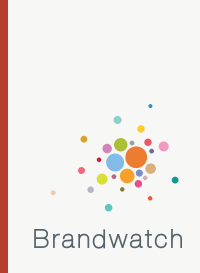




eBooks



Designed to help you get the most out of social media, whatever your goals might be.

As marketers have become increasingly aware of the benefits to be reaped from engaging with their target audiences in the domains they naturally inhabit, global investment in social media marketing has continued to grow rapidly.

Many brands are, however, still struggling to grasp the most effective ways to leverage social media and prove ROI on their efforts.

This eBook provides a practical guide to giving your marketing department the edge by being fully alerted and involved with social media conversations surrounding your brand, your competitor and your industry.



converse and convert

using social media to engage your target audience

using social media to engage your target audience

introduction/

Thank you for taking the time to read our eBook on social media monitoring for marketing, the 4th in our series for brands seeking to better navigate social media.

This eBook highlights the ways in which social media monitoring enables you to monitor the powerful and insightful conversations that you can discover and join, enabling you to find new communities and networks that were previously invisible to you. Such a highly targeted approach to marketing underpins the real revolution of marketing on social media – entering into highly focused discussions with many consumers at one time.

We look forward to any input you may have. So please, feel free to post comments on our blog at www.brandwatch.com/blog. We value and read all of your input!

Best regards,

The Brandwatch team

marketing the brand/

As we stated in our first [eBook on brands](#), brands are primarily mental creations by consumers to help them understand one company/product/service/industry over another in an increasingly competitive world. As such, developing your brand is a long-term effort that brings together individuals and teams from across your enterprise.

Today, social media monitoring and analysis tools are used in a wide range of disciplines to elevate brand performance. The information they gather and present enables continuous improvement in the areas of marketing, product development, customer service, PR, and even personal promotion of company executives. We cover all of these topics in our [eBook series](#), but the use-case we're focusing on in this eBook is marketing.

By leveraging social media monitoring tools for marketing, you can hear – and understand – what's being said online. This represents a giant leap toward gaining competitive advantage in your market. The knowledge you gain from having the pulse of the market enables you to increase awareness of your brand, find influencers that impact brand perception, and leverage new networks that are relevant to your marketing initiatives.

stats

In a 2011 study by Booz & Co and Buddy Media, **81%** of companies stated that their marketing department is responsible for leading social media efforts.¹



cont...

Historically, marketing efforts have focused on very specific goals and campaigns meant to generate awareness, retain customers, and develop new customer leads. It's no different in the social media world. What is different in social media is the way in which marketers can engage and converse with their target audience. Rather than blasting out one-way messages with little feedback, or "push marketing," social marketers can message to their target markets in more subtle, conversational ways. This new social dialogue lets consumers provide marketing with instant feedback that helps to guide and improve ongoing marketing efforts.

Those CMOs who can home in on the conversations that really matter stand to gain significant competitive advantage in creating positive brand awareness and attracting a growing number of customers into the sales channel.

fact

B2B vs. B2C Marketing on Social Media

B2C marketers led the charge into social media marketing. Today, B2B marketers are taking pages from B2C marketers' playbooks – applying subtle changes and making equally substantial strides in understanding and engaging online consumers.



take an approach grounded in reality/

Over the last few years there has been a lot of talk about social media revolutionizing marketing in a way that instantly transforms a brand. Merely create some smart, original content and watch it take off in a viral manner, catapulting your brand to online fame with millions of enamored followers.

For all but a few exceptions, reality is far different. Social media marketing does provide substantial benefits. But these normally occur in terms of hundreds and thousands, depending upon the breadth and term of the marketing campaign. Whatever form they take, campaigns that succeed in social media do so for the same reasons as other marketing campaigns – **they build upon a core idea or need with which your target audience can connect.**

So, the first step to connecting with your target consumers is to understand their wants and needs. You can most easily do this by listening to the social conversations that are already taking place. In fact, listening is the absolute first *must do* of social media marketing.

tip

Best practices in social media marketing call for a phase of listening and monitoring prior to storming ahead with campaigns.



cont...

