



THE STATE OF
SOCIAL MARKETING
2015 Report



A LETTER FROM THE AUTHOR



There are now over 7.18 billion people in the world, and we're more in touch than we ever have been. Technology has brought us closer to each other, giving us the ability to share just about anything with just about anyone, any time.

The advent of social media has made the world smaller. We Are Social reports that over 2 billion people worldwide use social media, meaning 28% of the global population is interconnected.

*2 billion people worldwide
are active on social media*

For marketing organizations, this web of connections presents a massive opportunity to make an impact on an unprecedented number of people. Marketing via social is a priority for more companies than ever before.

On average, social media accounts for 9.9% of digital marketing budgets in 2015, a figure that is projected to grow to 22.5% in the next five years.

*Social media will account for 22.5% of digital
marketing budgets in the next five years*

With each year bringing more networks, more metrics, more companies competing for a share, and a greater ability to connect the dots between social media and business results, marketers are able to create more meaningful programs that impact their company's bottom line. But, making this impact requires increasingly sophisticated resources.

According to VentureBeat, marketing technology accounted for \$3 billion in Q1 2015 investments and acquisitions, and social was the number two category on the list (second only to analytics), accounting for almost \$500 million in deals.

A LETTER FROM THE AUTHOR

With increasing investment, focus, and pressure on social media to make an impact, it's important for social marketers to understand the space more than ever.

This report is designed to serve as a resource for social marketers, pulling together data from different Simply Measured studies and surveys, as well as other sources, to identify key trends in the social marketing industry such as:

- How best-in-class social marketing teams are structured
- What social marketers are focused on
- Where social marketers struggle
- What social marketers need to be successful
- How the biggest networks are evolving

Whether you're a CMO with the goal of integrating social media into broader marketing initiatives, a social marketing leader looking for continued education, or a community manager trying to broaden your understanding of the market, this report aims to provide context to your professional world.

Cheers,

Kevin Shively
Sr. Content Strategist at Simply Measured



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report includes two surveys of social marketing professionals, research and analysis of the top brands in the world spanning six major networks, and insight from interviews with dozens of industry experts and best-in-class social media marketers. In this report, you'll learn:

Key Topics

- **How companies of all sizes build their social media teams:** Which roles and functions are important, which currently exist, and which are emerging as common trends.
- **What challenges social media marketers face:** Which are the biggest problems that social media teams have in 2015?
- **What are the functional needs that social media teams have in 2015:** By modeling other digital marketing channels, sophisticated social marketers are able to develop a framework for success in both the social marketing process and for their social analysis.
- **Which social media networks have the most activity:** Where are people most active, and where are brands engaging with them?
- **What are the network-specific trends in 2015:** Looking at seven of the largest social networks in the U.S., what trends stand out for each one and what can brands learn?

Key Findings

- **Social media is a growing focus for marketing organizations:** Social media marketing will account for 22.5% of marketing budgets within the next five years.
- **Social media teams have three distinct needs:** Centralized strategy and planning, direction tied to business goals, and dedicated tactical execution.
- **The majority of social media teams are part of the marketing organization:** 49% of all social media teams report to marketing leadership.
- **Demonstrating the value of social programs is the number one challenge:** 60% of social media marketers say showing ROI is their greatest challenge.
- **Social media analysis is not yet largely integrated into the overall business:** Only 22% of marketers say social media data impacts the overall business.
- **Of the major social networks, YouTube, Facebook, and Twitter have the highest brand adoption:** YouTube is used by 100% of the top brands in the world, with Twitter and Facebook close behind. Younger networks like Instagram and Pinterest are gaining steam.

SOCIAL BUSINESSES

When social media marketing first emerged as a category, there weren't standards for experience or expertise. Companies hired young staff and interns to "tweet and post to Facebook" but had no goals, process, or understanding of the networks they were using.

This is no longer the case. Social media marketing has grown both in popularity and importance. In 2015, there are an estimated 76,000 social media marketing professionals in the workforce.



