



The Social Index

General Methodology

Philosophy

Our goal is to provide an index that's not shrouded behind a single score. While the specific algorithm and weightings are proprietary, we want it to be clear what factors we're looking at, and what areas brands can improve in. The following five scores were selected to evaluate unique aspects of a brand's online presence, and provide a more holistic snapshot of an industry's landscape.

Measurement

For each metric, a single leader is given a score of 100, for which all other metrics are normalized against. It should be noted that every time the index is run the baseline is adjusted against a single leader, which means that scores are determined by both a brand's performance and their leading competitor's performance in that area.

Social Visibility

Goal

Social visibility measures the volume of conversation surrounding brands on social media, effectively evaluating which brand has the biggest presence on social.

Measurement

For now, we're measuring Twitter and Facebook channels. For each channel, certain types of interactions are valued or weighted more than others – for example, a Like on Facebook

might be valued less than an @mention on Twitter, since it requires less effort, is more common, and generally does not suggest as high of a degree of brand support.

General Visibility

Goal

General Visibility measures how much conversation a brand is generating outside of social or how far the brand carries on non-social sites.

Measurement

It specifically measures the volume on blogs, forums and news sites. Again, each source is weighted according to its value: mentions on top news sites, which are generally more rare and more valuable to a brand than a blog mention, will be weighted more heavily.

Net Sentiment

Goal

Recognizing that not all Visibility is good, this metric aims to capture the conversation's mood based on an aggregate sense of sentiment over the given time period.

Measurement

Sentiment is notoriously difficult to measure. Brandwatch's natural language processing (NLP) techniques are among the most conservative, which means it aims to take fewer guesses but at a higher level of accuracy. The index score evaluates the ratio of positive sentiment to negative sentiment within the context of all conversations, which includes neutral topics. Applying the same methodology across all brands ensures that each endures the same margin of NLP error, providing a fair assessment across the industry.

Reach Growth

Goal

Measures how much a brand's social following is growing.

Measurement

Specifically, the metric examines the growth rate of social followers over a given time period. For each brand, that growth rate accounts for the size of the initial following using an adjusted logarithm – in other words, we account for the fact that it's generally easier for a brand to grow from 100 to 200 followers, than from 100,000 to 200,000 followers.

Engagement & Content

Goal

This metric looks at both how effectively a brand's social accounts respond to their audiences and how much a brand's audience engages with their content – essentially, we want to isolate the quality of a brand's social accounts. The Content part of this score adds context to the Social Visibility score: a brand that posts 100 times and receives 10 likes on each might have a higher Social Visibility score than a brand that posts 10 times and receives 50 likes on each post. However, the quality of their posts may not be as strong as the second brand – this score aims to support brands that post quality, engaging content. The Engagement side of this score aims to measure how often brands are responding to their audiences.

Measurement

This metric examines audience engagement rates (Replies, Retweets, Likes, Comments, and Shares) in relation to brand activity (Tweets, Replies, Posts, Comments). For the Engagement portion, we're analyzing how often businesses are responding to incoming messages. On the Content portion, we're measuring the amount of audience activity per brand post. Each interaction type is again weighted accordingly.