Think about listening this way: You are engaging a new audience with which you're not yet familiar. If you were in person with this audience, would you just start shouting out your message? Of course not, and the same holds true on social media. There is no bigger turnoff for social consumers than a brand that doesn't listen, understand, and then respond.

Listening isn't just about getting your message right. It's also about finding out where and how to engage customers. You may have a preconceived notion of where your target customers are, but on social media, meaningful discussions about your brand could be taking place on many sites you've never before heard about or considered.

converse & convert/ take an approach grounded in reality

6

comment

B2B vs. B2C Monitoring.

While B2C marketers can often attract consumers with simple messages (e.g. food, relaxation, sunny getaways), B2B marketers frequently pursue audiences that are either unaware of a problem or don't know that a solution to their problem exists. For this reason, B2B messages usually require far greater precision. That said, both B2C and B2B marketers have an elevated need to understand social conversations today in order to break through the noise and reach their desired audiences.



precision targeting is the real revolution behind social marketing/

Homing in on the social media sites that matter to you most is vital to your marketing success on social media. By expending your efforts on highly targeted environments, you stand a better chance of being seen by the *right* people.

Enterprise-class social media monitoring tools provide the ability for you to monitor for potent conversations – those in which you can take part and bring value. As opposed to free tools or site-specific tools, enterprise class tools enable you to find *all* the new communities and networks that would otherwise remain hidden from your sight.

Social media monitoring tools offer an unparalleled means of locating these communities. With well planned monitoring of a selection of keywords you can start to build a framework that ensures you are on top of what's happening online.

You can then use this information to determine where and how you should interact with relevant networks and both current and prospective customers.

B2B vs. B2C Interactions.

B2B and B2C marketers diverge regarding the places where they invest the most time and energy, states a recent study by Webmarketing 123. According to the study, Facebook is clearly the top site for B2C marketers, with more than **75%** of the study's B2C marketers stating that they are most active on Facebook, versus just **8.4%** for Twitter, and **6.2%** for LinkedIn.² B2B marketers pursue a more spread marketing approach with **34.6%** using Facebook the most, followed by LinkedIn (**25.3%**), and Twitter (**25.6%**).³

quote

The Future of Community:

"It is within the gates of private, smaller communities where meaningful peer connections, idea exchange and collaboration can truly take place."⁴

Vanessa DiMauro

"While social media can be used as a megaphone, it is much more powerful when used as a stethoscope."⁵

Chris Heggem



beyond your brand/ monitor industry keywords

To maximize the marketing benefits of social media, you should broadly monitor across several categories to gain a true understanding of your target audience and how it is evolving.

There are permanent keywords you should be listening for based on your industry. There are also more time-dependent keywords, such as those reflecting current trending topics, that are relevant to your product or target market (see next page).

Industry Keywords.

How you monitor industry terms will depend on the size and specificity of your particular industry. If you operate in a relatively niche industry – let's say luxury office furniture – it's likely that most conversations featuring top-level terms related to your industry will also relate directly to your company. These offer you opportunities to engage and represent your brand. You can quickly tap into these conversations through the broad monitoring capabilities of advanced social media monitoring tools.

cont...

If you participate in a broad-scoping industry, you will need to more narrowly focus your monitoring efforts to avoid information overload. Normally, this takes a few iterations with an advanced monitoring tool. They allow you to set your terms, listen, modify the terms, and listen again until you get it right.

Imagine you're a holiday vacation package provider. Monitoring terms as broad as "holiday" and "travel" will likely yield far too much data. To make the results more relevant to your needs, pick out terms for particular product areas or sub-categories of your industry. An example here could be a selection of terms related to Caribbean all-inclusive holidays surrounding New Year's Eve. The results of this monitoring effort will provide you with more targeted discussions and smaller, focused audiences. Now you can participate with relevance and focus. Remember, keeping social interactions simple will save you time and effort.

beyond your brand/ monitor trends

Monitoring trends has become increasingly popular on social media, as marketing organizations have become accustomed to making social activities part of their normal routine. Where once they were merely checking in daily to uncover mentions of their brand, today's savvy marketers can manipulate monitoring tools that touch millions of sites to spot emerging trends. This helps them get a jump on the competition.

