missing out. When finalizing the social media strategy, in addition to the three buyer's journey stages, consider what mobile "first micro-moments" the brand could leverage for increased response.[24]

Much of these content strategies leverage the real-time data that comes from social media monitoring. Taking marketing action based on this live data is often called real-time marketing. **Real-time marketing** is systematically responding to consumers with dynamic, personalized content across channels that is relevant in the moment.[25] Other ways to think about real-time marketing are delivering the right message at the right time or creating "on-the-fly" content that is relevant to your target audience. Real-time marketing is leveraged through access to data, such as social media monitoring, with an understanding of the brand's target audience and competitors. Real-time marketing gained attention with the Oreo, "You can still dunk in the dark," Super Bowl tweet mentioned in chapter 5. It can take the form of live response during big events such as the Super Bowl or the Oscars. Real-time marketing can also occur in response to relevant, trending topics and news or by engaging with competitor brands through friendly banter as the fast-food chain Wendy's has been known to do.[26] Real-time marketing is also simply responding to individual consumers one at a time, delivering the right message in the right buying stage or at the right mobile micro-moment.

Before leaving the subject of content scheduling and real-time marketing, one other concept should be considered. **Newsjacking** is the strategy of injecting a brand into breaking news through social media or content marketing to get the brand noticed. Newsjacking has been a public relations strategy for years but has gained new relevance with the increased use of social media and the twenty-four-hour news cycle.[27] Newsjacking in this new context was first introduced by marketing and public relations expert David Meerman Scott in his book *Newsjacking: How To Inject Your Ideas Into A Breaking News Story and Generate Tons of Media Coverage*. Scott explains that news gathering happens in real time today as journalists quickly look for credible information on breaking news through searches and social media. Journalists tend to easily find the "who, what, when, and where" of the story, but the "why" is harder to find. To take advantage of newsjacking, brands should focus on quickly creating this "why" content and distributing it through social media, such as tweets and blog posts, with the trending keyword or hashtag of the story.[28] As part of a social media strategy, brands should constantly be monitoring breaking news and trending hashtags and be prepared to create "on-the-fly" content to take advantage of these real-time marketing opportunities.

Social Media Metrics

Now that you have the core social media strategy and content schedule, it is import to ensure that you have a plan in place to measure success and a way to estimate the costs with

a budget. **Metrics** are simply standards of measurement by which efficiency, performance, or progress can be assessed.[29] The metrics behind social media efforts are very important to gain approval and to prove ROI in order to acquire funding to implement and continue social media strategies and plans. Yet the sheer amount of data and the options of what can be collected and where may be overwhelming. The key to understanding social media metrics is knowing how to collect data, track metrics, and identify key performance indicators (KPIs) to link social media actions to business goals and marketing objectives for social measurement and optimization.

The first place to look for social media metrics is the social media platforms. Top social channels each offer their own analytics and certain metrics are the most important for marketers, advertisers, and public relations professionals.[30] As examples, the specific metrics available from Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, Pinterest, Instagram, and YouTube will be explained.

For the social network Facebook, **Facebook Insights** is the tool to track organic and paid performance on its pages. This tool offers metrics on page posts such as likes (unlikes, organic likes, paid likes), reach, engagement, engagement rate, impressions, and demographic information for fans, plus additional people with whom brands have engaged. There are also detailed video stats including number of views lasting 3 seconds, 30 seconds, or 95 percent of total video length.[31] For the business-focused social network LinkedIn, **LinkedIn Analytics** is the tool that provides insights into company page performance for organic and paid brand actions. For updates, it provides insights on post performance with metrics like impressions, clicks, likes, comments, and shares. Followers can be tracked by total number or broken down by organic (gained without advertising) and acquired (gained through sponsored content and ads). Visitors can be tracked by page views, unique visits, and separate career-page clicks with visitor demographics on business-focused variables such as seniority, industry, company size, and function.[32]

In microblogs like Twitter, **Twitter Analytics** is the tool that measures organic and paid impact for brand account performance. It offers metrics including total tweets, tweet impressions, profile visits, mentions, followers, tweets linking to you, engagement rate, link clicks, retweets, likes, and replies. It also provides demographic, lifestyle, consumer behavior, and mobile information about followers. Twitter Analytics also measures the effectiveness of Twitter Cards.

For the image-focused, microblog channel Pinterest, **Pinterest Analytics** is the tool that provides data on organic and paid pin performance. It delivers metrics as a daily average or for specific time periods organized by impressions, repins, and clicks. It also provides demographic information for the people you reach by average monthly viewers and average monthly engaged by country, language, metro area, and gender. It shows interests, boards, and businesses that audiences are interested in. Pinterest Analytics can also provide brand website content metrics, including impressions, saves, clicks, and original (first-time) pins.[33]

For the content-sharing platform Instagram, **Instagram Insights** is the tool that details metrics on how people are viewing brand Instagram organic and paid content. It tracks overall metrics such as impressions, reach, website clicks, and profile views along with follower gender, age, and location information. It also reports post-specific metrics including likes, comments, saved, impressions, reach, engagement, and video views. With the addition of Instagram Stories, Insights also provides story impressions, reach, replies, and exits.[34] For the

video content–sharing platform YouTube, **YouTube Analytics** provides data on YouTube brand channel organic and paid video performance. It delivers data in different reports such as subscribers, subscriber status, traffic, traffic sources, views, watch time, earnings, likes, dislikes, comments, shares, favorites, devices, audience retention, and organic versus paid traffic. YouTube also offers demographic information on viewers such as location, age, and gender.[35]

These are just six of the top social media channels. Other social channels offer their own version of metrics tools that are being added all the time. More recent additions include Yelp Metrics[36] and Foursquare Attribution.[37] Metrics for other social media platforms can often be obtained through third-party software tools, and metrics from various channels can also be collected in unified dashboards and reports within these software tools. Once marketing, advertising, and public relations professionals understand the metric possibilities for each channel, the key to making all this data more usable and actionable is understanding the bigger picture as it relates to unique brand business goals and then linking the specific metrics for each channel as KPIs to those business objectives. Use a social media metrics template (see table 14.2) to help organize and visualize how specific social media channel data and business objectives come together to measure the success of social media marketing efforts.

Table 14.2. Social Media Metrics Template

Social Media Channel	Objective 1*:	Objective 2*:	Objective 3*:	Objective 4*:
	KPI:	KPI:	KPI:	KPI:
	KPI:	KPI:	KPI:	KPI:
	KPI:	KPI:	KPI:	KPI:
	KPI:	KPI:	KPI:	KPI:

*Ensure objectives follow SMART guidelines (specific, measureable, achievable, relevant, and time bound).

In this template, identify the broader business objectives, making sure they are quantified and time bound—expressed as SMART objectives. This was discussed in chapter 4 and should have been established at the beginning of the social media strategy plan. A startup or business with a new product or service may be focused on building awareness among a certain target audience (views, reach, impressions, demographic data, etc.). Another company or organization may have issues with reputation and be looking to change perception (negative to positive sentiment). Or perhaps the business needs to drive leads or online sales (traffic sources, conversion pages, etc.). Maybe a brand needs to focus on retention of existing customers for continued sales and recruiting of new customers via word-of-mouth (likes, comments, shares, etc.). An organization may also have all of these objectives and more, as long as they are quantified and assigned unique KPIs for each social channel.

An additional tool to help link social activity to business goals to prove ROI is integrating Google Analytics on websites with social media. The Google Analytics Social Reports break down social traffic to let businesses know how and which social media efforts are working. The Social Conversions report shows which social networks lead to website conversions. Conversions can be anything from a direct sale to a download, an email subscription, an event registration, a quote request, or more. Setting up Google Analytics goals with specific dollar values per conversion will show dollar values per social channel. This helps determine where to focus time and money beyond followers and engagement and connects social media to the bottom line.[38] Using social media monitoring, publishing, and analytics tools such as Hootsuite, HubSpot, Salesforce, Sysomos, NUVI, or Crimson Hexagon, or other tools like SocialMention, TrueSocialMetrics, Sprout, or Buffer can also help track and organize social metrics. For a more complete list of options, see appendix B: Social Media Tools and Resources.

Another way to make sense of social media metrics is to organize the data by key social media metrics categories. Social media expert Jay Baer of Convince & Convert suggests four categories of social media metrics to measure success of content marketing efforts including: (1) consumption metrics, which are how many people viewed, downloaded, or listened to social media content; (2) sharing metrics, which measure how relevant the social content is and how often is it shared with others; (3) lead-gen metrics, which measure how often social media content consumption results in a lead; and (4) sales metrics, which measure if money was made from social media content.

The last category of sales metrics is often the most important, but marketers have known for decades that not all marketing action can be directly attributable to sales. For example, traditional media advertising such as TV, radio ads, billboards, or magazine and newspaper ads are seen as valuable contributors to metrics such as awareness, opinion, or recall, but don't always lead to a direct, traceable sales action. These contributions are often expressed in traditional marketing with the sales or purchase funnel. As first defined in chapter 5, the purchase funnel is the consumer-focused model that illustrates a customer journey toward purchase from awareness to interest, desire, and action.[39] You can think of each social media metric category in a similar way—each is important and leads to the others. The related social media journey can be thought of as first consumption, then sharing, and finally lead generation and sales.

Another way to think about social media metrics categories was first proposed by Google co-founder Avinash Kaushik. In 2011, he suggested the following consistent social media metrics categories across all social channels. First, conversation rate is the number of conversations per social media post and channel. KPIs are different per channel. For

example, on Facebook and LinkedIn it is comments and on Twitter it is replies. Second, amplification rate measures the number of shares per social media post and channel. Again KPIs are channel-specific such as reshares for Facebook, retweets for Twitter, and repins for Pinterest. Third, applause rate accounts for the various ways users can promote a post on different networks. KPIs vary per channel from likes on Facebook to hearts on Instagram. Finally, economic value is the sum of short-term revenue, long-term revenue, and cost savings. Here Avinash brings it all back to Google Analytics with a KPI such as "Per Visit Goal Values." This can then be linked to source visits by social channel.[40]

The number of social media channels, each channel's unique metrics, and social media monitoring and analytics options can be overwhelming. Yet it becomes more manageable and actionable by taking a step back and looking at broader business goals, connecting specific metrics (KPIs) to each business objective, and then finding the right tools to collect and monitor that data. But be careful not to place too much emphasis only on last-touch attribution. Tools like Google Analytics are great but may only report on the last visited digital location before a conversion. Only looking at the end of the buyer's journey could discount the important role of other social media and brand content. Be sure to include metrics that track performance at each stage of the buyer cycle (pre-purchase, purchase, post-purchase) and purchase funnel (awareness, interest, desire, action). Link management is one way to ensure measurement across all purchase stages and multiple digital channels. A link management tool like Bitly can improve visibility of every touch point, control where consumers are sent, and view results for insights. Bitly can create branded customized shortened links and unique customer-specific links that integrate with CRM systems like Salesforce and HubSpot for easy measurement and optimization. Companies like TrendKite are advancing public relations analytics to measure and report earned media's contributions to the bottom line. And location-based platforms like HYP3R are emphasizing the value of location-based engagement with high-value customers.

Before leaving the topic of social metrics it is important to mention dark social. **Dark social** is web traffic with no referral data because the link was shared through unmeasurable social media.[41] This can happen when direct URLs are copied and pasted to be shared through email, texting, secure browsing, direct messages (DMs), and messaging apps like WhatsApp, WeChat, Kik, or Facebook Messenger. Dark social can also happen in native app content like Facebook Instant Articles or Snapchat, which doesn't have clickable links. Why is it dark? In analytics programs like Google Analytics, this traffic appears to be direct traffic as if the exact URL was manually typed into the browser. Yet that is highly unlikely when you have complicated, long URLs.

In 2016 RadiumOne research estimated dark social shares as a percent of on-site shares to be 84 percent globally, up from 69 percent two years earlier. This means that up to eight out of ten consumers' outbound sharing from publisher and brand websites happens in private without referral data. Marketers, advertisers, and public relations professionals should note that these percentages can vary up and down significantly depending on country, age group, and industry.[42]

The good news is that once a brand is aware of dark social traffic, there are steps to start measuring its impact including: (1) using shortened URLs to share unique links in social networks and emails or on websites to track clicks; (2) adding social share buttons on websites for visitors to use instead of copying and pasting the direct URL to track referral traffic;[43] (3) using Google Analytics to narrow direct traffic to referrals that are most likely

dark social using advanced audience segments by behavior filtering to remove easy-to-remember web pages;[44] (4) tracking dark social traffic with share buttons and html codes that find copy-and-paste shares of page content or URLs.[45] These tools include GetSocial .io, SiteCTRL, AddThis, ShareThis, Bitly, and Po.st.[46]

Social Media Budget

You have worked hard in researching and developing a social media strategy, schedule, and metrics, but how much will it cost? Budgeting is an important part of social strategy and most likely needed if you want your strategy to be executed. Few managers or business owners will approve any effort without first knowing the cost. Understanding expense is also an important step to calculating return on investment (ROI). This can be easier if you follow a budgeting process. See table 14.3 for an example social media budget template.

In the budget template, costs are broken down into five expense categories and each category is divided into in-house costs (to be performed by employees) and outsource costs (to be hired out). It is also suggested that marketers, advertisers, and public relations professionals calculate the percentage of each line item under a category and the percentage of each category out of the total budget to understand where the most money is

Table 14.3. Social Media Budget Template

Budget Category Type/Description	In-House Expense Fixed/Percent	Outsource Expense Fixed/Percent	Total Category Fixed/Percent
Content Creation	($ per hour x hours	(# pieces content x	**$ %**
Writing	per month)	$ per piece/project)	$ %
Graphics			$ %
Video			$ %
Social Advertising	(N/A)	($ per day x days	**$ %**
(social channel 1)		per month)	$ %
(social channel 2)			$ %
(social channel 3)			$ %
Social Engagement	($ per hour x hours	($ per hour x hours	**$ %**
(social channel 1)	per month)	per month)	$ %
(social channel 2)			$ %
(social channel 3)			$ %
Software/Tools	(N/A)	($ per month)	**$ %**
Monitoring			$ %
Scheduling			$ %
Analytics			$ %
Promotions/Contests	($ per campaign)	($ per campaign)	**$ %**
(social channel 1)			$ %
(social channel 2)			$ %
(social channel 3)			$ %
Total	**$ %**	**$ %**	**$**

being spent. After having an understanding of how each category is contributing more or less to overall success, consider adjusting budget category percentages to match contribution level. Each item and category is calculated as a monthly expense and percentage of the total per the five categories of content creation, social advertising, social engagement, software/tools, and promotions/contests.

"Content Creation" covers in-house or outsourced time to write and design social media plus any fixed costs such as stock photos or video production. Estimate time to create the content needed for the strategy in a month. Marketers, advertisers, and public relations professionals can get an idea of how much content is needed from the previously discussed content calendar. For in-house employees, divide salary into an hourly rate. For outsourced help, calculate by their hourly rate or their cost per piece or project.

"Social Advertising" is paid, outsourced costs for reach per social channel such as Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter, Pinterest, Instagram, and Snapchat. Start with the content calendar and estimate how many posts will be paid/sponsored native ads or promoted/boosted posts. Then calculate costs based on current rates per social media network. Because much of social advertising works on a bidding process, many brands set per-day limits. Thus, this category is estimated based on spending per day, per network, multiplied by the number of days a brand expects to be running social ads in a month.

"Social Engagement" is the cost for employees or contractors to listen and respond to brand talk per channel. Listening and engagement are important activities in social media. They cannot be planned ahead of time but, based on current activity and planned strategies, this cost can be estimated. An idea of the level of customer activity on brand social media channels can be gauged from a social media audit. Are there hundreds or even thousands of posts every day or a few dozen? From there, estimate hours per day needed to engage all or a percentage of those customers per channel. Multiply the number of hours by employee or outsourced rates.

