

2010 Social Media Marketing Benchmark Report

*Data and Insights for Mapping an
Effective Social Marketing Strategy*

Note: This is an authorized excerpt from the full MarketingSherpa 2010 Social Media Marketing Benchmark Report. To download the entire Report, go to: <http://www.SherpaStore.com> or call 877-895-1717

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Executive Summary

Welcome to MarketingSherpa's 2010 Social Media Marketing Benchmark Report.

An important transition in the use of social media for marketing purposes is taking place. A rapidly increasing segment of marketers are gaining the experience required to advance from novice to competent practitioner capable of achieving social marketing objectives and proving ROI. This Executive Summary will give you a glimpse into the most complete benchmark study available for guiding marketers through this transition.

In the past year, marketers have been captivated by the ample hype about Twitter, Facebook, blogs and other social media platforms. Their reaction was, for the most part, counter-intuitive to proven marketing principles. They jumped into this new medium thinking tactically about the latest social media platforms they could add to the mix rather than thinking strategically about the objectives they needed to achieve.

In the year ahead, we see social marketing maturing to the point where a majority of organizations will be in transition from the trial phase to the strategic phase of the learning curve. We see marketers first researching the medium (starting with resources like this report) and monitoring audiences to determine realistic objectives, then formulating tactics and implementing tools for accomplishing those objectives.

To make this leap, marketers will need benchmark data to help them better understand what works (and what doesn't) in social media marketing, and a *practical* method for mapping a strategy that will lead them to social marketing success. Both of which are provided in this *2010 Social Media Marketing Benchmark Report*.

Throughout this report, we have segmented benchmark data into standard demographics like organization size, primary market and industry sector. And for the first time we are segmenting data by the "social marketing maturity" of responding organizations. Social marketing maturity has been defined by the practices of an organization during three logical phases of development. The goal is to demonstrate the disparity in the performance of social marketing programs by organizations in each stage of maturity.

This report also provides valuable insights and commentary from more than 2,300 marketers who participated in the benchmark survey and enthusiastically shared their experiences. Social media has opened a whole new world of possibilities for marketers, and the report that follows will help guide you through this promising new frontier.

As always, we welcome your comments and look forward to hearing from you.