Consider Sony's use of social media monitoring by marketers of its Sony Reader product. As they monitored the universe of industry terms and brand terms, the hot and trendy word that kept appearing was "moms." Sony took this information and quickly changed its marketing campaigns to focus on moms. Sony's head start over competitors was significant. Nielsen had reported in late 2010 that the majority of tablet and eReader buyers were young and male.⁶

So as the rest of the industry was primarily marketing to young males, Sony was acquiring loyal followers among older women. It took an updated Nielsen study in Q3 2011 to convince competitors that women (including moms) were buying up eReaders.⁷ Imagine the insights Sony has gleaned from its interactions with moms over the past year. The loyalty figures are impressive as well!

stats

55% of moms surveyed who are active on social media feel their eReader brand understands their lifestyle vs. **37%** of moms who don't use social media.



cont...

Marketers are also targeting temporal topics and themes that trend as the result of external occurrences. For example, the aforementioned provider of luxury office furniture could track all social discussions taking place around the issue of back problems in the workplace. Finding conversations about new research on the topic could yield substantial insights into new marketing language and techniques to attract consumers aware of the issue. It may even decide to launch a micro-site or blog dedicated to giving advice about back problems.

stats

Twice as many social media moms are willing to pay a higher price for their eReader brand (**37%** vs. **18%**) and almost six times more (**38%** vs. **7%**) have responded to a direct marketing promotion from the brand.⁸



beyond your brand/ monitor competitors

What are your most challenging competitors doing and why? This is critical knowledge to pass up the organizational ladder, because it impacts so much of your company's strategy.

From our previous example of Sony and its connection with moms – what if a competitor had been closely tracking Sony's eReader marketing efforts on social media? Couldn't the competitor have reacted faster than the year-plus that it actually took?

You may not like your competitors, but the fact is that monitoring them can only help. Monitor their keywords, brand names, special campaigns, and events that affect their business. You will quickly understand the positive and negative buzz surrounding them. Surely you can take advantage of this knowledge and find ways to play against their strengths, weaknesses, or unaddressed issues. At the same time, you can evaluate how your brand is doing relative to theirs and perform periodic benchmarks to see how your efforts are changing the social conversations in your industry.

cont...

Here are some basic questions to guide your competitive monitoring effort:

- What are our competitors doing better?
- How are competitors' relationships with their customers? Can we replicate their successes?
- With whom do they have great relationships? Who are their key customers?
- What lead generation and sales channels work well for them?

Remember that monitoring competitors, particularly their blogs and forums, will require you to listen more than engage. Does that mean you cannot defend your brand when inaccurate comments are posted about it? It depends on the scenario. But recognize that the main benefit is to find communities that discuss products like yours, learn from them, and learn where your company stands.

engage and respond to add value/

Here you transition from listening to connecting with new communities and raising awareness of your brand among consumers. Before diving in, make sure your team is clear regarding the messages you are putting out to the world. It's difficult to backtrack once a message goes viral, so first decide how you want consumers to perceive your company.

Marketers have much less leeway than consumers to operate on social sites, so you need to put consumers at ease with exemplary social behavior. If you adhere to these best practices, your engagements should prove successful:

- 1. Be transparent.** This helps community members see your brand as something more than a company logo or product.
- 2. Add value.** People use social media to learn or solve problems, so help them do so if you can. If you cannot, resist commenting for the sake of airtime. It wastes their time.
- 3. Be realistic.** Don't have a marketing person answering customer service or product development inquiries. Wait for the right person to respond.
- 4. Inform and educate without selling.** Make sure the content you share really helps answer questions versus promoting your product/service.
- 5. Never lie.** If unsure, check and double-check your facts before posting anything to a social media site. Remember that your gaffs will live on in perpetuity.
- 6. Adhere to a social media policy.** Avoid rogue posts and always ask yourself if the item you are about to share completely complies with your policy.

cont...