"Software/Tools" covers monthly costs for social media monitoring and other automation software services. These can help save time and thus money in other categories such as content creation and engagement. There are many free tools, but to get access to advanced features and enterprise-level service, many organizations have to pay. This budget category is broken down into monitoring, scheduling, and analytics as a first step. Depending on what software is found, it may be useful to add categories such as consumer research, customer service, automation, or scheduling software. A software solution may also cover multiple categories, thus eliminating the need for categories. Or a software solution may provide services outside the scope of social media such as Salesforce and CRM. In that case, divide a percentage of the cost for the integrated systems social media–only services. Some tools may have one-time costs but most are billed as monthly access fees.

"Promotions/Contests" are costs for prizes, discounts, coupons, and rebates. Besides buying reach through native ads, many businesses build audience and engagement through special offers, discounts, and contests. Whether they are executed through a Facebook app, hashtag, or unique offer code, promotions, contests, sweepstakes, coupons, and discounts have hard costs associated with them. In this category, estimate those expenses per campaign. For example, a brand may offer a summer campaign and a holiday campaign, or campaigns that coincide with specific holidays that include promotions and contests. A brand may also have a social campaign built around a live event that includes promotions and contests that have costs that need to included.

Finally, add totals per month, per line item and category. Also calculate the percentage of each category and the category percentage of the total budget. As a general guideline, one survey found that top social media costs were internal employee compensation (37 percent), followed by social media advertising (18 percent), external staff compensation (10 percent), and content costs (7 percent).[47] This social media budget template is a good way to calculate how much a social media strategy will cost to execute, but how do you know if the total is too much or too little overall?

A way to put total social media budgets into context is to compare them to those of competitors. The social media audit may have uncovered insight that a main competitor is much more active in social media and seeing business success as a result. A brand's strategy may then be to increase social activity to compete and the budget becomes an estimate of what it costs to match the competitor's level of social media engagement or social media voice. Another way to put social media budgets into context is to compare them to industry standards. For example, an analysis by Content Factory estimated that outsourcing professional social media marketing can cost anywhere from $1,000 per month to $20,000 per month. Admittedly, this range is very broad. Another approach is to look at typical percentages of overall marketing spending and social spending. Take the existing marketing budget and estimate social media spending based on current standards. If a brand uses an outside advertising firm, Content Factory suggests estimating between 10 and 20 percent of the total advertising spending for the agency to manage social media.[48]

The CMO Survey indicates businesses now spend an average of 9 to 13 percent of their marketing budget on social media and this number is expected to increase to 21 percent by 2019.[49] A general guideline would be to take the brand's existing marketing budget as a percentage of revenue (businesses spend an average of 10 percent of revenue on marketing, but this varies by industry[50]), and then calculate a percentage of the marketing budget (such as 13 percent) dedicated to social media. If the estimated budget from the social media budget template is significantly off from this general number, then the social media plan and/or the business objectives may need to be adjusted to fit available resources. Another option is to start with the general estimate and then complete the budget template to see what level of social engagement the brand can afford. If a brand is budgeting against a social media strategic plan tied to real business objectives and the right metrics are in place, then a return on investment (ROI) can be justified.

Theoretically Speaking: Uses and Gratification

Why do people find media valuable? Uses and gratifications has been a core theory in communications since the early 1970s. Researchers such as Jay Blumler, Elihu Katz, Michael Gurevitch, and Alan Rubin first developed this theory. To them it represented a dramatic shift from previous mass-communications research. It flipped the perspective from studying what mass media does to people to what people do to mass media.[51] **Uses and gratifications theory** proposes that audiences are active in media consumption and that they consciously select media content to satisfy their various needs. This theory also shifted perspective in another way by suspending judgments about the cultural value of content. Uses and gratifications assume all content has a potential functional value.[52] Today this even applies to funny cat videos or any meme. Some people value them simply for the entertainment.

With the current increased use of interactive and social media, uses and gratifications theory has taken on new dimensions. Shyam Sundar and Anthony Limperos write about this transition in "Uses and Grats 2.0: New Gratifications for New Media." The authors argue that with the development of interactive, two-way media, more and different gratifications are being sought and obtained from media. Understanding how consumers use various media and the different gratifications they seek can help marketers tailor traditional and social media content to be more effective. Some of the proposed new gratifications sought by consumers from media technology include modality, agency, interactivity, and navigability. Modality or forms include realism, coolness, novelty, and "being there." Agency or ability to act independently includes agency-enhancement, community building, bandwagon, filtering/tailoring, and ownness, which is being unique to oneself. Interactivity includes interaction, activity, responsiveness, and dynamic control. Navigability includes browsing/variety-seeking, scaffolds/navigation aids, and play/fun. Marketing, advertising, and public relations professionals can look at these media technology gratifications and consider how knowing the gratification sought by a target audience could influence the content produced in a social media marketing strategy and plan.[53]

Leap of Faith?

It is one thing to create a smart social media strategy; it is another to sell it to management and implement it in the real world. The *Guardian* looked at this issue when reporting results of a poll of global senior marketers. The survey found that only half of all boardrooms were convinced about social media's value.[54] Why don't executives believe in the business power of social media? It's hard to see the value of social media if a person is not actively using it. According to another survey, 61 percent of CEOs do not use social media at all—a number that has not decreased much from 70 percent in 2012. And of the CEOs who are on social media, 70 percent use only one social network. Thus, many marketing, advertising, and public relations professionals may face roadblocks when presenting social media plans and pitches to the executive level.[55]

It is easier to understand the influence of a TV commercial on purchasing decisions when one has the personal experience of watching TV. It is harder to see how Facebook could influence a purchase decision when one does not personally use the social media network. However, the bottom line is that social media marketing works, not because executives are using it but because the customer is using it to acquire purchasing-decision information. And this reality will impact the organization's bottom line as social engagement becomes an increasingly influential factor in consumers' purchasing decisions.

Because of this reality, social media strategists must not only understand social media and how to complete and execute plans, but they must also play another role. In addition to being a social media strategist, a social media professional must also be willing to be a social media educator. It is the social media manager's job to help executive decision-makers understand that the world is embracing social media and it is influencing business results. Explain that customers are making purchasing decisions in social media about consumer products and services and about business-to-business products and services. Show the data that proves more and more consumers are relying on social media to help them determine what products and services to buy.

MINI CASE

Saucony Find Your Strong

Saucony is a brand of shoes and apparel that focuses on the sport of running. The company is unique from other brands that manufacture products for multiple sports. To emphasize this difference, the brand wanted to create a campaign that really connected with their exclusive target audience of runners.

The result was the "Find Your Strong Project." Find Your Strong was described on the Saucony microsite as: "This Site Is Dedicated to You, The Runner. You are our inspiration and the reason we do what we do. Rather than tell you how we feel about running, we'd rather hear from you." Emphasizing interactivity and leveraging two-way social media, the campaign was based on an ever-changing Running Manifesto of user-generated social media content. The brand community website featured live aggregated content of sayings and photos from real runners sharing their passion for running and the brand. User-generated brand content was shared on Twitter sent to @Saucony or posted with #findyourstrong.[a]

The campaign integrated traditional media such as print and banner ads in running publications like *Runner's World*, but most of the effort was delivered through social media such as Twitter, Facebook, blogs, and YouTube videos.

The campaign increased social media followers from ten thousand to one million in just three years. Chris Lindner, CMO of Saucony, said, "The message was whether you run to get physically stronger or for other reasons, people were finding strength from running. . . . We didn't say, 'Be like Saucony.' We said, 'Find your strong.' People really internalized that and shared their stories with us."[b] During those three years, the Find Your Strong campaign helped to propel Saucony into becoming the fastest-growing brand in the running channel.[c] The brand found a way to translate product features into customer benefits and express them using social media in a way that invited participation. Saucony also created a campaign that helps lessen the pressure and workload of generating all social media content themselves.

[a] "The Find Your Strong Project," Saucony.com, accessed January 20, 2015, http://community.saucony.com/findyourstrongproject/.

[b] Amy Gesenhues, "Get to Know: CMO & SVP of Business Development for Sperry Top-Sider Chris Linder," MarketingLand.com, July 16, 2014, http://marketingland.com/get-know-cmo-svp-sperry-top-sider-chris-lindner-90798.

[c] Meredith Derby Berg, "Saucony Finishes Strong With Its 'Find Your Strong' Strategy," AdAge.com, January 27, 2014, http://adage.com/article/news/saucony-finishes-strong-find-strong-strategy/291329.

Be sure to build a solid social media strategic plan, but also plan to build a solid case for social media acceptance. For a social media plan to be successful, it must first be approved. Build the case for organizational use of social media and be prepared to combat corporate-suite skepticism. It may be helpful to follow other brand examples, like Dove, which built social media efforts slowly over time. Complete the full plan, but gain approval for smaller-scale efforts that can be added to as success is proven.

Chapter 14 Checklist

Social media can change quickly. Visit PostControlMarketing (http://www.postcontrolmar keting.com) for updates, but also use this chapter checklist to briefly check how social media statistics in this chapter have changed since publication.

✓ How has social media measurement changed? What are the key social media metrics that marketers, advertisers, and public relations professionals use to measure perfor–mance today? Which platforms have new analytics capabilities and what metrics have been added to the social media platform analytics described here? Are there new cross–platform metrics tools?

✓ How has social media budgeting changed? Are there new categories of social media expenses? Have social media budgets in general increased? Is the average marketing spending on social media still around 13 percent or has it increased to 21 percent or more?

✓ Check for the latest statistics on executive confidence in and use of social media. Have C–Suite executives and CEOs in general embraced the impact of social media? What are the latest ways social media managers are convincing them of the business relevance of social media strategy and plans?

✳ SOCIAL PLAN PART 14

Compile the Parts and Sell the Story

For this final part of the plan, collect all other social plan parts, 1 through 13, that have been completed throughout the book. Pull these sections together into one cohesive social media marketing story. Strategically this is a plan to follow, but also a story to sell. Even though most leaders know social media is important and want to do something with it, most are still skep-tical of social media methods. This plan will serve as a reference to follow, but also to show and present to organization decision-makers in order to get social media efforts approved, funded, and running.

Begin by pulling out the main sections from each part of the plan completed from chap-ter 1 to chapter 13. Compile the sections into a single report that tells the overall social media story, from research, target audience, and insight to big idea, selected social channels, content, schedule, metrics, and budget. As you tell the social media plan story, remember to support and quantify everything with outside references and data to build a strong and convincing argument. Don't forget to define social media terms for full context and understanding. Most executives may not be familiar with social media terminology. Also, remember that a picture is worth a thousand words. Use screen grabs and charts and graphs when appropriate to provide a more complete and convincing vision of the proposed effort.

Finally, put the pieces together in an order that makes sense. Start with a big picture of the current situation, objectives, and background leading up to the brilliant-solution big idea

and executions in the selected ideal social media channels. Explain why you chose those channels and help people see what the campaign will look like with example content posts. Show at least one "mock up" post per social media channel, visually set in screen grabs of the environment to make each post look as real as possible. Provide an example content schedule to preview weekly activity. Also provide example consumer response through comments and other interactions. Ensure metrics are explained to show how success will be measured, and finally, estimate costs to secure final approval. While structure of the final plan document and presentation can vary, below is an example social media plan format and order to follow:

1. Provide an overview of the brand, main competitor, and current marketing activities.
2. Identify overall business objectives, define the target audience, and describe their social media use.
3. Include the social media audit results in a table and describe insights gained (see table 4.2).
4. Explain social media strategy big idea with theme/hashtag and how it integrates with traditional marketing.
5. Provide the social media channels added and removed with selection rationale considering user statistics, culture, and content.
6. Write and design example content in context of each social channel and include an example content calendar table (see table 14.1).
7. Identify metrics by channel and business objective to show how success will be measured using the example metrics table (see table 14.2).
8. To take the plan one step further, estimate costs. Calculate with one of the methods described in chapter 14 following the example social media budget template (see table 14.3).
9. Don't forget an overall introduction and conclusion or executive summary.

   Once the formal written report is complete, create a presentation to sell the plan in person to organization management and decision-makers. Keep slides simple, using them for visual support, and tell the audience the social media story. Once you have obtained approval, be sure to take social media law, ethics, and etiquette into consideration as you move toward implementation (see chapter 15).

For a condensed version of the social plan see Appendix A: Three-Part Social Plan.

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

1. The Saucony "Find Your Strong" campaign relies heavily on user-generated content. Find another example of a brand that uses fan content as a main component of its social media efforts and explain how they motivate or reward participation.
2. Conduct a brief content analysis of NASCAR's social media presence. What strategy are they following and what kind of content are they producing? Why do you think it has worked so well?
3. Measurement, metrics, budgeting, and return on investment (ROI) are very important. Do some research and determine what experts agree to be the top social media metrics that prove real ROI.

4. Educating management on the value of social media contributing to an organization's over-all business objectives can be difficult, especially if most executives are not active in social media themselves. Do some research and find best practices or arguments that social media professionals use to get their social media efforts approved and funded.

ADDITIONAL EXERCISES

1. For this exercise, go to Seth Godin's blog (sethgodin.typepad.com) and read through some of the thousands of posts he has made over the years. Be sure to cover earlier and later time periods. What do you notice about the posts? Are they all of equal quality? If each is not an earth-shattering insight, then what is consistent that has drawn hundreds of thousands of readers over time? What specifically can you learn from Seth Godin's persistence and consistency that you can apply to your social media strategy? List at least three qualities.
2. For this exercise, go back to the uses and gratifications theory. Look at the proposed new gratifications consumers seek from media technology by Shyam Sundar and Anthony Limperos. Select the gratifications that most apply to social media. Next, select five different social media categories or channels (that is, social networks and media sharing or Facebook and YouTube) and list the types of gratifications each social channel or category could possibly satisfy. Finally, brainstorm and explain examples of the type of brand content that would be created for each type of gratification within each social channel or category.

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Social Media Law, Ethics, and Etiquette

All of us who professionally use the mass media are the shapers of society. We can vulgarize that society. We can brutalize it. Or we can help lift it onto a higher level.[1]

—Bill Bernbach

PREVIEW

When was the last time you looked forward to watching or reading an ad? You most likely don't turn on the TV to watch your favorite television commercial. You probably have never searched Google for the latest banner ads. Yet, you may look forward to seeing some good ads during the Super Bowl and you probably don't mind when you see a good ad that is interesting, funny, or provides valuable information. You may even seek out the entertaining ones on YouTube. Other times you intentionally leave the room during commercials, skip them, or even block them when they get annoying. Our acceptance and rejection of ads has been an ongoing battle in both traditional and online media.

When marketers, advertisers, and public relations professionals abuse their professions by not following the law, by being unethical, or simply by not following good etiquette, they can suffer a decrease in credibility as an individual, brand, or entire industry. Once you lose credibility, it becomes harder to get others to listen to you. In recent years, the demand for

ad-blocking software has increased as a way to avoid marketing scams, bait and switch offers, publicity stunts, PR spin, overly distracting on-screen ads, annoying pop-ups, and unwanted auto-playing videos. Typical online magazine or news articles, once clicked, now download 10KB to 5MB of marketing data around the content readers want. This "bloat" slows computers, crashes browsers, and places codes on users' computers to track their actions across the internet, raising privacy concerns. It is no wonder that the use of ad-blocking software such as AdBlock Plus and Adguard is on the increase.[2]

An **ad blocker** is a program that removes online ads from a website user's desktop and mobile experience.[3] Globally, ad-blocking software users have risen from just 54 million in 2013 to 615 million by 2017. Use of ad blockers grew 30 percent in 2016 alone and now 11 percent of the global internet population blocks ads on the web.[4] This is a significant problem for publishers who rely on advertising to fund the free content they provide to users because ad blocking decreases that revenue. Publications such as *Forbes* depend on up to 80 percent of their total revenue from online advertising. Yet consumers use ad blockers to decrease clutter and distractions, and to speed up loading times. They want to protect their privacy, protect themselves from malware, and save bandwidth and battery on mobile devices. This has led to a somewhat combative relationship between publishers and their readers.[5]

Instead of altering the ad-infested environment that led to the creation and use of ad blockers and seeking user-acceptable alternative means to generate income, many publishers have instead increased their war on ad-blocking software and users. Some publishers have fought back with their own blocking, creating ad-block walls that users cannot get around.[6] In the end, this tactic may not work to increase ad revenue as 74 percent of ad-block users say they simply leave websites with ad-block walls. However, ad-block users indicate they are willing to view some forms of ad formats. Other publications have had success taking a different approach, such as shifting to more acceptable forms of advertising and increasing revenue through online subscriptions. For example, the *New York Times* is experimenting with content paywalls to increase subscriptions and create alternative forms of online advertising. From 2016 to 2017, the *New York Times* digital subscriptions grew 40 percent. During that same period, traditional display and classified advertising revenue declined 19 percent, but digital advertising increased with more acceptable forms such as social media branded content.[7] The *Guardian* has taken another approach by asking readers directly to make one-time contributions to avoid the publication putting up a paywall.[8] Whatever the solution, a more user-centric approach may help negotiate a truce in this battle between readers and publishers where advertising is used as the weapon between sides. Perhaps social media can be a bridge to a more acceptable future.