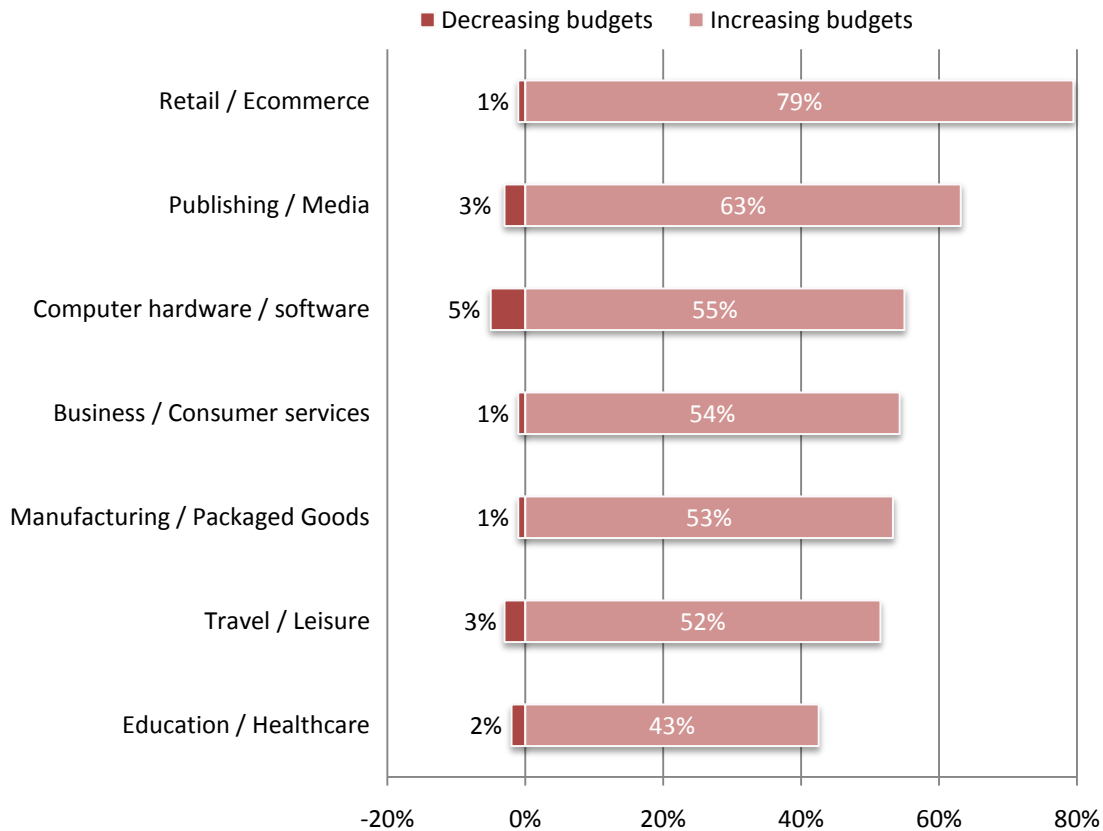
Regards,



Sergio Balegno
Research Director, MarketingSherpa

2010 Social Marketing Budgets Defy Economic Concerns

Change in Social Marketing Budget from 2009 to 2010, by Industry Sector



Source / Methodology: MarketingSherpa Social Media Marketing Benchmark Survey / Fielded Nov 2009, N=2,317

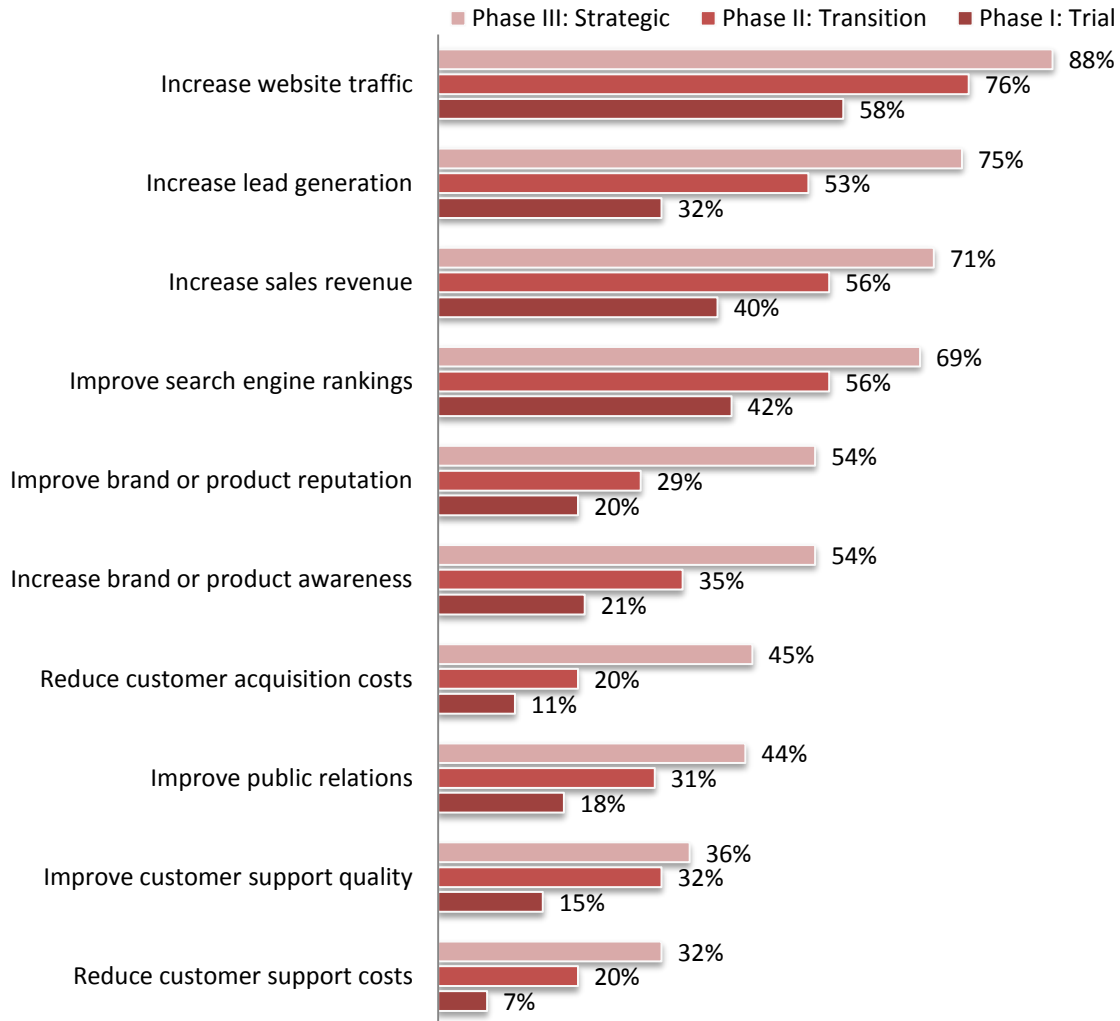
Chances are your overall marketing budget was hit hard by the economy in 2009 and the prospect of recovering a substantial portion of these funds in 2010 is not very likely. But there is good news for social media marketers. This chart shows that social marketing will benefit from very significant budget increases in the year ahead no matter what industry your organization is in. What this chart doesn't show is from where these increases will come.