- 7. Converse.** Once you participate, be ready to field responses to your postings. Social media participants despise having their comments and feedback ignored.
- 8. Participate in others' forums.** Assuming you have established your own online forum, show that you respect others' opinions by participating in some of their forums.
- 9. Sustain your social media effort.** Nothing says "we don't care" about the community more than an on-and-off presence in social media.

summary/ measuring marketing results

In the simplest forms, marketers realize two main benefits from monitoring social media: generating positive brand awareness and driving consumer traffic to company websites and content.

Website traffic is easy to track. If you have a website analytics package for your site, you can track the traffic coming to you from the array of links you have established on social media. By seeing which comments/links deliver the most traffic, you can adapt where and how you target your marketing efforts for the greatest success.

Gauging increases in brand awareness is less scientific. After all, you can't track how many people saw and read your comment or the impression it left with them. The most direct indicator of marketing's impact on brand awareness is the volume of comments and/or posts related to your comments, blogs, and other social activities.

As we stated earlier, outside of a few wildly successful social media stories, successful social media marketers experience a gradual increase in brand awareness over time. This usually manifests itself as an increase in website and campaign traffic as well as social media mentions of your brand.

cont...

Because social media monitoring enables you to target the most relevant discussions, the quality of traffic to your website should also improve over time. Just as the quality of traffic improves, so too will your knowledge of ways to improve your social marketing. Better understanding of consumer and industry trends will lead you to make wiser decisions in several ways:

- **Search marketing:** make better decisions on keyword and link-source research
- **Display advertising:** find the most relevant venues for advertising your products/services
- **Strategy:** Provide market insights to improve your company's overall strategy development

end/

We hope you've gleaned some useful insights into marketing your brand on social media and the ways in which advanced social media monitoring tools can help you get the most from your social marketing efforts.

To see how Brandwatch can help give your business the edge in social media, visit the website and book a live demo with our team.

about brandwatch/

Brandwatch is one of the world's leading social media monitoring tools, with offices in the UK, US and Germany.

Innovative brands and agencies all over the world use Brandwatch for:

Research – Understanding the market

Sales – Identifying leads

Customer Service – Responding and engaging quickly

Marketing – Targeting new networks

Reputation Management – Limiting negativity and building on positivity

Creative Commons Attribution-NoDerivs 3.0 License

Please feel free to copy, share and reference this e-book. All we ask is that you acknowledge Brandwatch as the source and link to <http://www.brandwatch.com> when citing the publication.

thank you

to see how brandwatch can help give your business the edge in social media, visit the website and book a live demo with our team.

brandwatch.com/demo

references/

1. Booz & Company/Buddy Media, *Campaigns to Capabilities: Social Media & Marketing 2011, Selected Insights*, October 2011.
2. Webmarketing 123, *2011 State of Digital Marketing Report*, October 2011.
3. Corporate Eye Web Services Ltd, *B2B vs. B2C Social Media Marketing Plans Converge and Diverge*, November 5, 2011. Accessed online December 22, 2011 from the following source: <http://www.corporate-eye.com/blog/2011/11/b2b-vs-b2c-social-media-marketing-plans-converge-and-diverge/>
4. Farland Group, *Perspectives on the Future of Community: Vanessa DiMauro's View*, October 18, 2011. Accessed online December 22, 2011 from the following source: <http://farlandgroup.com/blog/perspectives-on-the-future-of-community-vanessa-dimauro%E2%80%99s-view/>
5. BlackBelt Strategies (MarketingNinja.com blog), *The First Steps to Social Media Success: Shut Up and Listen*, June 29, 2011. Accessed online January 4, 2012 from the following source: <http://www.marketingninja.com/the-first-steps-to-social-media-success-shut-up-and-listen/>
6. <http://www.openforum.com/articles/marketing-to-moms-is-getting-easier-thanks-to-tablet-computers>
7. Ibid.
8. <http://www.brandchannel.com/home/post/2011/05/12/Social-Media-Moms-Research.aspx>