Social Media Laws and Regulations

Bill Bernbach was an advertising creative director who helped launch the famous international advertising agency Doyle Dane Bernbach (DDB). He was also seen as integral to helping launch the "Creative Revolution of Advertising" in the 1960s, when advertising moved away from more rational, homogenous appeals, proving that creativity could attract attention and increase sales. Bernbach, his techniques, and agency are referenced many times in the popular AMC show *Mad Men*, featuring a fictional ad agency from the early 1960s.[9]

Bernbach's quote at the beginning of this chapter is especially meaningful with regard to the subject of social media marketing communications law and ethics. What are the professional responsibilities of using social media?

Like any marketing, advertising, public relations, or general business practices, actions taken are subject to laws and regulations by government and industry organizations. This also applies to social media action. The **Federal Trade Commission (FTC)** is responsible for protecting consumers in the US from unfair trade practices including deceptive advertising and the use of social media for marketing communication. Businesses within highly regulated industries such as pharmaceuticals, medical devices, financial, gambling, tobacco, alcohol, and firearms have additional restrictions and are further monitored for compliance by agencies such as the Federal Communications Commission (FCC), the US Food and Drug Administration (FDA), US Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC), and the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms, and Explosives (ATF). The US Department of Labor also has specific requirements for employers that may require or prohibit specific actions in relation to employees and social media.

The European Union and other countries around the world have their own social media laws and regulatory agencies. In the United Kingdom, the Competition and Markets Authority (CMA) regulates competition and ensures consumer protection. In Canada, the Competition Bureau ensures that businesses and consumers prosper under fair competitive conditions, and in Australia, the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission (ACCC) protects fair trade to benefit consumers and businesses. With the great increase in global commerce, social media laws and regulations are taking on a global perspective. The **International Consumer Protection and Enforcement Network (ICPEN)** is an organization composed of consumer protection authorities from over sixty countries. With the aim to protect cross-border commercial activities, the ICPEN has released a series of guidelines: "ICPEN Guidelines for Review Administrators," "ICPEN Guidelines for Traders and Marketing Professionals," and "ICPEN Guidelines for Digital Influencers." These guides can be found on their website at ICPEN.org.[10] See table 15.1 for a summary list of

Table 15.1. Main Government Organizations That Regulate Social Media

United States
Federal Trade Commission (FTC)

Canada
Competition Bureau

United Kingdom
Competition and Markets Authority (CMA)

Australia
Australian Competition and Consumer Commission (ACCC)

European Union
European Commission

Global
International Consumer Protection and Enforcement Network (ICPEN)

main government organizations that regulate social media. When it comes to social media laws, there are too many details to include them all. What will be covered in this chapter are general overall guidelines to be followed. What is provided is not intended to be legal advice or to address every situation. Each business and organization should consult their own attorneys to apply current law to specific circumstances and jurisdictions.

A good foundation to start with is the FTC's truth-in-advertising standards, which are based on Section 5 of the FTC Act. The FTC's Business Center publishes an "Advertising FAQs: Guide for Small Business," which is a valuable resource for any size business or organization. Any brand claim made in social media must first meet these general standards. The FTC's "Deception Policy Statement" declares that an ad is deceptive if it contains a statement or omits information that (1) is likely to mislead consumers acting reasonably under the circumstances; and (2) is "material"—that is, important, to a consumer's decision to buy or use the product. The FTC looks at the context of the ad for a consumer acting reasonably on information important to their purchase decision and considers both express and implied claims that must be based on objective evidence. In addition, there are specific requirements for alcohol, tobacco, drug, dietary supplement, environmental, food, and children's ads, as well as rules regarding bait and switch, comparative ads, contests and sweepstakes, endorsements, testimonials, free claims, rebate offers, guarantees, new claims, pricing, and sales.[11]

It is useful to note that the business or marketer and any communications firm they hire, such as advertising agencies and public relations firms, are all held accountable for any misleading claims. Communications partners should make independent checks to ensure that business or organization claims are properly substantiated. If a company violates the law, penalties from the FTC or courts can include cease-and-desist orders, per-day fines, civil penalties ranging from thousands to millions of dollars, and required corrective advertising.[12]

In 2009, the FTC came out with additional endorsement guidelines because of the growth of bloggers being compensated with free products, money, or advertising revenue for writing product reviews that consumers used as unbiased opinions to inform their purchase decisions. Those endorsement guidelines have been expanded to include social media networks where influencers are posting on behalf of brands. Due to the large increase in this type of activity, the FTC issued a press release in 2017 reminding influencers and brands of their responsibility to clearly disclose relationships. The **FTC Endorsement Guides** explain that marketers or advertisers and influencers promoting or endorsing products are responsible for clearly and conspicuously disclosing material connections that affect the weight or credibility consumers give to an endorsement in social media. Influencers can be consumers, celebrities, spokespersons, and employees. Material connections could include monetary payment, free product gifts, or a business and family relationship.[13]

How should brands and influencers disclose relationships? The FTC does not require specific wording. Yet, in response to common questions about its Endorsement Guides, it suggests wording such as "Company X gave me this product to try" or "Some of the products I'm going to use in this video were sent to me by their manufacturers." It also matters where and when these disclosures are given. The FTC advises that it is not enough to have a general disclosure on the home page of a website or blog, in the description of a video, or even at the end of an Instagram post. Disclosures must be given clearly and prominently at the beginning of the actual post, video, or podcast, in close proximity to the claims to which

they relate, and not hidden behind hyperlinks. Special consideration is given for microblogs like Twitter due to the 140- to 280-character limit. Here the FTC advises starting tweets with the words "#sponsored," "#promotion," or "#ad." If a brand and endorser are using a live video steam or video game playthrough stream, the FTC suggests a continuous, clear, and conspicuous disclosure because viewers could tune in and leave at anytime.[14]

Additional considerations include barring endorsers from talking about products if they haven't tried them and from saying that products are wonderful if they actually think they are awful. If a brand is running a contest or sweepstakes in social media, this should be disclosed with wording such as "#contest" or "#sweepstakes." The FTC indicates that asking for honest opinions and reviews is okay, but if the person receives some form of value in return, like a free product or a discount, this must be disclosed. Keep in mind that ratings and review sites such as Amazon or Yelp will have their own standards that brands must follow in addition to the FTC guidelines. Brands that use a network of bloggers and social media influencers to promote their products have a responsibility to provide reasonable training about claims and disclosure requirements and to regularly monitor those brand partners to ensure compliance. If employees are allowed to post about their employer's products and services, they need to disclose that employment relationship when making an endorsement. This also applies to any advertising agency or public relations firm employees who are endorsing a client's product or service. Responsibility for compliance rests with the company and any communications firms that may be hired to implement plans and programs.[15] View these guidelines for yourself at FTC.gov.

For brands operating in the United Kingdom, the Competition and Markets Authority (CMA) has a guidance publication similar to the FTC's which can be found on the website GOV.uk. Entitled "Online reviews and endorsements: advice for businesses," it details the requirements for social media reviews and endorsements.[16] In Canada, the Competition Bureau offers a guidance document, "The Deceptive Marketing Practices Digest," covering online advertising and disclosure issues that can be found on CompetitionBureau.gc.ca.[17] In Australia, the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission (ACCC) offers advice on avoiding misleading claims in social media. This can be found under the business section of their website at ACCC.gov.au.[18] In addition, remember that the ICPEN offers overall global guidance at ICPEN.org.

Despite these government guides and resources, there has been a rise in undisclosed promotional posts. The *Guardian* reports that in the UK complaints about content on social networks have risen 193 percent since 2012. Many social influencers are failing to inform readers that they have been paid to publicize products.[19] In the US, the FTC has sent warning letters to celebrities to remind them of their disclosure obligations.[20] Despite the FTC efforts, an analysis of the fifty most-followed Instagram celebrities by Mediakix found that 93 percent of posts promoting a brand were not FTC-compliant.[21]

The Word of Mouth Marketing Association (WOMMA) has published "Social Media Disclosure Guidelines: Best Practices for Transparency and Honesty in Digital, Social & Mobile Marketing." This resource explains that companies have certain responsibilities to ensure that influencers, groups, business partners, and employees properly disclose relationships as well as to ensure that statements about their own and their competitors' products and services are truthful and accurate. WOMMA suggests organizations must first have explicit

social media policies. The brand should also ensure that its vendors have their own social media policies that align with the brand's standards. It is not enough to have a policy and publish it on the corporate website. Brands should also train and educate influencers, vendors, partners, and employees on those policies. Brands also have the responsibility to monitor campaigns implemented by these parties to ensure that they are following the standards. If situations are found where disclosure policies were not followed or claims were not properly substantiated, corrective action should be taken. Finally, brands should regularly consult relevant government websites for current views on social media disclosures and claims.[22]

For any organization or company today, it is important to have a social media policy that sets standards for employees, vendors, partners, and the brand. A **social media policy** is an organization's standards for conduct regarding the way its employees post content in social media as part of their jobs or as private individuals.[23] The Forbes Human Resources Council suggests that a social media policy should be a comprehensive document including guidelines across many categories, and best practices with training tips for employees.[24] Jylian Russell on the Hootsuite blog indicates social media policies can vary greatly depending on the organization and can be more of a condensed document presenting straightforward guidelines.[25] Social media policies can range anywhere from the two-page Adidas guidelines[26] to the fourteen-page New York City Schools guidelines.[27] Intel's social media guidelines take a balanced approach with a summary of three rules of engagement expressed in a simple graphic as (1) Disclose your relationship to Intel, (2) Protect Intel, and (3) Use common sense when posting. The policy then expands on the three rules with further, detailed explanations, examples, and links to additional resources.[28]

A good policy will consider standards for official brand accounts and standards for employees on their own accounts. Russell suggests that a social media policy include rules and regulations for behavior and conduct including brand guidelines, etiquette, engagement, and confidentiality. Roles and responsibilities should be specified from message approval to service and security. Legal risks should be addressed such as crediting sources, confidentiality, and disclosure. A security risks section can educate on best practices about secure passwords, attacks, or scams, and accountability should be addressed to remind employees of their responsibility.[29]

The Forbes Human Resources Council takes a different approach, explaining that a social media policy should include important categories of information to help keep a brand safe. They indicate that a policy should first educate about social media, including specific platforms' terms of use, conditions, and limitations. Then remind employees about blurred personal and professional lives and how personal social media actions can have professional implications. Finally, employees should also be reminded to think carefully before posting about controversial issues and to follow conventions as a representative for the brand. Standards for respecting professional boundaries of coworkers should be set, including guidelines for addressing workplace issues and conflicts inside the company and not on a public social forum. Employees should know to clarify and assert their opinions as their own, indicating that they do not represent the company, and they need to ensure that they do not disclose confidential or proprietary information.[30]

Another important legal consideration in social media is the use of user-generated content or UGC. UGC is an important part of any effective social media effort. Many fans

often share content to the brand hashtag or handle, and brands may run contests, events, and promotions to intentionally elicit this content. Marketing, advertising, and public relations professionals should take care to follow best practices and ensure good policies when it comes to sharing, repurposing, and eliciting user-generated brand social media content. One important practice is attribution. **Attribution** is giving original authors credit for their content.[31] The fan-based marketing company Tradable Bits offers suggestions on how to repurpose user-generated content from social media. The way to attribute user-generated content varies per platform, but a general standard is to include the original network's official log, author's username, profile picture, and a live link to the original content. On Sprout Social's blog, Alex York suggests adding the words "credit," "photo," "cc," or "by" for attribution.[32]

In addition, brands should explicitly and transparently request permission for the rights to use fan photos and post content. This can be as simple as replying to fan posts offering praise and asking that they grant the brand rights with a response. To go with rights requests, ensure that the organization has a publicly published rights-granted policy that spells out the details of how the brand will utilize user-generated content. That way fans know exactly what rights they are granting.[33] Having a published user-generated content policy is another best practice to go along with an employee or brand social media policy. A **user-generated content policy** is an organization's standards for rights granted to use consumer-created content in brand marketing. The website TermsFeed suggests that such policies include clauses addressing intellectual property, liability, privacy, and acceptable use.[34] Macy's has a "User Generated Content Policy" published on their website that covers brand social media channels and hashtags.[35] While these general guidelines may be helpful, brands should consult their own company's general counsel before implementing any UGC campaign.

Social media also includes content curation on social networks and writing of new content such as blog posts pulled from many sources. It is important that brands take into consideration how to properly cite internet sources. Craig Silverman of the American Press Institute indicates that the starting point for curation or aggregation of social media content is attribution. Beyond that, be careful not to extract all the value of an original post or include so many quotes that there is nothing more for the reader to gain from visiting the original source.[36] Pawan Deshpande on the Content Curation Marketing blog adds that brands should strive to only reproduce the portion of a headline or article that is required to make the point and provide context and commentary for the material used.[37]

Corey Wainwright provides a nice overview of considerations on the HubSpot blog. When quoting someone else's online content, use direct quotes, include their name and company, and link to the source. Also check the website's or blog's content usage guidelines to ensure you follow them. Statistics or data used should give credit to the company and link directly to the page where the data was published. If an idea was originated or a story was first broken by someone else, indicate that in the copy as well with name, company, and link. Wainwright suggests citing sources in social media by using "via@username" in Twitter or Instagram. On Facebook, find the person and link to their timeline, and in LinkedIn, share the content and mention the person and company name. Other considerations include "photo by @ username" or "content by @username."[38]

Photos and videos are different. If you took the photo or created the video yourself, or if the brand bought stock photos or rights from a photographer, you don't need attribution

if it is used under the rights provided. But be careful not to assume ownership or rights. Just because you found a photo or video in a brand folder, don't assume the company has bought it and has the right to use it forever in all circumstances. Before using any photo, be sure you have the rights and that you are using the photo within those rights in terms of the acceptable media and within the specified time period. Alternatives include free stock photo resources and Creative Commons copyright licenses. **Creative Commons** provides licenses as an alternative way for creators to retain copyright while allowing others to copy, distribute, and make some use of their work. There are multiple levels of licenses available, from attribution commercial use to noncommercial attribution.[39] Be sure to check the license level of any work found. Do not simply perform a Google images search and use what you find. Just because it is on the internet doesn't mean that it is free. Be sure to check each photo's individual copyright notice and seek permission from the owner.

Again, these are simply general guidelines and do not imply legal advice. Brands should consult their own lawyers and directly reference copyright law, fair use, and plagiarism requirements under the Digital Millennium Copyright Act. The **Digital Millennium Copyright Act (DMCA)** updated US copyright law to apply to the development of electronic commerce, distribution of digital works, and protection of copyright owners' rights.[40] Brands from other countries or global brands operating in multiple countries should check with each applicable governing authority regulating commerce, competition, and consumer protection such as the Competition and Markets Authority in the United Kingdom, the Competition Bureau in Canada, the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission in Australia, and the International Consumer Protection and Enforcement Network for overall global perspective.