As a relatively new and rapidly emerging tactic, social media is generally funded by either increasing the overall budget or, more often than not in the current economic climate, by shifting funds from other marketing line items to social media. Social marketing budgets are growing at the expense of other tactics and a deeper dive into this study will show you which ones and to what extent.

The human factor will account for nearly 60% of social marketing expenditures next year including staff salaries for blogging, content development, social monitoring, etc. Another 20% of the budget will go outside the organization to agencies, consultancies and other social marketing service providers.

Aligning Social Marketing Objectives with Corresponding Metrics

Objectives that are Targeted *and* Measured, by Social Marketing Maturity



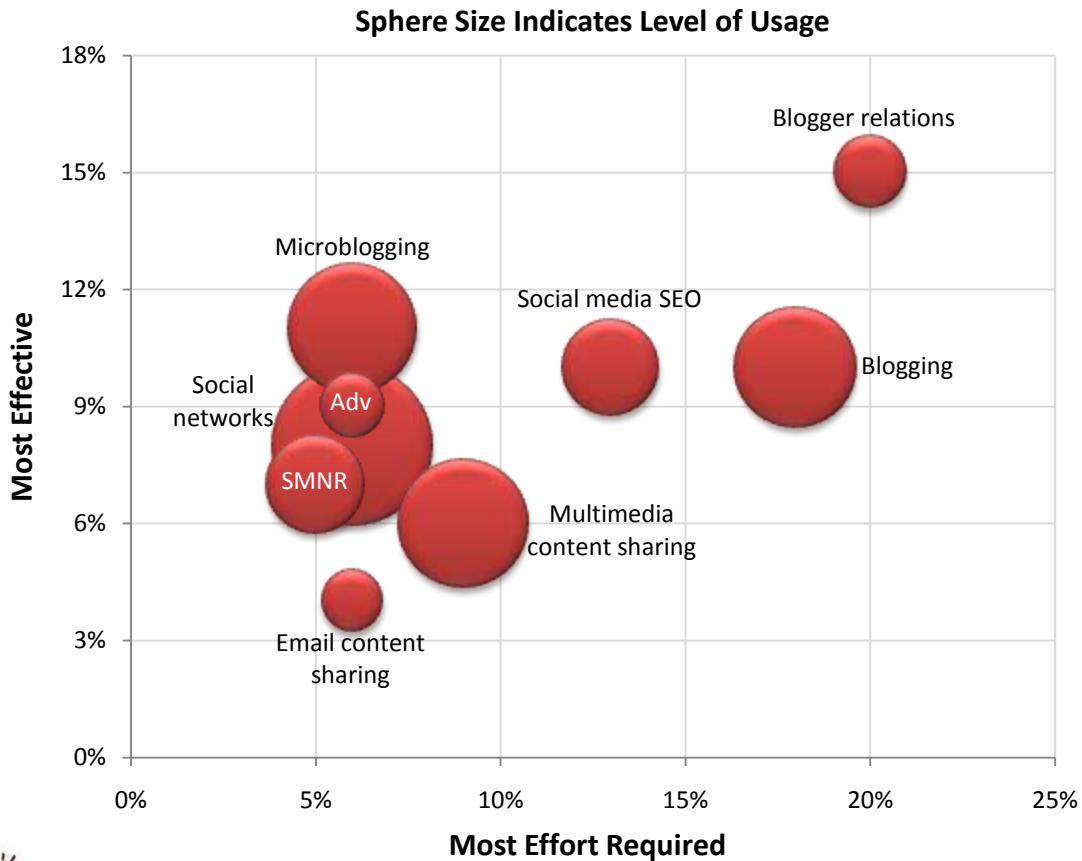
Source / Methodology: MarketingSherpa Social Media Marketing Benchmark Survey / Fielded Nov 2009, N=2,317