Source: Google Trends

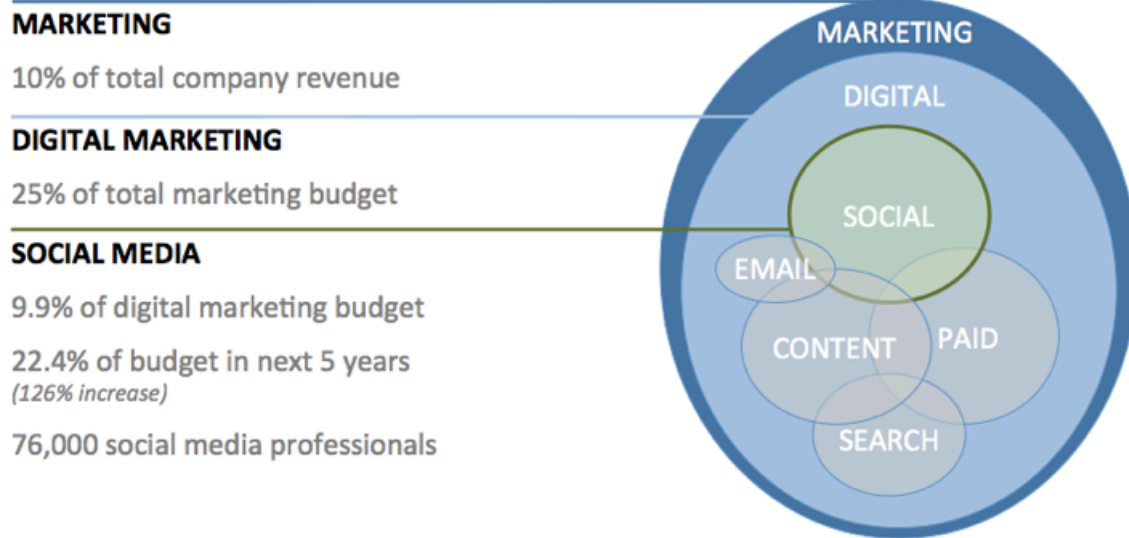
There may be plenty of young people still working in social, but the level of professionalism and integration with other marketing goals is much higher, the opportunity is greater, and, as a result, budgets and teams are bigger.

This section will identify the common traits of social media organizations, how they're structured, the challenges they face, and the needs they have.

SOCIAL BUSINESSES

The State of the Social Media Organization

Social media is no longer a reactive function, having moved beyond basic social listening and channel-specific engagement metrics. While those aspects are still important, social strategy has become a more complex, integrated effort. Social media is integrated closely with many other marketing activities, and its share of attention, budget, and staffing needs is only continuing to grow.



Sources: Gartner and CMOSurvey.com

For this report, we interviewed and surveyed hundreds of social media marketers to come up with a framework for structuring a social media team, and across the board, social media professionals have pinpointed three essential components of success:

1. Centralized strategy and planning
2. Direction tied to business goals
3. Dedicated tactical execution

In order for these three components to be put in place, a company must first make social media a priority.

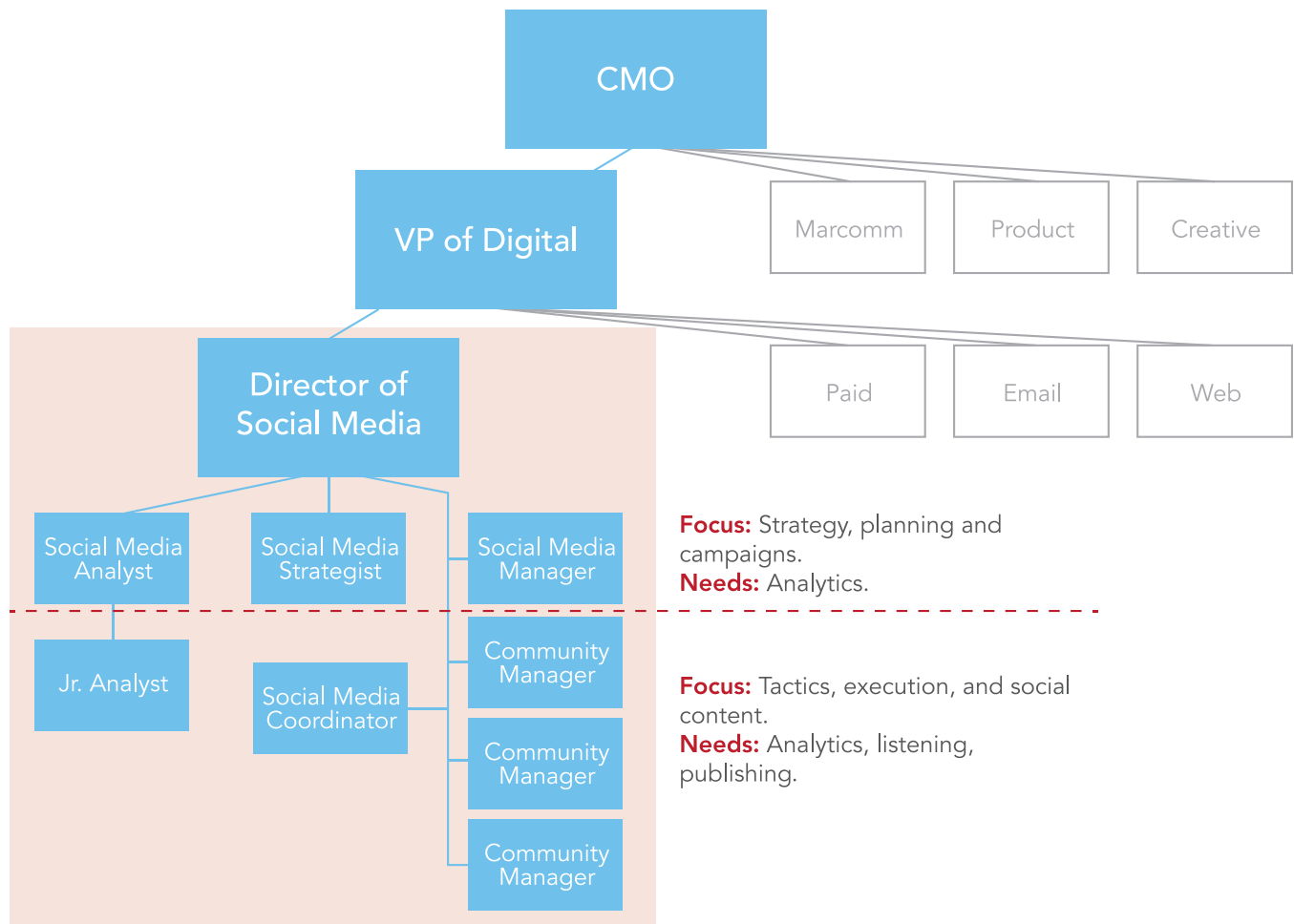
“A problem comes when the social team is not a priority within the org. Social media is a really important channel in today’s MarComm world – when you de-prioritize it, that’s the core issue.”