Social Media Ethics and Etiquette

In addition to the social media laws and regulations already discussed, each organization and marketing communications group should consider its own industry's code of ethics. These codes of ethics vary on the unique situation, but some overall considerations are the Word of Mouth Marketing Association (WOMMA), the American Marketing Association (AMA), the American Association of Advertising Agencies (AAAA), the American Advertising Federation (AAF), the Institute for Advertising Ethics (IAE), and the Public Relations Society of America (PRSA). Other country-associated professional groups and individual company industry groups vary from the American Medical Association (AMA) to SNAC International (formerly the Snack Food Association). In the United Kingdom, look for industry associations such as the Marketing Agencies Association (MAA), the Advertising Association (AA), and the Public Relations and Communications Association (PRCA). In Canada, consider the Canadian Association of Marketing Professionals (CAMP), the Association of Canadian Advertisers (ACA), and the Canadian Public Relations Society (CPRS). Australia has the Australian Association of National Advertisers (AANA), the Australian Marketing Institute (AMI), and the Public Relations Institute of Australia (PRIA).

The Word of Mouth Marketing Association (WOMMA) has a code of ethics that it requires its members to adhere to which is presented as being essential to maintaining a quality reputation. The Code of Ethics and Standards of Conduct are seen as self-regulatory efforts for responsible professional practice. The "Standards of Conduct Required of

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Wal-Marting Across America

In 2006 a blog appeared online published by a couple named Jim and Laura who were chronicling their journey across the US in an RV traveling from Las Vegas to Georgia. As they drove across the country, they stayed for free in Walmart store parking lots. Along the way the couple wrote about how great the stores were and interviewed Walmart employees who all loved their jobs. This was a public relations professionals and marketers dream. However, this amazing earned media wasn't earned, it was completely orchestrated and paid for by Walmart through their public relations agency, Edelman. What was the problem?

The fact that the bloggers were paid was never disclosed. People felt deceived when they found out that the trip and the blog were just a PR stunt. Consumers were misled into thinking that the couple and tour did not have a connection to Walmart.[a] Even before the specific social media disclosure rules were written by the FTC, this fell under the category of deceptive advertising.

BusinessWeek.com finally revealed that "Wal-Marting Across America" was a fake blog supported through a corporate-funded organization called Working Families for Walmart. An *Advertising Age* article noted that Edelman Worldwide helped to write the WOMMA code of ethics which states, "Honesty of identity: You never obscure your identity." It was also against the Public Relations Society of America (PRSA) code of ethics. The incident was an embarrassment for the agency, industry, and company.[b] It also led to a new term called flog. **Flog** is a paid-for, fake blog. CEO Richard Edelman apologized for failing to be transparent about the identity of the bloggers and reconfirmed the agency's commitment to openness and trust. Many companies that are good at social media today first learned from mistakes early on, such as we've already discussed—Dell (chapter 11), Home Depot (chapter 12), and Comcast (chapter 13). Today Walmart is focusing on using user-generated content to change the brand's perception. And Edelman publishes the industry-respected Trust Barometer that helps monitor consumer trust in business, governments, NGOs, and media across the world. [c]

[a] Kiley Skene, "A PR Case Study: Wal-Marting Across America," NewsGeneration.com (blog), April 4, 2014, http://www.newsgeneration.com/2014/04/04/pr-case-study-walmarting-across-america/.

[b] Mya Frazier, "Edelman Eats Humble Pie: Unmasked as Force Behind Wal-Mart Blog, PR Giant Does Damage Control," AdAge.com, October 19, 2006, http://adage.com/article/news/edelman-eats-humble-pie/112588/.

[c] "Edelman Company Profile," CorporateWatch.org, March 30, 2012, https://corporatewatch.org/edelman-company-profile/.

WOMMA Members" include: (1) discloser of identity, (2) disclosure of consideration and compensation received, (3) disclosure of relationship, (4) compliance with FTC Guides, (5) genuine honesty in communication, (6) respect for venue (such as website, blog, forum), (7) compliance with laws pertaining to marketing with children and adolescents, and (8) compliance with media–specific rules. For further details visit womma.org/ethics.[41] For a look at an early blog campaign from a national brand and public relations firm that didn't follow some of these standards, see "Mini Case: Wal–Marting Across America."

Other ethical considerations in social media include paying for reviews and buying followers. Brands should always be transparent and truthful in social media. It may be very

tempting to jumpstart a campaign by purchasing followers and positive reviews, but these practices ultimately have negative consequences. David Hagenbuch of Mindful Marketing found that five thousand followers can be bought for as little as $29 or fifty thousand followers for $119. In addition, social media account owners can buy "likes." Prices for likes start at $14 for five hundred worldwide likes and up to $1,325 for twenty thousand US likes. He says this type of marketing is deceptive. Consumers make purchase decisions based on the numbers of followers and likes. If their followers and likes are fake, there is no basis for this social proof. Hagenbuch also points out that it is unjust. A company can work hard for months to obtain a legitimate ten thousand followers, yet a competitor may simply pay $39 dollars and get them overnight. In the end, it is simply mindless marketing and eventually consumers will uncover the fake facade.[42]

Many retailers, websites, and social media platforms with ratings and reviews are stepping up enforcement of rules and removing companies with fake ratings and reviews. Other social platforms are cracking down on fake followers as this is an important measurement for paid social media and impacts the overall credibility of a platform. AdEspresso did an experiment where they grew an Instagram account the regular way and by buying fake followers using bots. Over the long term, the regular method beat out the bot for total followers, engagement, and sales.[43] Moreover, consumers often find out about such deceptive practices on their own, which can blow up into a public relations crisis as stories are shared in social media and picked up by the news media. In January 2018, the *New York Times* published an article on the social media black market that exposed companies that sell fake followers and revealed that numerous celebrities, athletes, and politicians had purchased fake followers.

Not only are these practices unethical but they can also cost organizations. In Canada, Bell Mobile was forced to pay a $1.25 million penalty by Canada's Competition Bureau for having employees write online reviews in the Apple AppStore and Google Play store without disclosing their ties.[44] In the United Kingdom, the Competition and Markets Authority has worked with the International Consumer Protection and Enforcement Network to prevent a US firm from using deceptive online reviews posted by employees and to ensure compliance by Norwegian online newspapers to clearly distinguish marketing messages from editorial content. In another case, the ICPEN sought to stop an Australian property management company from blocking guests the company feels may leave negative TripAdvisor reviews from receiving emails inviting their feedback.[45] Amazon has been suing companies that sell fake reviews along with individuals offering to write fake reviews. From 2015 to 2016, the online retail giant went after over one thousand defendants for posting false reviews.[46] Crys Wiltshire from digital marketing firm gShift says that buying fake followers decreases engagement rates and can get accounts flagged or suspended. A brand may also be wasting money investing in influencers without large numbers of real fans, which can hurt social media metrics and ROI.[47]

One other ethical consideration is the use of social media automation or bots. Automation can be a great time saver for an organization and there are many tools and options. Yet automation must be used carefully in social media where most people who participate are looking for real human interaction. AI is improving, but often bots stand out like a sore thumb in a social media feed and can hurt the brand's reputation—perhaps more than if the company did not respond at all. A **social bot** is a computer program used in social media networks to automatically generate messages simulating conversation.[48] Social bots are also

used in the unethical practices discussed above to generate fake followers and engagement such as likes and shares. Auto-responder programs can help scale engagement, but they don't understand sarcasm and nuance. They are only based on simple keywords and commands so a lot can go wrong if no human is watching.[49]

During the Occupy movement in the United States, Bank of America's automated Twitter bot had some unfortunate responses. After @OccupyLA posted "you can help by stop stealing people's houses!!!!" @BofA_Help responded with "We'd be happy to review your account with you to discuss any concerns. Please let us know if you need assistance." The account kept repeating the same four or five prewritten responses promising that they were there to help, listen, and learn from their customers while directly responding to outright criticisms of the bank. To one person who tweeted that they were chased away from Bank of America headquarters by New York City police, the brand responded, "Thank you for following up. Have a great weekend!"[50] Two years later Coca-Cola's Super Bowl automated tweet campaign was tricked into drawing #MakeItHappy images from Adolf Hitler's *Mein Kampf*.[51] Similarly, the New England Patriots automatic tweets were tricked into producing a jersey image with a racial slur.[52] Jenn Chen on the Sprout Social blog suggests using bots in helpful ways such as automating articles shared from RSS feeds of trusted sources, scheduling of evergreen content, posting content during the optimal schedule, or finding influencers. On the other hand, tasks that should not be automated include comments, likes, retweets, favorites, follows, or auto-posting from one network to another. Brand accounts should also always be monitored by people—automated responses are not a substitute for real human listening and response.[53]

Beyond brand considerations, social media brings together our personal, professional, and working lives in a way no other medium has before. With 2.8 billion active social media users in the world,[54] 97 percent of Fortune 500 companies active on LinkedIn, 86 percent on Twitter, 84 percent on Facebook,[55] and 92 percent of recruiters using social media to find candidates, it is too important not to carefully consider your actions.[56] How should someone navigate this social landscape where worlds collide and brands communicate like people in one-on-one conversations with consumers?

Ethics studies ideas about good and bad behavior.[57] **Etiquette** is the proper way to behave.[58] Both combine into **professionalism**, which is the skill, good judgment, and polite behavior expected from a person trained to do a job such as social media marketing.[59] Because social media often blurs the lines between personal and professional lives, it is useful to look at actions in social media from three perspectives: personal (as an individual), professional (as an employee or prospective employee), and brand (as an organization). Because personal, professional, and brand posts often get compressed through the same public social medium to reach personal friends, professional contacts, and brand fans, great care should be taken when posting (see figure 15.1). Considering so much of our lives is impacted by online presence, many have started managing their careers online by treating themselves as a brand. **Personal branding** is a practice where people market themselves and their careers like brands.[60] Personal branding includes marketing in terms of creating a brand, advertising by promoting oneself, and public relations for reputation management and press coverage. Personal branding can also be thought of as simply an ongoing process of establishing a desired image to obtain career opportunities. From these various perspectives certain questions should be considered before posting content in social media.

Figure 15.1. Our social media worlds are colliding.

Most reading this book have experienced social media via personal social use. Yet it shouldn't be assumed that what is done on personal social media accounts only applies to personal life. A CareerBuilder survey found that 60 percent of employers use social sites to research job candidates, 41 percent say they use social networking sites to research current employees, and 26 percent have found content online that caused them to reprimand or fire an employee. Even if someone tries to keep their social profiles completely private, 41 percent of employers say they are less likely to interview someone if they find no information about that person online.[61] It should be noted that these insights are based on responses to surveys. Employers and human resources professionals should consult their own policies, lawyers, and the latest regulations concerning employment laws. This can especially vary across industries, such as in healthcare where HIPPA laws apply, or from country to country, such as those in the European Union where stricter protection for employees in social media is enforced.

The top types of social media content that concerns employers include inappropriate photographs and videos, drinking and using drugs, discriminatory comments, bad-mouthing a previous company or fellow employee, and poor communication skills. However, employers also find information in social media that may cause them to consider hiring a candidate, including a background that supports job qualifications, a professional image, a personality

that fits company culture, a well-rounded range of interests, and great communication skills.[62] What about ranting? Rants seem to be a popular activity in social media and many may feel like ranting can help blow off steam and make you feel better. But research has found that people's moods actually decline after reading rants, and after writing rants, they became more angry, not less.[63] Forum moderator Bill Horne describes ranting as watching "others being burned at the electronic stake as they abandon logic, courtesy, common sense and self-respect."[64] In the end no one feels better.

Recruitment professional Kate Croucher says about candidates and social media, "If they are sharing lots of interesting things, and making insightful comments or forming strong opinions, and interacting with others in a positive way, it shows their ability to rally people behind them and develop effective relationships."[65] The following is a list of questions to consider before posting on social media from a personal, professional, and brand perspective. For a summary of these questions and considerations see table 15.2. Consider the following questions before posting or commenting in a personal capacity on social media:

1. *Is it all about me?* No one likes someone who only talks about themselves. The same applies in social media. Balance boasting with complimenting.
2. *Am I stalking someone?* It is good to be driven and persistent but be careful not to cross the line into creepy. Don't be too aggressive in outreach.
3. *Am I spamming them?* Not everything or even the majority of what you post should ask for something. Don't make everything self-serving.
4. *Am I venting or ranting?* Venting and ranting may feel good, but research says it doesn't help and no matter how justified you feel, it never presents you in a positive light. Do not post negative comments or gossip.
5. *Did I ask before I tagged?* You had a great time and want to share those memories, but your friends, family, or employer may have different standards. Check before you tag people in posts.
6. *Did I read before commenting or sharing?* Don't make yourself look foolish by not fully reviewing something you are commenting on or sharing with others. Don't jump to conclusions.
7. *Am I grateful and respectful?* Don't take people for granted. Respond and thank those who engage with you.
8. *Is this the right medium for the message?* Not everything should be said in social media. Consider the feelings of the other person. Some messages should be given in person, by phone, or in email.
9. *Am I logged in to the right account?* There are too many corporate examples of embarrassing posts meant for personal jokes that went out on official brand accounts. Always double-check which account you are on. Don't post personal information on brand accounts.

When it comes to professional social media use as an employee or contractor, consider how social use impacts careers and employers. This impact could occur on professional social networks such as LinkedIn, in a professional group on Facebook, or in separate social media accounts or on a blog with a more professional or career purpose. Once hired, always refer

Table 15.2. Social Media Etiquette and Ethics Template

Personal Social Action (As an Individual)	Professional Social Action (As a Current/Prospective Employee)	Brand Social Action (As an Organization)
Is it all about me? (Compliment, don't just boast)	**Does it meet Social Media Policy?** (Follow employer/client requirements)	**Does it speak to target market?** (Meets their wants/needs, not yours)
Am I stalking someone? (Don't be too aggressive in outreach)	**Does it hurt company reputation?** (Personal posts represent your employer)	**Does it add value?** (Make it educational, insightful, fun)
Am I spamming them? (Don't make everything self-serving)	**Does it help company marketing?** (Be an advocate for your brand)	**Does it fit the social channel?** (Environment, policies, standards)
Am I venting or ranting? (Don't post negative comments/gossip)	**Would my boss be happy seeing it?** (Private posts aren't fully private)	**Is it authentic and transparent?** (Don't hide/exclude anything relevant)
Did I ask before I tagged? (Check before you tag people in photos)	**Am I open about who I work for?** (Reveal financial connections)	**Is it real and unique?** (Don't use auto-responses or spam)
Did I read before commenting or sharing? (Don't jump to conclusions)	**Am I being fair and accurate?** (Constructive criticism with evidence)	**Is it positive and respectful?** (Don't bad-mouth competition/customers)
Am I grateful and respectful? (Respond and thank those who engage)	**Am I respectful, not malicious?** (Don't post what you wouldn't say in person)	**Does it meet codes of conduct?** (See WOMMA Code of Ethics, etc.)
Is it the right place for the message? (Some messages are appropriate elsewhere)	**Does it respect intellectual property?** (Get permission to post content)	**Does it meet laws and regulations?** (See FTC Social Guidelines, etc.)
Am I in the right account? (No personal posts on brand accounts)	**Is this confidential information?** (Don't disclose nonpublic info)	**Does it meet the Social Media Policy?** (Follow your own organization's standards)

Have I listened twice as much as I am talking?

to the company's social media policy, but there are also useful, general guidelines to consider. Not only should social media activity not hurt the company, but many companies today also see active personal social media use as a medium of advocacy for their brand. Consider that anything that is posted may impact professional image as a potential employee at another company or organization. Before posting a comment as a professional, consider:

1. *Does it meet the Social Media Policy?* Most organizations have official social media policies that you probably received when hired. Don't assume you know what the policy says. Many employees have been fired for not following company social media regulations. Make sure you know and follow employer or client requirements.
2. *Does it hurt my company's reputation?* No matter how many disclaimers you put on your accounts, such as "views are my own," certain content and behavior will negatively impact your employer. If your bio states where you work, your personal account represents your employer.
3. *Does it help my company's marketing?* Employee advocacy is an important strategy. Have a positive impact on your company's image and when you can advocate for your brand in social.
4. *Would my boss/client be happy to see it?* You may not have "friended" your boss or client but a coworker may have and your post is only a share or screen grab away. Even private accounts are never fully private.
5. *Am I being open about who I work for?* It is good to post positive content about your employer and it is nice to receive gifts, but if you are trying to pass it off as unbiased opinion, that is wrong. Be transparent about your financial connections.
6. *Am I being fair and accurate?* Everyone is entitled to his or her personal opinion, but if your opinion tends to always be unfounded and seems to have an agenda, it will reflect negatively upon you. Criticism is welcome when it is constructive and opinion is backed by evidence.
7. *Am I being respectful and not malicious?* People can get very insensitive, judgmental, and angry in social media posts. That does not convey a professional image. Don't post what you wouldn't say in person. Even an outburst in person fades in memory, but a malicious post is there forever.
8. *Does it respect intellectual property?* Not everything on the internet is free. Check for or get permission to post company or client brand assets and content.
9. *Is this confidential information?* As an employee or contractor, you are granted access to privileged and confidential information. Don't assume it is fine to share. Do not disclose nonpublic company or client information.