Defining specific objectives for a social marketing initiative is only half the battle. The other half is aligning those objectives with corresponding metrics. This alignment is important because it enables an organization to measure its progress in achieving the objectives and proving ROI. While obvious, this step is often overlooked.

This chart breaks out the percentage of organizations targeting *and* measuring social marketing objectives by their social marketing maturity status. Regardless of the specific objective, an organization in the strategic phase of social marketing maturity is much more likely to align their objectives with corresponding metrics than are organizations in the earlier phases.

Three Dimensions of Social Marketing Tactics

Comparing the Effectiveness, Effort Required and Usage of Social Marketing Tactics



Source / Methodology: MarketingSherpa Social Media Marketing Benchmark Survey / Fielded Nov 2009, N=2,317

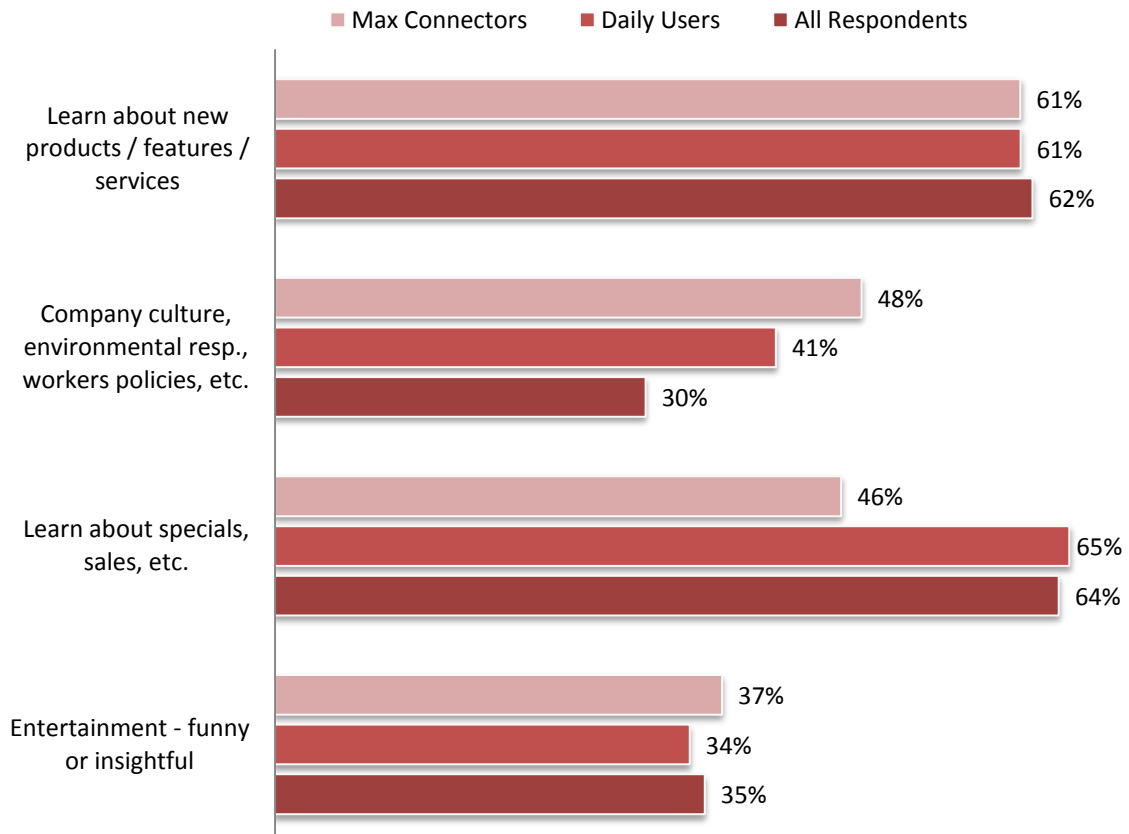
The data breakouts for the use, effort required and effectiveness of social marketing tactics are provided throughout this study. In the chart above, we combine these three sets of data to give you a three dimensional view of the tactics.