The final perspective is for people responsible for posting on behalf of an organization or company from the brand account. For those who are responsible for creating and sharing brand social media content, there are additional considerations to ensure that the content that is created helps to meet business objectives and follows laws and regulations. Before posting or commenting as a brand on a social media account, consider:

1. *Does it speak to my target market?* Social media is unique from traditional marketing and requires a different perspective to be effective. Be sure to focus on your target's wants and needs, not yours.

2. *Does it add value?* Social media only works if people view and share it. Make your content educational, insightful, or entertaining to grab interest and draw engagement.

3. *Does it fit the social channel?* Don't post content ideal for Twitter on Instagram or Reddit. Each channel has its own culture and community. Make sure each post fits the channel's environment, mission, and policies or standards.

4. *Is it authentic and transparent?* Trying to trick people into clicking a link or making a purchase will get you nowhere. Don't hide or exclude any relevant information.

5. *Is it real and unique?* Bots can automate tasks and be a great time saver, but use them for the right actions. Don't use auto-responses and create anything that could be perceived as spam.

6. *Is it positive and respectful?* It may be fine to talk trash about competitors or complain about customers in the office, but not in social media. Don't bad-mouth the competition or customers.

7. *Does it meet codes of conduct?* As professionals, we are part of trade associations that set standards of conduct. Be sure you are meeting these ethical standards such as the WOMMA, AMA, AAAA, or PRSA's Code of Ethics.

8. *Does it meet all laws and regulations?* Government has been catching up with social media and has issued regulations and laws you must follow. See guides on requirements like the FTC social media endorsement guidelines.

9. *Does it meet the Social Media Policy?* Most likely your brand or a client's brand has a social media policy. Ensure you follow your own company's standards.

The last consideration in all social media action from a personal, professional, or brand perspective has to do with listening. A recent study has shown that listening can influence up to 40 percent of a leader's performance.[66] Listening improves relationships and social media is based on relationships with friends, colleagues, and customers. Thus, the last question to ask before posting or commenting in any personal, professional, or brand perspective is:

10. *Have I listened twice as much as I am talking?* Do you fully understand the person, organization, or situation you are commenting about? We have two ears and one mouth for a reason. Taking the time to listen has saved many a person or brand from putting their foot in their mouth and given valuable insight into creating successful social media efforts.

Consumer Data Privacy and Security

One final topic to consider is consumer data collection. As a social media professional, you will have the ability to collect and purchase an enormous amount of information about consumers. Deciding what to collect, what to sell, what to buy, and what to do with that information is an important legal and ethical issue. While this topic is much broader than social media and goes into digital marketing, e-commerce, customer relationship management (CRM), and even the general business practices of any organization, it is useful to mention in the context of social media. Main topics to consider in relation to social media strategy include privacy policies, behavioral targeting, data brokers, and data security.

For the Federal Trade Commission's perspective and standards in the US, see their report "Privacy & Data Security Update (2016)." at FTC.gov.[67] In general, Europe tends

to have stricter consumer protection rules, especially with the new European Union (EU) General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) mentioned in chapter 13.[68] Organizations should have privacy policies and data security standards. A **privacy policy** is a statement that defines an organization's policy on collecting and releasing information about a visitor or user.[69] It is important to note that having a privacy policy does not guarantee privacy protection. A privacy policy explains what information is collected, how it is used, and whether it is kept confidential or shared or sold to other firms, researchers, or sellers like data brokers. A survey of US internet users found that 52 percent incorrectly believed the statement, "When a company posts a privacy policy, it ensures that the company keeps confidential all the information it collects on users." Many policies are just legal documents that disclose how customer data is managed.[70] Even then privacy policies often use vague language about what is collected and how it is used. Another survey found that only 31 percent report that they understand how companies can share their personal information.[71] It is best to read all privacy policies before using a website, service, or app.

Who buys and sells this consumer data? **Data brokers** are businesses that collect consumers' personal information and sell it to other organizations.[72] Data brokers collect information about consumers from public and nonpublic sources such as courthouse records, website cookies, and loyalty card programs. In the US there is no regulation that requires data brokers to share the information they have on consumers. Recently large data brokers like Acxiom, which is said to collect an average of 1,500 pieces of information on more than 200 million US citizens, have started self-regulation efforts.[73] Acxiom has started the website aboutthedata.com where consumers can see what information has been collected about them, edit that information, and opt-out from the use of their marketing data.[74] The buying and selling of consumer information has become very profitable. It has been reported that data brokering is now a 200-billion-dollar industry.[75]

Other concepts to consider that are relevant to paid social media include behavioral targeting. **Behavioral targeting** is used by online advertisers to customize messages based on web-browsing behavior such as web pages visited or searches made.[76] This can help improve the relevance and effectiveness of social media ads. This is better for marketers, but it is also important to note that some consumers have viewed this as creepy. Recent criticism includes consumers complaining that Facebook listens to their conversations to place customized ads in their feed. Yet this is a behavioral targeting technique the company denies.[77] It has been revealed that Facebook has also allowed third party companies like Cambridge Analytica to collect private information from their users. Facebook CEO Mark Zuckerberg was called to testify before the US Congress over these allegations. Big data has enabled an enormous amount of consumer data that can be leveraged in many ways. But just because you can doesn't always mean you should.

Another consideration on this topic is data security. **Data security** refers to the measures organizations take to ensure digital privacy to prevent unauthorized access to computers, databases, and websites.[78] Data security is a growing concern of most organizations. This responsibility most likely rests with business Information Technology (IT) departments, yet marketers, advertisers, and public relations professionals must ensure that they know what measures are in place to communicate to consumers. Also, with the rise in high-profile data breaches at Target, Yahoo, eBay, and Equifax, brands need social media to communicate to worried consumers in crisis communication plans. No matter which country or countries

your organization is doing business in, you should ensure that the company has strong and compliant privacy policies and data security measures in place.

This chapter just touched the surface of social media law, ethics, and etiquette. For formal legal advice, consult organization lawyers, official documents, and more in-depth resources. We must also consider growing evidence of the negative effects of social media use. New evidence, studies, and social media founder testimonies are just beginning to come out. Is social media addicting, bad for our health and our society? For further consideration of these important questions see "Additional Exercises," number 2, at the end of this chapter. The message of this chapter is that what you put out into the public helps to shape society. As Bill Bernbach said, you can choose to vulgarize and brutalize society, or you can choose to help lift it to a higher level.

Theoretically Speaking: Elaboration Likelihood Model

Most marketing communication is designed to persuade and this includes advertising or public relations in social media. Thus it is helpful to understand theories of persuasion that may influence social media strategy. A key theory of persuasion is the Elaboration Likelihood Model (ELM) first developed by John T. Cacioppo and Richard E. Petty in the 1980s.[79] The **Elaboration Likelihood Model** is a dual process theory that proposes there are two routes to persuasion—the central route and peripheral route.[80]

Cacioppo and Petty indicated the persuasion level of a message can impact the attitude of a consumer who receives the message and explained that there are two routes to persuasion or this attitude change. The central route of persuasion requires longer thinking or elaboration. This requires motivation, which can come from relevant messages, high involvement, strong arguments, and little distraction. In the peripheral route of persuasion, the person does not spend time with the message—they don't elaborate on the meaning. Yet this route can still be persuasive by eliciting thought that doesn't require as much brainpower, like past experience, popularity, peer pressure, authority, attractiveness, or scarcity. Thus the central route applies to audiences with high motivation and the ability to think about the message. They focus on the quality of the message arguments and this can lead to lasting attitude change. The peripheral route is for audiences who have low motivation or lack the ability to think about the message. It involves more superficial processing that is more about attractiveness or surface features.[81]

How does ELM apply to social media? Consider the product and service and target audience, which may indicate the need to emphasize one route over the other. Buying a new car is usually a high motivation decision and requires deep processing because there is a lot of money involved in the decision. Messages for a car may take the central route. On the other hand, buying a pack of gum is usually a low-motivation decision. There is not a lot on the line. Thus a gum message may take a more superficial approach following the peripheral route focused on looks and surface features. You may think of these as more rational versus more emotional persuasion appeals. This said, consumers don't buy cars simply on strong arguments and rational appeals. Many also fall in love with the way a car looks, sounds, or the image it has. They buy with both their head and their heart. At the end of the day, the best message route for brand strategy is usually a combination of both central and peripheral routes. Or different social media content may be chosen to highlight rational (central route) or emotional (peripheral route) messages at various times and places.

Chapter 15 Checklist

Social media can change quickly. Visit PostControlMarketing (http://www.postcontrolmarketing.com) for updates, but also use this chapter checklist to briefly check how social media statistics in this chapter have changed since publication.

✓ How has social media law changed? Has the FTC updated their regulation for endorsements? Have they come out with additional regulations that must be followed to ensure social media marketing is not deceptive? Have international regulations changed in other countries? Have any government or trade organizations responded with new regulations to address the possible negative effects of social media use?

✓ How have ethical considerations changed? Have the trade associations updated their codes of ethics in and around social media use? What are the latest statistics? Have there been any high–profile cases where a brand or agency has violated the codes of ethics like "Wal–Marting Across America"?

✓ Have social media policy best practices changed? Look for the latest guides in writing a social media policy. Does more have to go into them because of increased social media use and risks? What does a typical brand social media policy look like today?

SOCIAL PLAN PART 15

Checking the Plan for Law and Ethical Considerations

Your social media strategy and plan is done. You are going to present it and get it approved and then start implementing it. Before moving forward, ensure that you have considered all the legal requirements and ethical considerations. Report results of these considerations in these areas:

1. Look up the most recent FTC or other governing authority regulations for social media. Review the requirements and the brand social media plan. Does it meet the requirements?
2. Identify the most relevant trade association and read their code of ethics. Does the social media plan meet the expectations of professional conduct?
3. Does the organization or business have a social media policy? If not, write one based on best practices and brand standards. If the brand has a social media policy, review it and revise based on the latest legal regulations and ethical standards.
4. Consult business or organization lawyers to review any plans or policies for formal legal advice to ensure compliance before executing the final plan.
5. Finally, as a social media professional who may be implementing the social plan for a brand, also consider your own personal brand. Are you prepared to be active in social media from the personal, professional, and brand perspectives? Ensure you have standards, systems, or plans in place to keep these different worlds working together.

For a condensed version of the social plan see appendix A: Three-Part Social Plan.

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

1. Go back to Bill Bernbach's quote at the beginning of this chapter. Find an example of a brand vulgarizing society with their social media. Find another brand that is helping to lift society to a higher level in social media. What are the main differences?

2. Revisit the "Wal-Marting Across America" case study. Has the Walmart brand or other public relations firms done anything like that since the crisis? Have other brands or advertising agencies done something similar in a different social media context?

3. Is the use of fake followers really that prevalent? What percentage of the followers on top brand or celebrity Twitter and Instagram accounts are fake? How can you tell?

4. Think about the elaboration likelihood model some more. Analyze one of your last major and minor purchases. How much of your decision was based on rational thinking (central route) and how much was based on emotional thinking (peripheral route)? Did social media have any influence on your decision? Which route did the message emphasize?

ADDITIONAL EXERCISES

1. For this exercise, go online and find the published social media policies for three to five organizations. You may want to concentrate on one industry or simply pull from a wide variety of businesses and organizations. Make a list of the key sections from each policy and look for common categories. From this, make a list of required categories to include in a social media policy. From your research, create a template for a brand social media policy and write your own guide to creating it. It you like what you have created, seek an outlet to publish it. What blog or publication would find it to be of value?

2. Is social media addicting, bad for our health and our society? We increasingly see headlines such as "Social Media Anxiety Disorder, Explained. It's a Real Thing,"[82] "Facebook Admits Social Media Can Harm Your Mental Health,"[83] "Addiction for Fun and Profit: Facebook and Other Silicon Valley Companies Strive to Keep Users Hooked. Does that Make them Evil?,"[84] and "Troll Factories, Bots and Fake News: Inside the Wild West of Social Media."[85] Research the growing evidence about the negative effects of social media. What are the latest developments and studies? Should something be done and by whom? What has happened since the Cambridge Analytica scandal? Have new Federal Regulations emerged after Facebook CEO Mark Zuckerberg testified before the US Congress?

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Appendix A:
Three-Part Social Plan

A blueprint for creating an integrated social media strategy or plan has been laid out in the "Social Plan" (parts 1–15) at the end of each chapter. What follows is a condensed version of that process. Marketers, advertisers, and public relations professionals can use this simplified, three-step approach to develop a complete, integrated social media strategy for any brand, product, service, or organization. Work through each part, 1 through 3, to build a social media plan to be presented, approved, and activated.

1. Brand Summary and Social Analysis

For the first part of the social media plan, write a summary of the organization's history, mission, business objectives, current situation, and marketing campaign; define the target audience; perform a social media audit; and report results and insights gained.

- Gather a snapshot of the organization's history, mission, industry, competitors, and recent performance.
- Explain the current marketing communications campaign theme/tagline/look and recent efforts for the brand and main competitors.
- Define a target audience with multiple bases of segmentation including specific demographic and psychographic variables.
- Perform a social media audit of all possible social channels (not just current brand or competitor accounts), report results (see table A.1), and describe the insights gained.
- Identify overall business objectives, not social media specific, following SMART (specific, measurable, attainable, realistic, time bound) guidelines.

Table A.1. Social Media Audit Template

Who	Where Channel/Environment	What Content/Sentiment	When Date/Frequency	Why Purpose/Performance	Opportunity 1 = challenge 5 = opportunity
Company					
Consumer					
Competitor					

2. Big Idea and Social Channels

Create a social media big idea with legs that integrates with traditional marketing. Then select social media platform channels by category that fit target audience and big idea. Use the social media story template to plan possible big idea content.

- Summarize insights from social media audit and add consumer research on the target audience from primary and secondary sources including their social media usage statistics.
- Explain how the insights led to a social media big idea with a theme/hashtag across social media channels. Consider how the idea can be told as a larger brand story leveraging all five acts of storytelling as depicted in the social media story template (see table A.2).
- Select social media channels by category that are most appropriate for target audience, big idea, and business objectives. Include user statistics that match target audience and describe how content/culture of each platform fits the big idea.
- Suggest current social media channels that are no longer needed and should be removed or how the strategy on those existing channels needs to be changed.
- Consider how current traditional advertising, public relations, digital marketing, promotions, brand characters, and brand taglines will be integrated into the new social effort.

Table A.2. Social Media Story Template

STORY ELEMENTS					
PLOT >	**ACT 1** Introduction/ Exposition	**ACT 2** Conflict/ Rising Action	**ACT 3** Climax/ Turning Point	**ACT 4** Results/ Falling Action	**ACT 5** Resolve/ Release Tension
CHARACTERS POV: Brand/ Consumer					
SETTING Background/ Context					
CONFLICT Problem/ Solution					
THEME Moral/Lesson					

3. Final Social Media Plan and Presentation

Add social media integration beyond marketing communication, examples of social content for the big idea in each social channel, a content calendar, and determine social media metrics to support business objectives. Collect all previous information into a final social media plan report.

- Take the plan beyond marketing such as how social media research could support the business, identify projects or functions that could use crowdsourcing, devise a strategy to engage and reward brand evangelists, and/or plan a cross-functional social care team (consider topics in part IV, chapters 11–13).
- Finalize the plan by collecting all information from the previous two parts into one cohesive social media strategy. Start with a big picture of the current situation problem, target audience, and business objectives leading up to the social audit insights and the big idea solution and executions in the selected social media channels. Justify social channels added and removed with user statistics and content description.
- Illustrate the big idea with at least one example in each social platform of written content in visual context of the social media environment where the content would appear. Create an example content calendar for how the plan will be executed (see table A.3).
- Add measurement by linking business objectives with metrics for each social channel to determine KPIs following the social media metric template (see table A.4).
- Create a final oral presentation of the report to sell the plan to organization management. To go further, estimate the social media budget following the social media budget template (see table A.5).

Table A.3. Social Media Content Calendar

Social Media Channel	Mon. (time)	Tues. (time)	Wed. (time)	Thur. (time)	Fri. (time)	Sat. (time)	Sun. (time)
Target/Persona:	Title/Theme: Assets: Tags/Keywords:	Title/Theme: Assets: Tags/Keywords:	Title/Theme: Assets: Tags/Keywords:	Title/Theme: Assets: Tags/Keywords:	Title/Theme: Assets: Tags/Keywords:	Title/Theme: Assets: Tags/Keywords:	Title/Theme: Assets: Tags/Keywords:

Table A.4. Social Media Metrics Template

Social Media Channel	Objective 1*:	Objective 2*:	Objective 3*:	Objective 4*:
	KPI:	KPI:	KPI:	KPI:
	KPI:	KPI:	KPI:	KPI:
	KPI:	KPI:	KPI:	KPI:
	KPI:	KPI:	KPI:	KPI:

*Ensure objectives follow SMART guidelines (specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and time bound).

Table A.5. Social Media Budget Template

Budget Category Type/Description	In-House Expense Fixed/Percent	Outsource Expense Fixed/Percent	Total Category Fixed/Percent
Content Creation	($ per hour x hours	(# pieces content x	**$ %**
Writing	per month)	$ per piece/project)	$ %
Graphics			$ %
Video			$ %
Social Advertising	(N/A)	($ per day x days	**$ %**
(social channel 1)		per month)	$ %
(social channel 2)			$ %
(social channel 3)			$ %
Social Engagement	($ per hour x hours	($ per hour x hours	**$ %**
(social channel 1)	per month)	per month)	$ %
(social channel 2)			$ %
(social channel 3)			$ %
Software/Tools	(N/A)	($ per month)	**$ %**
Monitoring			$ %
Scheduling			$ %
Analytics			$ %
Promotions/Contests	($ per campaign)	($ per campaign)	**$ %**
(social channel 1)			$ %
(social channel 2)			$ %
(social channel 3)			$ %
Total	**$ %**	**$ %**	**$**

Follow this example social media plan format:

1. Provide an overview of brand, main competitor, and current marketing activities.
2. Identify overall business objectives, define target audience and describe their social media use.
3. Include the social media audit results in a table and describe insights gained (see table A.1).
4. Explain social media strategy big idea with theme/hashtag and how it integrates with traditional marketing.
5. Provide social media channels added and removed with selection rationale considering user statistics, culture, and content.
6. Write and design example content in context of each social channel and include an example content calendar table (see table A.3).
7. Identify metrics by channel and business objective to show how success will be measured using the example metrics table (see table A.4).
8. To take the plan one step further, estimate costs. Calculate with one of the methods described in chapter 14 following the example social media budget template (see table A.5).

Once the formal written report is complete, the presentation is given, and the plan is approved, consider the legal and ethical guidelines discussed in chapter 15. For implementation, what social media policies, guidelines, systems, and/or training needs to be put into place?

Appendix B: Social Media Tools and Resources

What follows is a list with links to over three hundred sites and apps to improve your social media efforts and knowledge. Use these to complete the social media plan and execute the strategy. Links are divided into ten categories: Social Media Monitoring and Metrics; Online Data Collection and Analytics; Social Media Content Creation and Data Visualization; Social Content Scheduling and Automation; Social Media and Digital Media Research; Trade Associations, Awards, and Conferences; Social Media News and Insights; Social Media and Content Marketing Podcasts; Social Media and Digital Marketing Training and Certification; and Social Media Channels. A short description of each site follows the name before the URL. This is a great start, but social media tools can change quickly. Discover more and new resources as they are introduced by visiting www.postcontrolmarketing.com/links.

Social Media Monitoring and Metrics

Agora Pulse (social media management tool): www.agorapulse.com
Agora Pulse Free Tools (Facebook barometer, Twitter report card, Facebook page contests): agorapulse.com/free-social-media-marketing-tools
Audiense (Twitter analytics): audiense.com/twitter-analytics
Brandwatch (social listening and analytics): brandwatch.com
Brand24 (social media monitoring): brand24.com
Buzzsumo (content analytics): buzzsumo.com
Cision (social monitoring and analytics): cision.com/us/products/ps-social-software
Clarabridge (customer experience management and analytics): www.clarabridge.com
Crimson Hexagon (social media analytics): crimsonhexagon.com
Critical Mention (media monitoring): www.criticalmention.com
Google Alerts (monitoring): google.com/alerts
Hootsuite (social dashboard, scheduling, reporting): hootsuite.com
How Sociable (social media monitoring): howsociable.com
Iconosquare (analytics and management): iconosquare.com
Klear (influencer marketing platform): klear.com
Likealyzer (Facebook page analysis): likealyzer.com
Lithium (social media management): lithium.com
Meltwater (social media monitoring): meltwater.com

Meltwater Impact (free content report): impact.meltwater.com

Mention (social media monitoring): mention.com/en/media-monitoring/social-media-monitoring-tools

Netbase (social analytics): netbase.com

Nielsen Social (social content ratings): www.nielsensocial.com

NUVI (monitoring, analysis, reporting): www.nuvi.com

Oktopost (B2B social media management): oktopost.com

Oracle Social Cloud (listening, analytics, engagement): www.oracle.com/us/solutions/social

ReviewTrackers (online review management): reviewtrackers.com

Rival IQ (social media analytics): rivaliq.com

Salesforce: Social Studio (listening, publishing, engagement): marketingcloud.com/products/social-media-marketing/social-studio

Social Bakers (social media management): socialbakers.com

Social Blade (social media statistics): socialblade.com

Sprout Social (social media management): sproutsocial.com

Simply Measured (social analytics): simplymeasured.com

Social Mention (real-time search and analysis): socialmention.com

Social Searcher (real-time social search): social-searcher.com

Socially Devoted Meter (analyze response rate): socialbakers.com/resources/socially-devoted

Social Studio (enterprise social media management): salesforce.com/products/marketing-cloud/social-media-marketing

Spredfast (enterprise social media management): spredfast.com

Sprinklr (unified customer experience management): www.sprinklr.com

SumoRank (analyze best Facebook page content): sumorank.com

Sysomos (social media management, analytics): www.sysomos.com

Talkwalker (social analytics and monitoring): talkwalker.com

Talkwalker Social Analytics Search (track campaigns and hashtags): talkwalker.com/social-media-analytics-search

Trackur (social monitoring and sentiment analysis): www.trackur.com

TrueSocialMetrics (social media analytics): truesocialmetrics.com

Twitonomy (Twitter analytics and monitoring): twitonomy.com

Viralwoot (social scheduler and analytics): viralwoot.com

Visible Measures (video monitoring and analytics): visiblemeasures.com

Unruly (social video insight): unruly.co

Yext Free Location Scan (location data analysis): yext.com/blog/2016/05/grow-business-free-location-scan-app

Zoho Social (social media management): zoho.com/social

Unmetric (social intelligence and analytics): unmetric.com

Online Data Collection and Analytics

Alexa (website statistics and analysis): alexa.com

Bottlenose (data analysis): bottlenose.com

Chartbeat (content intelligence and analytics): chartbeat.com

Comscore (cross-platform measurement): comscore.com

Conversion Fly (online tracking): conversionfly.com

Cyfe (all-in-one dashboard): www.cyfe.com

Delmondo (Snapchat analytics): delmondo.co/snapchat-analytics-software

Drip (e-commerce marketing automation): drip.co

Facebook Insights (Facebook analytics): facebook.com/help/search/?q=insights

Facebook Page Cost Calculator (Facebook ad cost tool): shiftcomm.com/facebook-page-cost-cal culator

Foursquare Analytics: enterprise.foursquare.com/solutions/analytics

Google Analytics (website analytics): www.google.com/analytics

Google Analytics UTM Tracking URL Builder (online tracking): chrome.google.com/webstore

Google Tag Manager (tracking): www.google.com/analytics/tag-manager

Google Tools (online data analysis): www.thinkwithgoogle.com/tools

Google Trends (real-time online search analysis): www.google.com/trends

GRYTICS (Facebook Group analytics): grytics.com

IBM Watson Analytics (data AI): ibm.com/analytics/watson-analytics

Instagram Insights (Instagram Analytics): blog.business.instagram.com/post/145212269021/new-busi ness-tools

iSpionage (online competitor research): ispionage.com

Keyhole (real-time hashtag tracker): keyhole.co

Keyword Tool (keyword research): keywordtool.io

Kiss Metrics (behavioral analytics and engagement): www.kissmetrics.com

Klout (social sharing and impact measurement): klout.com

Kred (influence score and platform): kred.com

Leadpages (landing page creator, opt-in tools): leadpages.net

LinkedIn Analytics: linkedin.com/help/linkedin/answer/4499

ManageFlitter (Twitter tools and analytics): manageflitter.co

Moz Open Site Explorer (Inbound link tool): moz.com/researchtools/ose

New Share Counts (Twitter share counts tool): newsharecounts.com

Nexalogy (discover social conversations): nexalogy.com

Omgili (discussion, news, blog search): omgili.com

Pinterest Analytics: analytics.pinterest.com

Quantcast (website audience measurement): quantcast.com

RiteTag (trending hashtags): ritetag.com/hashtag-search

Ruzzit (trending videos, stories, and images): ruzzit.com

SearchMetrics (enterprise content marketing): searchmetrics.com

SEMrush (online competitive intelligence): www.semrush.com

SharedCount (track URL shares and likes): www.sharedcount.com

Shopping Insights (online shopping trends): shopping.thinkwithgoogle.com

SimilarWeb (website stats and analytics comparison): similarweb.com

Snaplytics (automated story publishing and analytics): snaplytics.io

Social Searcher (social media search): social-searcher.com

Soovle (search suggestions): soovle.co

Trendspottr (real-time viral content, influencers): trendspottr.com

Tweetreach (Twitter analytics): tweetreach.com

Twitter Advanced Search: twitter.com/search-advanced

Twitter Analytics: analytics.twitter.com

Ubersuggest (keyword suggestion tool): ubersuggest.io

UVRX (social search): uvrx.com/social.html

WordStream (keyword tool): wordstream.com/keywords

Yoast (SEO tool): yoast.com

YouGovProfiles (media planning, audience segmentation—UK): yougov.co.uk/profiler#
YouTube Analytics: www.youtube.com/analytics
YouTube Trending: www.youtube.com/feed/trending
Visio Sparks (social media counts checker): visiospark.com/shared-counter

Social Media Content Creation and Data Visualization

Accelerated Mobile Pages Project (create fast web pages): www.ampproject.org
Adobe Kuler (color tool): color.adobe.com/create/color-wheel
Animaker (animated video tool): animaker.com
ANIMOTO (video creation tool): animoto.com
BIGVU (video creation tool): bigvu.tv
Botletter (create Messenger newsletters): botletter.com
Brandr (social content creation): getbrandr.com
Canva (design tool): www.canva.com
Chartbuilder (create charts): quartz.github.io/Chartbuilder
Chhirp (record audio for Twitter): cordproject.co/chhirp
Compressor by Pitchengine (automated social post creation): c.tiny.pr
Crello (design tool for social posts): crello.com
Curalate (visual commerce platform): curalate.com
Datawrapper (create charts and maps): datawrapper.de
DesignEvo (create custom logo designs): designevo.com
DesignWizard (online graphic design software): designwizard.com
Easelly (infographic tool): www.easel.ly
Emotional Marketing Analyzer (headline improvement): aminstitute.com/headline
Enhance (social image creation): hootsuite.com/products/mobile-apps
Facebook Creative Hub (create Facebook ads): facebook.com/ads/creativehub
Fastory (social story creation): fastory.io
Gifs (gif maker): gifs.com
Good Data (business intelligence tool): gooddata.com
Google Data Studio (data visualization): datastudio.google.com
Google Fonts: www.google.com/fonts
Google Image: images.google.com
Grammarly (proofreading and editing): grammarly.com
Headline Analyzer (optimize headlines): coschedule.com/headline-analyzer
Hemingway Editor (improve writing): hemingwayapp.com
Infogram (create charts, maps, graphics): infogram.com
Knowem (username and trademark database): knowem.com
LibreStock (free stock image search): librestock.com
Lumen5 (social video creation): lumen5.com
MetaShort (custom social links): metashort.co
Namechk (check usernames and URLs): namechk.com
NodeXL (social analysis and visualization): nodexl.codeplex.com
Opal (marketing collaboration platform): workwithopal.com
Over (social image, type, graphic tool): madewithover.com
Phonto (add text to photos): phon.to

PicPlayPost (multiple media story creation): www.mixcord.co/partners/picplaypost.html
Pictaculous (color pallet generator): pictaculous.com
PicMonkey (photo editing, design): picmonkey.com
Piktochart (infographic maker): piktochart.com
Pixlr (photo editing): pixlr.com
Placeit (create mockups): placeit.net
Content Idea Generator (title maker): portent.com/tools/title-maker
Power BI (business intelligence): powerbi.microsoft.com
Promo (video creation): slide.ly/promo
Recite (visual quote creator): recite.com
Relay (resize, remix designs across social): relaythat.com
Ripl (animated video creation): ripl.com
Rocketium (create BuzzFeed style videos): rocketium.com
Screencast-O-Matic (screen recording): screencast-o-matic.com
Smartmockups (create product/post screen shots): smartmockups.com
Spark (create graphics, web pages, stories): spark.adobe.com
Stencil (social media image creation): getstencil.com
Story Slicer (edit social video): storyslicer.us
Studio (add layers to photos): madewithstudio.com
Tiny PNG (image compression): tinypng.com
TwistedWave (audio editor): twistedwave.com
Tweetroot (create Twitter word clouds): rubbledev.com/app/tweetroot-for-twitter
Typito (video creation): typito.com/go
Typorama (social graphic creation): apperto.com/typorama
Free Stock Photo Sites (updated list of free social images): blog.Hootsuite.com
Videolicious (automatic video creation): videolicious.com
Word Swag (add text to photos): wordswag.co

Social Content Scheduling and Automation

Adobe Experience Manager (cross-channel content management): adobe.com/marketing-cloud/enterprise-content-management.html
AdStage (paid marketing reporting and automation): www.adstage.io
Alltop (news and information aggregator): alltop.com
Bitly (link management platform): bitly.com
Buffer (schedule and track social posts): bufferapp.com
Contentgems (content discovery): contentgems.com
ContentStudio (content discovery and management): contentstudio.io
CoSchedule (cross-channel marketing calendar): coschedule.com
dlvr.it (automated social posting): dlvr.it
DrumUp (content curation tool): drumup.io
Edgar (social media automation and scheduler): meetedgar.com
Flipboard (content curation tool): flipboard.com
Google Programmatic (automatic online ad buying): thinkwithgoogle.com/programmatic-guide
Google Photos (free photo storage): google.com/photos
IFTTT (cross-app task automation): ifttt.com