The effort (time and resources) required of a social marketing tactic often trumps the effectiveness of a tactic in determining its use. The more effort required, the less likely it will be implemented. For example, the most effective tactic shown in the chart above – blogger relations – is used by far fewer organizations than less effective tactics primarily because of the effort required.

This focus on “fast and easy” versus effectiveness is a problem that is far more prevalent with organizations in the trial phase of social marketing maturity than with more advanced social marketers working from a strategic social marketing plan.

How Consumer Use Affects Relationships with Commercial Interests

Why We Friend and Follow Companies



Source / Methodology: MarketingSherpa and Survey Sampling, Popular Media Study / Fielded Dec 2009, N=1,314

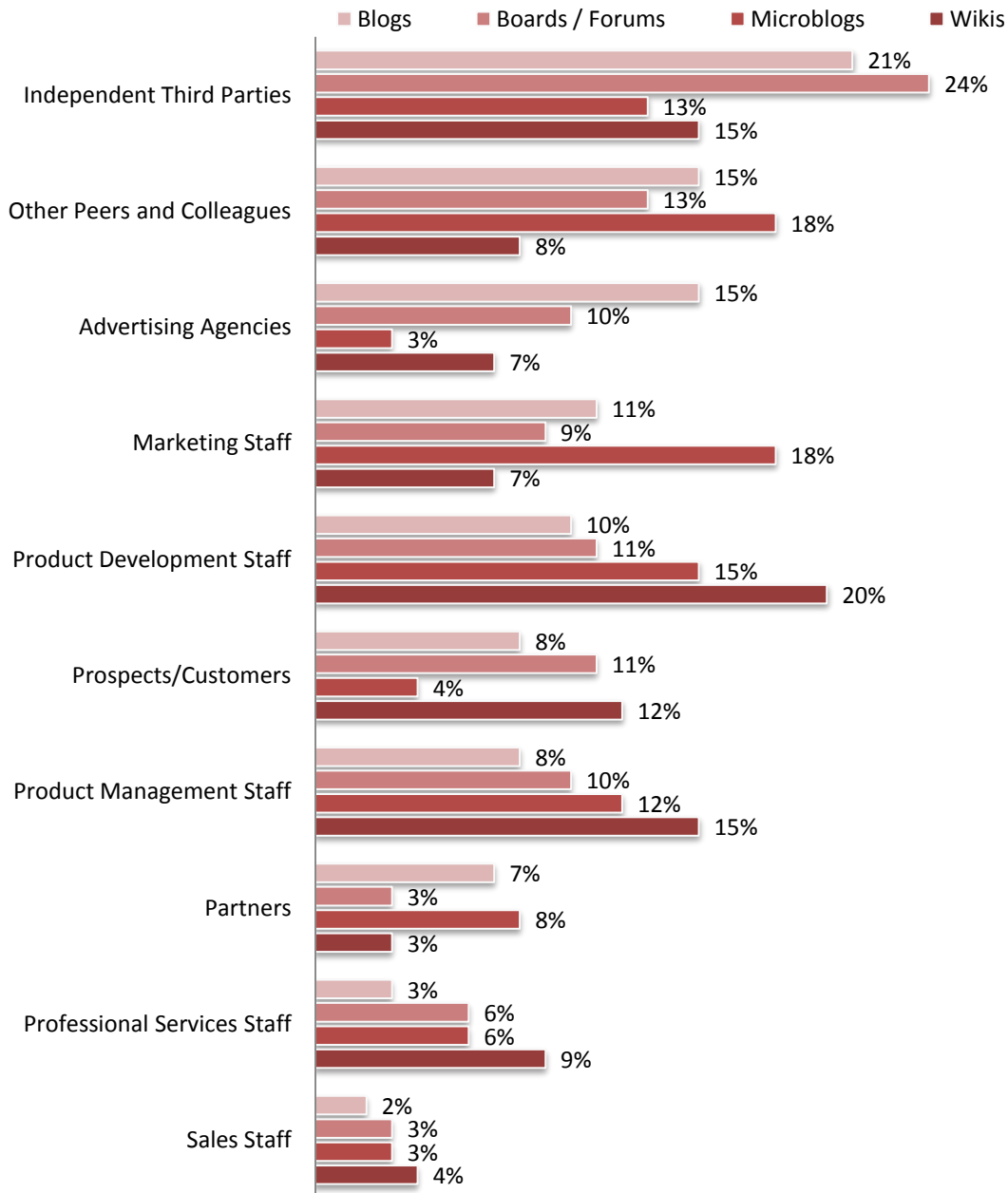
In reporting on this consumer use study, we make reference to a group we’re calling “Max Connectors” – those people with more than 500 social connections.

The motivations for consumers to track brands and companies through social media are generally predictable. However, there are exceptional aspects. Unlike our motivations for email or catalogs, getting a first or early look at features and products is at least as strong a motivation as beneficial pricing (this is especially true of “Max Connectors”).

Another unique driver of social connectedness with companies is to “get to know” the company. Although other aspects of the Internet have already opened this arena up to scrutiny, social media has accelerated the ability of individual consumers to monitor, communicate and comment on companies as citizens.

Technology Buyers' Voice of Choice, by Social Media Platform

Preferred Primary Voice of Insight and Opinion on Vendor-Hosted Social Platforms

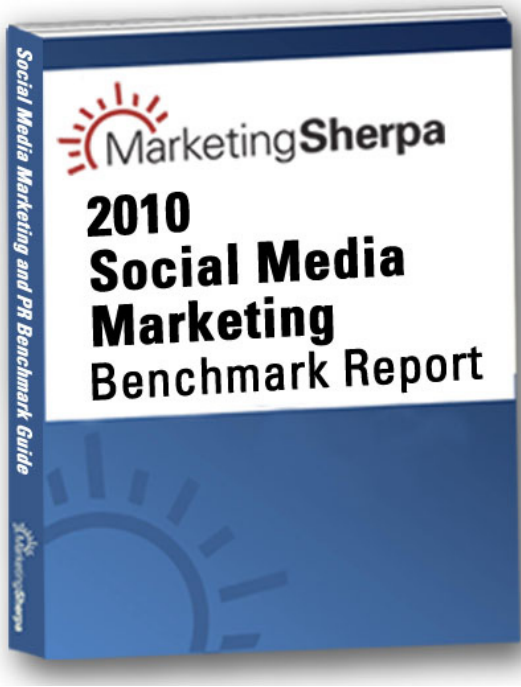


Source / Methodology: IDG Connect, IT Investment Decision and Content Preference in Social Media / Fielded Jun 2009, N=100

When vendors host or participate in social conversations, they must realize the preferred voice of insight and opinion varies by platform. This chart is useful in determining who to spotlight in conversational threads. While independent third parties have the highest overall preference, vendor staff can – and should – have a role to insure the conversation stays on topic and works to build legitimacy and a perception of expertise that helps round out the contribution of independent voices.

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All-New! Research Data and Insights for Mapping an Effective Social Media Marketing Strategy



The 2010 Social Media Marketing Benchmark Report includes:

- 188 charts and tables
- Research from 2,317 marketers
- 8 critical challenges to achieving success
- Sherpa's Social Marketing ROAD Map
- Budgeting and financial metrics
- Social media consumption and user behavior
- Research on Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn and blogging

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