Later (schedule Instagram posts): later.com

List-O-Matic (list management): accessify.com/tools-and-wizards/developer-tools/list-o-matic

MissingLett_r (automated social campaigns): missinglettr.com

Nuzzel (news feed, curation): nuzzel.com

OptinMonster (auto lead generation): optinmonster.com

Outbrain (native ad platform): outbrain.com

PixelMe (URL shortener and retargeting): pixelme.me

Post Planner (content recommendations): www.postplanner.com

Scoop It Content Director (content marketing automation): scoop.it

Short Stack (create contests, giveaways, landing pages): www.shortstack.com

Slack (team collaboration): slack.com

SocialOomph (social discovery and automation): www.socialoomph.com

Social Warfare (WordPress social sharing automation): warfareplugins.com

Tailwind (Pinterest/Instagram discovery and scheduling): tailwindapp.com

Thunderclap (synchronize crowd social): thunderclap.it

Tint (social content aggregator): tintup.com

Twittimer (schedule cross-platform social posts): twittimer.com

TweetBot (Twitter client): tapbots.com/tweetbot

TweetDeck (Twitter client): tweetdeck.en.softonic.com

Uberflip (B2B content creation): uberflip.com

Woobox (create contests, giveaways, campaigns): woobox.com

Zapier (automate workflows across apps): zapier.com

Zendesk (social customer service system): www.zendesk.com

Social Media and Digital Media Research

Adobe Digital Index (research on digital marketing): cmo.com/adobe-digital-index.html

Affinio (audience interest analysis): www.affin.io

Facebook IQ (consumer and ad insights): facebook.com/iq

Forrester (social media research findings): www.forrester.com/Social-Media

Gallup (social media research reports): www.gallup.com

Global Web Index (consumer survey data insights): www.globalwebindex.net

IBM Watson Analytics for Social Media (holistic view of consumers, market, competitors from millions of online sources): ibm.com/marketplace/cloud/social-media-data-analysis/us/en-us

Interbrand Best Brands (global ranking of brands): interbrand.com

Kantar Media SRDS (insights for media planners and buyers): srds.com

Millward Brown BrandZ Reports (global brand equity ranking): millwardbrown.com/brandz

Nielsen Social Media Reports (social media research reports): www.nielsensocial.com

Pew Research Center (US social research reports): www.pewinternet.org

Roper Center (public opinion research): www.ropercenter.uconn.edu

Simmons (consumer survey research): simmonssurvey.com

Social Explorer (easy access to US demographic data): www.socialexplorer.com

Social Media Collective (social media research reporting): socialmediacollective.org

Statista (research statistics portal): www.statista.com

Think with Google (online consumer research insights): thinkwithgoogle.com

YouGov BrandIndex (brand perception ranking): brandindex.com

Trade Associations, Awards, and Conferences

Brand Innovators (marketer conference): brand-innovators.com/events
Content Marketing World (content marketing conference): www.contentmarketingworld.com
INBOUND (content marketing conference): www.inbound.com
INTEGRATE (IMC conference): imc.wvu.edu/integrate
Online Media Marketing Awards (online marketing awards): www.mediapost.com/ommaawards
Social Media Marketing World (social media conference): www.socialmediaexaminer.com/smmworld
Social Media Strategies Summit (social media conference): socialmediastrategiessummit.com
Social Media Week (social media conference): socialmediaweek.org
Summit (customer experience conference): summit.adobe.com/na
SXSW (new media/technology conference): sxsw.com
SXSWedu (conference and competition): www.sxswedu.com
The Webby Awards (Internet awards): www.webbyawards.com
The Shorty Awards (social media awards): shortyawards.com
The Mashies (digital awards): mashable.com/mashies
Word of Mouth Marketing Association: womma.org

Social Media News and Insights

Amy Porterfield (online marketing expert): amyporterfield.com
Australia ACCC (social media regulation—Australia): accc.gov.au/business/advertising-promoting
        -your-business/social-media
Chris Brogan (online marketing expert): chrisbrogan.com/blog
Christopher S. Penn (online marketing expert): christopherspenn.com
Jeff Bullas (online marketing expert): jeffbullas.com
Canadian Competition Bureau Guides (social media regulation—Canada): www.competitionbureau
        .gc.ca
Content Marketing Institute (content marketing experts): contentmarketinginstitute.com/blog
Convince & Convert (social media experts): www.convinceandconvert.com
FTC Disclosures (social media regulation—US): www.ftc.gov/tips-advice/business-center/guidance/
        ftcs-endorsement-guides-what-people-are-asking
Gartner Digital Marketing (digital marketing experts): blogs.gartner.com/digital-marketing
Grow (social media expert—Mark Schaefer): www.businessesgrow.com
Hubspot's Inbound Hub (content marketing experts): blog.hubspot.com
ICPEN Guidance (social media regulation—international): icpen.org/initiatives
Marketing Profs (digital marketing experts): www.marketingprofs.com
Mashable Social Media (digital marketing news): mashable.com/social-media
RazorSocial (social media experts): www.razorsocial.com/blog
Scott Monty (digital marketing expert): scottmonty.com
Social Media Examiner (social media experts): www.socialmediaexaminer.com
Social Media Explorer (social media news): www.socialmediaexplorer.com
Social Media Marketing Magazine (social media news): www.smmmagazine.com
Social Media Today (social media news): socialmediatoday.com
Social Mouths (social media experts): socialmouths.com/blog
Social Media Law Bulletin (social media law insights): www.socialmedialawbulletin.com

The Digital Garage (online learning): digitalgarage.withgoogle.com

UK CMA Guidance (social media regulation—UK): gov.uk/government/publications/online-reviews-and-endorsements-advice-for-businesses

YouTube Video Creators (YouTube video expert): www.youtube.com/videocreators

WOMMA Code of Ethics (social media ethical guidelines): womma.org/ethics

WOMMA Free Resources (social media regulation guidelines): womma.org/free-womm-resources

Social Media and Content Marketing Podcasts

Amy Porterfield: amyporterfield.com/category/podcast

Behind the Numbers: An eMarketer Podcast: emarketer.com/Article/Behind-Numbers-eMarketer-Podcast

Buffer Podcast: buffer.com/podcast

Content Inc.: contentmarketinginstitute.com/content-inc-podcast

The Content Experience: convinceandconvert.com/podcasts/shows/content-experience-show

Experience This!: convinceandconvert.com/podcasts/shows/experience-this

Influence Pros: convinceandconvert.com/podcasts/shows/influence-pros-podcast

Marketing Marvels: convinceandconvert.com/podcasts/shows/marketing-marvels-podcast

Marketing Smarts Podcast: www.marketingprofs.com/podcasts

Social Media Examiner: www.socialmediaexaminer.com/tag/podcast

Social Pros Podcast: convinceandconvert.com/podcasts/shows/social-pros-podcast

The Art of Paid Traffic Podcast: rickmulready.com/category/aoptpodcast

The Business of Story: convinceandconvert.com/podcasts/shows/business-of-story-podcast

The Full Monty: scottmonty.com/p/podcast.html

The Marketing Book Podcast: www.artillerymarketing.com/marketing-book-podcast

The Marketing Companion: businessesgrow.com/podcast-the-marketing-companion-2

This Old Marketing: contentmarketinginstitute.com/pnr-with-this-old-marketing-podcast

Social Media and Digital Marketing Training and Certification

Adobe Software (Certifications): training.adobe.com/training/courses

Bing/Yahoo! Ads (Certification): advertise.bingads.microsoft.com/en-us/resources/training

Blogging University (WordPress): dailypost.wordpress.com/blogging-university

Cision (Certification & Accreditation): cision.com/us/resources/university-program

Code Academy: codecademy.com

Constant Contact Social Media 101: blogs.constantcontact.com/social-media-quickstarter

Conversion Marketing (Certification): Leadpages: convertedu.com/courses

Facebook Blueprint (Certification): facebook.com/blueprint

Google Partners (Adwords Certification): support.google.com/partners

Google Analytics Academy (Certification): analyticsacademy.withgoogle.com

Hootsuite Academy (Certification): hootsuite.com/education

HubSpot Academy (Certification): academy.hubspot.com

Meltwater (Certification): Coming Soon . . . www.meltwater.com

Microsoft Dynamics 365 (Certification): microsoft.com/en-us/dynamics365

Professional Certified Marketer—Digital Marketing (Certification): ama.org/events-training/Certification/Pages/digital-marketing-certification.aspx

Salesforce Trailhead (Badges and Certification): trailhead.salesforce.com or academic-alliance.salesforce.com/business-specialist

Snapchat Explore (Certification): forbusiness.snapchat.com/blog/introducing-explore/

The Trade Desk Trading Academy (Certification): thetradedesk.com/products/thetradingacademy

Social Media Channels

Wikipedia List of Social Networking Sites: en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_social_networking_websites

Overdrive Interactive's Social Media Map: ovrdrv.com/social-media-map

Glossary

Account planning is designed to bring the consumer's perspective into the process of developing creative advertising and public relations messages and executions.

Actionable insight is a true understanding of people in the target audience and situations related to the product or service that can be used to meet objectives of a marketing effort.

Ad blocker is a program that removes online ads from a website user's desktop and mobile experience.

Advertising is the placement of announcements and persuasive messages in time or space purchased in mass media.

Algorithm is a formula or set of steps used for solving a problem such as how to rank content to decide what is seen in social media feeds.

Amazon Reviews is a feature on Amazon.com that allows users to submit reviews and ratings to the web page of each product sold on the e-commerce site.

Analysis paralysis is when a decision is never made because there are too many options or it is thought of as overcomplicated.

Art directors are the professionals who execute or coordinate the type, photos, and illustrations used in advertising design.

Attention is the selective narrowing or focusing of consciousness and observance on something.

Attention economics deals with the problem of getting consumers to consume advertising and public relations messages.

Attribution is giving original authors credit for their content.

Behavioral targeting is used by online advertisers to customize messages based on web-browsing behavior such as web pages visited or searches made.

Big data refers to massive amounts of data so large or complex they are difficult to process using traditional data processing applications.

Big idea is a driving, unifying force behind brand marketing efforts.

Blog is an abbreviated version of Weblog, which describes websites that contain a reverse chronological order of entries or posts featuring diary-type commentary or stories on specific subjects that range from personal to political.

Blogger is a blog-publishing service that allows free user accounts hosted at the subdomain of blogspot.com founded in 1999.

Bottom line is the line at the bottom of a financial report showing profit or loss.

Buyer persona is a semifictional portrayal of the ideal customer based on real data.

BuzzFeed is a social news and entertainment company that collects and creates viral content from around the web that was founded in 2006.

Chatbots are computer programs that simulate human conversation for customer service or information acquisition and distribution.

Check–in is defined as self-reported positioning to share one's physical location through a social–networking service.

Collaborative tagging can be used to analyze trends and determine popularity of content over time as different sources converge.

Commonsense market segmentation is when managers use a single segmentation criterion, such as age, to split consumers into homogeneous groups.

Company wikis can bring together global divisions and partners who may not be in the same building, city, or country.

Consumer lifetime value is a concept that shifts focus from short-term profit to long-term profit from the continuing relationship with a customer.

Content calendar is a way to plan and visualize how content will be distributed during a specified time period.

Content curation is a process of gathering information relevant to a specific topic or area of interest to present to others.

Content marketing is a strategic marketing approach focused on creating and distributing valuable, relevant, and consistent content to attract and retain a defined audience ultimately to drive profitable customer action.

Converged media is the combining or blurring of paid (advertising), owned (brand sites and accounts), and earned media (social and public relations).

Conversation is an informal talk involving two people or a small group of people.

Copywriters are the writers of advertising or publicity copy.

Corporate communications involves managing internal and external communications aimed at corporate stakeholders.

Creative Commons provides licenses as an alternative way for creators to retain copyright while allowing others to copy, distribute, and make some use of their work.

Crowdsourcing takes a job normally performed by a professional, such as an employee, and outsources it to a large group of people through an open call.

Customer co-creation is simply the joint creation of value by the company and customer.

Customer relationship management is using systems to better manage data and interactions with customers and potential customers with a focus on long-term relationships.

Customer service is the process of ensuring customer satisfaction, often while performing a transaction, taking a sale, providing post-purchase support, or returning a product or service.

Customer service system is a combination of technological structure and organizational networks designed to provide services that satisfy customers.

Customer stickiness is simply the increased chance to utilize the same product or service that was bought before.

Dark social is web traffic with no referral data because the link was shared through unmeasurable social media.

Data brokers are businesses that collect consumers' personal information and sell it to other organizations.

Data-driven market segmentation is when managers analyze more complex sets of variables to split consumers into homogeneous groups.

Data security refers to the measures organizations take to ensure digital privacy to prevent unauthorized access to computers, databases, and websites.

Demographic variables include information such as age range, gender, geographic location, ethnic background, marital status, income, and education.

Digg is a social news website that aggregates news and publishers' streams via peer evaluation of voting up content, and also supports easy sharing of content to other social platforms such as Twitter and Facebook, that was founded in 2004.

Digital market research involves using new digital media to collect results through methods such as online surveys, online focus groups, online communities, bulletin boards, and social media sites.

Digital marketing specialists are the professionals who handle online activities for a brand, such as web development, online advertising, search engine optimization, paid search, and e-commerce.

Digital Millennium Copyright Act (DMCA) updated US copyright law to apply to the development of electronic commerce, distribution of digital works, and protection of copyright owners' rights.

E–commerce describes activities related to the buying and selling of goods and services over the internet.

Elaboration Likelihood Model is a dual process theory that proposes there are two routes to persuasion—the central route and peripheral route.

Emotional cognition is a psychological phenomenon in which a person or group influences the emotions and behavior of another through conscious or even unconscious emotions.

Engagement is involvement, interaction, intimacy, and influence between an individual and a brand.

Ethics studies ideas about good and bad behavior.

Ethnography is investigation of a group or culture based on immersion and/or participation to gain comprehensive understanding.

Etiquette is the proper way to behave.

Evangelism marketing is a form of word-of-mouth marketing in which marketers develop relationships with customers who strongly believe in a product or service and who voluntarily advocate for the brand.

External factors consist of a variety of factors outside the organization that marketers typically don't have direct control over.

Facebook is an online social-networking service where users create profiles, connect to other users as "friends," and exchange messages, photos, and videos that was founded in 2004.

Facebook Insights is the tool to track organic and paid performance on Facebook pages.

Facebook Live is a live video streaming feature added to the Facebook mobile app for any user to broadcast live video that was first made available to the public in 2016.

Facebook Messenger is the instant messaging service application that enables sending multimedia content with optional encryption through Facebook accounts.

Family life cycle is the stages people pass through from childhood to retirement that usually represent different needs and desires.

Federal Trade Commission (FTC) is responsible for protecting consumers in the US from unfair trade practices including deceptive advertising and the use of social media for marketing communication.

Five Ws are questions used for basic information gathering used by journalists to find out the who, where, what, when, and why of a story.

Flog is a paid-for, fake blog.

Folksonomy is a simple form of shared vocabularies created through tagging in social-bookmarking systems.

Forums are online discussion sites where people hold conversations on related topics via posted messages.

Four Cs can be explained as consumer not product, cost not price, convenience not place, and communicate not promote.

Four Ps divides the marketing mix or function into four interconnected parts: product, price, promotion, and place (distribution).

Foursquare is a personalized local search-and-discovery-service mobile app that enables users to find friends and read recommendations that was founded in 2009.

Friendster (founded in 2002 and shut down in 2015) was one of the original social network service websites allowing users to make contacts with other members and share online content and media with them.

FTC Endorsement Guides explain that marketers or advertisers and influencers promoting or endorsing products are responsible for clearly and conspicuously disclosing material connections that affect the weight or credibility consumers give to an endorsement in social media.

General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) sets legal protection guidelines for any company that collects and processes the personal data of European Union citizens.

Generational targeting is when marketers target broader age groups such as baby boomers, generation Xers, or millennials because they may have similar desires compared to previous generations.

Geocaching is an outdoor game where people use GPS on a mobile device to hide and then seek containers called geocaches at locations marked by coordinates.

Geofencing is setting up a virtual perimeter for a real-world geographic area and using a smartphone's GPS to trigger a message or customize content.

Geosocial is a type of social networking in which user-submitted location data allow social networks to connect and coordinate users with local people, businesses, or events.

Geotagging is when geographical identification information is added to media such as a picture, video, or social media post.

Goal is something that a person or group is trying to achieve.

Google+ is a social networking and identity service that adds a social layer to other Google properties and also serves to link web content directly with its author that was founded in 2011, but many of its social networking features were removed in 2015 to emphasize communities.

Google My Business is a listing that ensures that businesses show up in searches and includes social media features like updates, comments, photo sharing, ratings, and reviews.

Having legs means a campaign theme can be executed in many ways, in many different media, for a long period of time.

Homegrown monitoring is using search engines and going to each social media platform to find and manually track and analyze brand social media conversation.

Influencer marketing focuses on leveraging key leaders to advocate on behalf of a brand to reach the larger market.

Information superhighway describes a telecommunications infrastructure used for widespread, rapid access to information.

Instagram is an online mobile social-networking service that enables users to take photos and videos and share them on a variety of social networking platforms founded in 2010.

Instagram Insights is the tool that details metrics on how people are viewing brand Instagram organic and paid content.

Instagram Live is a live video streaming feature added to the Instagram mobile app for any user to broadcast live video that was added in 2016.

Integrated marketing communications (IMC) seeks to align and coordinate all marketing communications delivered to consumers to present a cohesive whole that persuades consumers to purchase.

Interactive marketing is the ability to address the customer, remember what the customer said, and then address the customer in a way that illustrates that the organization remembers what the customer told them.

Internal factors are the factors that occur within an organization and impact the approach and success of operations.

Internal marketing promotes the firm and its policies to employees as if they are customers of the firm.

International Consumer Protection and Enforcement Network (ICPEN) is an organization composed of consumer protection authorities from over sixty countries.

Internet of Things (IoT) is the network of physical objects with embedded technology that includes an IP address for internet connectivity to communicate with the external environment.

IP convergence means using the Internet Protocol (IP) as the standard transport for transmitting all information such as video, data, music, and TV teleconferencing.

iTunes is the Apple media player used to play, download, and organize digital audio and video on computers in the macOS and Microsoft Windows operation systems and mobile devices, including iPhone, iPod touch, and iPad that was released in 2001.

KPI is a key indicator that is used as a type of performance measurement.

LinkedIn is a business-focused social-networking service that allows users to create professional profiles of work experience and form connections with other professionals founded in 2003.

LinkedIn Analytics is the tool that provides insights into company page performance for organic and paid brand actions.

Listicle is short-form writing based on an often numerical theme structure with added copy to be published as an article.

Live streaming video is simply compressed video content sent over the internet and displayed in real time.

Market is defined as a place where products are bought and sold.

Market segmentation is a process of grouping potential customers into sets that are homogeneous in response to elements of the marketing mix.

Marketing communications coordinates promotional messages delivered through channels like print, radio, television, and personal selling.

Media richness theory states that media differ in the degree of richness they possess—the amount of information they allow to be transmitted in a given time.

Memes are ideas expressed as visuals, words, and/or videos that spread on the internet from person to person.

Metrics are standards of measurement by which efficiency, performance, or progress can be assessed.

Microblogging is a form of traditional blogging where the content is smaller in both file size and length of content.

Micro-influencer marketing is when brands partner with people who have smaller followings on social media to promote products in an authentic way versus sponsored ads.

Micro-moments are the hundreds of real-time, goal-oriented, mobile actions that influence consumer decisions and preferences.

Mission statement is a written declaration of an organization's core purpose and focus that tends to remain unchanged over time.

Mobile media is a personal, interactive, internet-enabled, and user-controlled portable platform for the exchange of information.

Mommy blogger is a mother who blogs about her children, motherhood, parenting, and other related topics. Note that some bloggers find this term condescending.

Myspace is one of the first social media networks (founded in 2003) that declined in favor of Facebook by users, although it has a loyal following in the area of music.

Native advertising is paid marketing that delivers useful, targeted content along with and in a form that looks like the social media site's or app's non-ad content.

News aggregation uses software to collect all new syndicated web content from many newspapers, magazines. and blogs into one page.

Newsjacking is the strategy of injecting a brand into breaking news through social media or content marketing to get the brand noticed.

Objective is a goal, something you are trying to achieve, expressed in specific terms.

Observation is a form of qualitative research that involves the systematic collection of data where researchers use all of their senses to examine people in natural settings and situations.

1% rule or the 90-9-1 principle states that in collaborative sites such as blogs and forums, 90 percent of users view the content, 9 percent contribute infrequently, and only 1 percent actively create new content.

Operations are jobs tasked with converting inputs such as materials, labor, and information into outputs such as goods, services, and value-added products that can be sold for a profit.

Organic reach is the number of unique people who saw a social media post through unpaid distribution.

Paid reach is the number of unique people who saw a post as a result of paid distribution.

Periscope is a live video streaming mobile app integrated into the microblogging social media service Twitter that was founded in 2015.

Permission marketing is when sales prospects must first explicitly agree to receive marketing communication.

Personal branding is a practice where people market themselves and their careers like brands.

Pinterest is a web and mobile social network that enables visual discovery, collection, and sharing and serves as a storage tool founded in 2010.

Pinterest Analytics is the tool that provides data on organic and paid pin performance.

Podcast is a series of episodes of audio or video content delivered digitally that are often subscribed to and downloaded through web syndication or streamed online through a computer or mobile device.

Primary research is new research to answer specific questions, and can include questionnaires, surveys, or interviews.

Privacy policy is a statement that defines an organization's policy on collecting and releasing information about a visitor or user.

Private wikis provide access to a business's most up-to-date collective knowledge.

Professional monitoring is using one or multiple software tools or setting up a private community to track and analyze brand social media conversation.

Professionalism is the skill, good judgment, and polite behavior expected from a person trained to do a job.

Programmatic advertising is the automated buying and selling of advertising media targeting specific audiences and demographics placed through artificial intelligence and real-time bidding.

Programmatic direct is ads purchased via a publisher-owned application program interface.

Psychographic variables consist of internal factors such as values, attitudes, interests, lifestyle, and behavior.

Public relations creates and maintains the goodwill of the public, such as customers, employees, and investors, through nonpaid forms of media.

Public relations executives are the professionals who focus on nonpaid forms of brand communication such as media relations, event planning, speeches, and, if needed, crisis communication.

Pull marketing attempts to attract the customer to brand communication by providing valuable content, which is usually delivered via social media.

Pull strategy aims marketing efforts at the end consumer to persuade the consumer to request the products from retail channels.

Purchase funnel is the consumer-focused model that illustrates a customer journey toward purchase from awareness to interest, desire, and action.

Push marketing is focused on interrupting potential customers, usually through the purchase of ads.

Push strategy is a manufacturer enticing other channel members to carry a product.

QR code is short for quick response code and is a two-dimensional bar code that provides quick and easy access to online information through a smartphone camera.

Quora is a question-and-answer website where questions are submitted and answered by its community of users founded in 2009.

Ratings are also a measurement of how good or bad something is, but expressed specifically on a scale that is a relative estimate or evaluation.

Real-time bidding (RTB) is auction-based ad transactions placed on real-time impressions in open and private marketplaces.

Real-time marketing is systematically responding to consumers with dynamic, personalized content across channels that is relevant in the moment.

Reddit is a social news and entertainment company that was founded in 2005 and acquired by Condé Nast Publications in 2006.

Research and development (R&D) is the process where often departments of engineers or scientists are charged with new product development and design.

Return on investment (ROI) is measuring the profitability of an investment as a ratio between the net profit and cost of investment.

Reviews are reports that give someone's opinion about the quality of a product, service, or performance.

RSS or rich site summary is a convenient way for people to listen to and read what others are saying and writing.

Search engine optimization (SEO) is improving the visibility of a website in unpaid (organic) web search engine results.

Secondary research discovers information previously researched for other purposes that is publicly available.

Sentiment analysis is identifying and categorizing opinions in a piece of text determining if the attitude expressed is positive, negative, or neutral.

Share of voice is your brand social media mentions divided by total competitive brand social media mentions.

Silo syndrome is when a department or function, like marketing, develops its own culture and has trouble working with other functions such as operations, customer service, or sales.

Slack provides a quick employee communication platform for messaging, sharing files, searches, and apps.

SMART objectives are specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and timely.

Snapchat is a photo- and video-sharing messaging service in which media and messages are only available for a short time before disappearing that was founded in 2011.

Social advertising is advertising that relies on social information or networks in generating, targeting, and delivering paid marketing communications.

Social bookmarking is an online service where users can save, comment on, and share bookmarks of web documents or links.

Social bot is a computer program used in social media networks to automatically generate messages simulating conversation.

Social capital is defined as actual or virtual resources collected by an individual or group by mutual association and recognition.

Social care is the efforts employees make through social media to care for customers.

Social conversation analysis is the study of the group talk produced in ordinary human interactions collected from the vast amounts of social media conversation data.

Social interaction is the process of reciprocal stimulation or response between two people.

Social-knowledge platforms or networks are internet-based information exchanges where users can ask questions and get answers from real people.

Social media is computer-mediated technologies that allow creation and sharing of information, ideas, and other forms of expression via virtual communities and networks.

Social media audit is a systematic examination of social media data.

Social media command center is a branded social media monitoring room acting as a central, visual hub for social data.

Social media feedback cycle is social media connecting post-purchase social media conversation back to the purchase process, where social media is the product of operations based on the expectation given in marketing communication.

Social media policy is an organization's standards for conduct regarding the way its employees post content in social media as part of their jobs or as private individuals.

Social media press release is an easy-to-scan document containing text and multimedia elements that are simple to share and which offers links to a collection of relevant information.

Social media research involves using various tools and techniques to collect and analyze data from social media networks or platforms.

Social messaging is instant messaging or chat applications created around social networks for communication on mobile phones, with fewer limits and more features than traditional texting.

Social network is any website where one connects with those sharing personal or professional interests.

Social presence theory states that media differ in the degree of social presence (acoustic, visual, and physical contact) they allow between two communication partners.

Social selling is a process of developing relationships through social media as part of the sales process.

Strategic business unit (SBU) is a fully functional and distinct unit that develops its own strategic vision and direction.

Strategic thinking means taking a broad, long-range approach and thinking systematically.

StumbleUpon is a discovery engine that finds and recommends web content to users that was founded in 2001.

Super-fans are a company's most active online consumers who answer forum questions, write in-depth blog posts, and provide valuable feedback without collecting a fee.

SWOT analysis is a process for identifying an organization's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats to analyze the internal and external factors impacting success.

Tagging is the way social-bookmarking programs organize links to resources.

Target audience is a group of people identified as the intended recipient of a communications message.

Target market is identified in business and marketing plan objectives and represents a group of people who share common wants or needs that an organization serves.

Traditional market research involves face-to-face or traditional media methods, such as focus groups, in-depth interviews, shop-alongs, ethnographic observation, intercepts, and telephone and mail surveys.

TripAdvisor is an online travel company providing hotel booking and reviews of travel-related content with travel forums that was founded in 2000.

Trolls are users who intentionally post inflammatory, extraneous messages in online communities to provoke emotional responses.

Tumblr is a blogging platform and social-networking website that allows users to post multimedia content in a short-form blog that was founded in 2007.

Twitter is an online social-networking service that enables users to send short, character-count-limited messages that was founded in 2006.

Twitter Analytics is the tool that measures organic and paid impact for brand account performance on Twitter.

Twitter Cards enable users to attach rich photos, videos, and media experiences to tweets and to drive traffic to websites.

Twitter Chats are when an organization or individual talks live with others about a topic during a preplanned time using a hashtag.

User-centric means having more control, choices, or flexibility where the needs, wants, and limitations of the end user are taken into consideration.

User-generated content is any photo, video, post, or comment published through a social media platform by an unpaid contributor.

User-generated content policy is an organization's standards for rights granted to use consumer-created content in brand marketing.

Uses and gratifications theory proposes that audiences are active in media consumption and that they consciously select media content to satisfy their various needs.

Video blog (vlog) is a combination of video, images, and text that can be thought of as a form of web television.

Video podcast is a series of video clips or web television series delivered digitally that are often subscribed to and downloaded or streamed online through a computer or mobile device.

Web 2.0 is the common term used to designate the collective technology changes in the way web pages were made and used that took them beyond the static pages of earlier websites.

WhatsApp is a free, cross-platform instant messaging service that allows encrypted multimedia communication through mobile cellular numbers.

Wiki is a website that allows collaborative editing by multiple contributors.

WikiLeaks is an international nonprofit that collects news leaks and classified media by anonymous sources and publishes them on its website.

Wikipedia is a collaboratively edited, free, internet encyclopedia supported by the non-profit Wikimedia Foundation that was founded in 2001.

WikiWikiWeb was the first website to use a wiki style of programming in 1995.

Wisdom-of-the-crowd is the collective opinion of a group rather than a single expert.

Word-of-mouth communication is when people share information about products or promotions with friends and is one of the oldest forms of marketing.

Word of Mouth Marketing Association (WOMMA) is the official trade association dedicated to word-of-mouth and social media marketing.

WordPress is a free, open-source blogging and content-management system that was founded in 2003.

Yahoo! Answers is a community question-and-answer website or social-knowledge platform founded by Yahoo! in 2005.

Yelp is a website and mobile app that publishes crowdsourced ratings and reviews about local businesses that was founded in 2004.

YouTube is a video-sharing website that enables users to upload, view, and share user-generated and corporate-media video that was founded in 2005.

YouTube Analytics provides data on YouTube brand channel organic and paid video performance.

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About the Author

Keith A. Quesenberry is a marketing professor, researcher, and consultant at Messiah College, where he teaches social media, digital marketing, marketing principles, and integrated marketing communications in the undergraduate and MBA programs. He also teaches emerging media in the graduate Integrated Marketing Communications program at West Virginia University. He previously taught communications and business classes in the Center for Leadership Education at Johns Hopkins University and key courses in the Advertising and Public Relations Department at Temple University. Prior to teaching, he spent nearly twenty years in marketing and advertising as an associate creative director and copywriter at advertising agencies such as BBDO and Arnold Worldwide. His client experience spanned from startups to Fortune 500s such as Delta Air Lines, ExxonMobil, PNC Bank, Campbell's, and Hershey.

His advertising campaigns have earned awards such as the One Show, National ADDYs, and London International Awards, and have been featured in the trade publications *Ad Age*, *Adweek*, *Brandweek*, and *Lurzer's International Archive*. His social media campaigns have been recognized by the industry, including a PRSA (Public Relations Society of America) Bronze Anvil for word-of-mouth and an OMMA (Online Media, Marketing, and Advertising) Award. He is also a contributing author to *Harvard Business Review, Entrepreneur, Time, Social Media Examiner,* and *Social Media Today*. His articles have been recognized as "Top 40 Content Marketing" and "Top 5 Visual Marketing" articles of the year, "5 Most Viral Marketing Posts from the Pros," and featured on the *Harvard Business Review* "Weekly Hotlist."

Quesenberry has made expert appearances on MSNBC TV and NPR, and has been quoted in *Harvard Business Review*, the *New York Times*, the *New Yorker*, *Entrepreneur*, *Forbes*, the *International Business Times*, *MS Money*, *Variety*, and on MSN, Fox News, Fox Business, Yahoo News, and in AFP stories around the world. His research has been published in journals including the *Journal of Marketing Theory and Practice*, the *Journal of Current Issues and Research in Advertising*, and the *International Journal of Integrated Marketing Communications* and in *Ad Age* Research Reports and has also been presented at national conferences for the American Marketing Association, the American Academy of Advertising, and the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication. Follow him @Kquesen on Twitter or subscribe to his blog at www.postcontrolmarketing.com.