Kipp Bodenar, VP of Marketing at Hubspot

SOCIAL BUSINESSES

In order for social media to be a priority, a marketing organization must understand how it fits into the broader digital marketing mix.

Centralized Social Media Organization

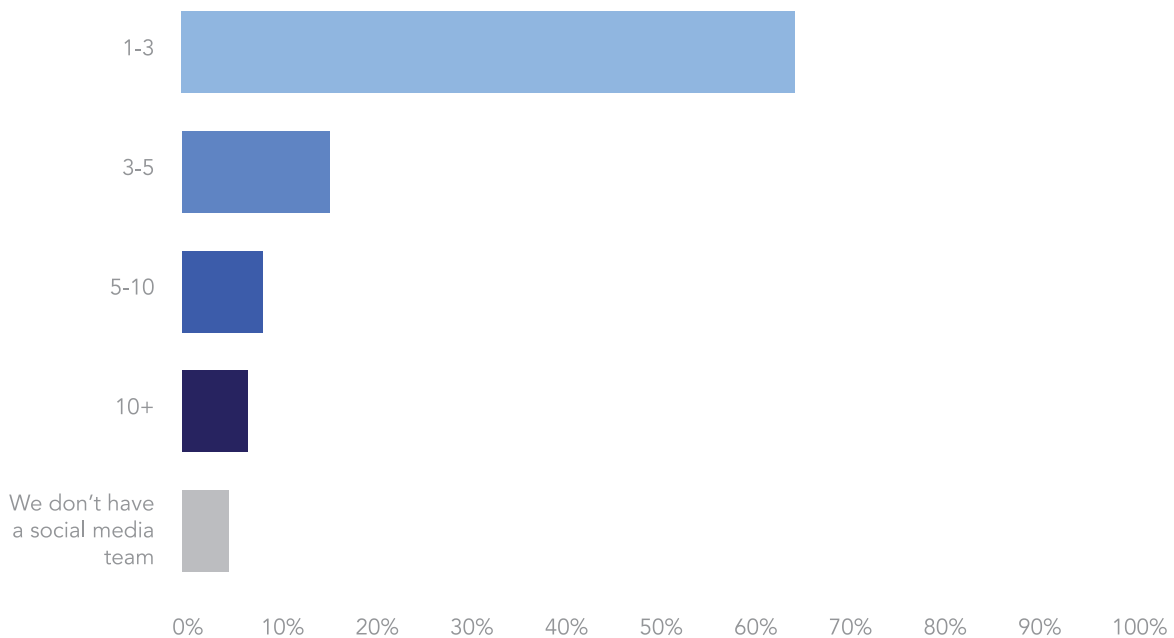


The number of employees and job titles will vary with each company's overall size, goals, and needs from a social team.

SOCIAL BUSINESSES

In many organizations, the number of social media-specific roles is limited. Our recent Simply Measured survey of over 350 social media marketers found that 65% of teams have between 1-3 people dedicated specifically to social media.

How many people work on the social media team?



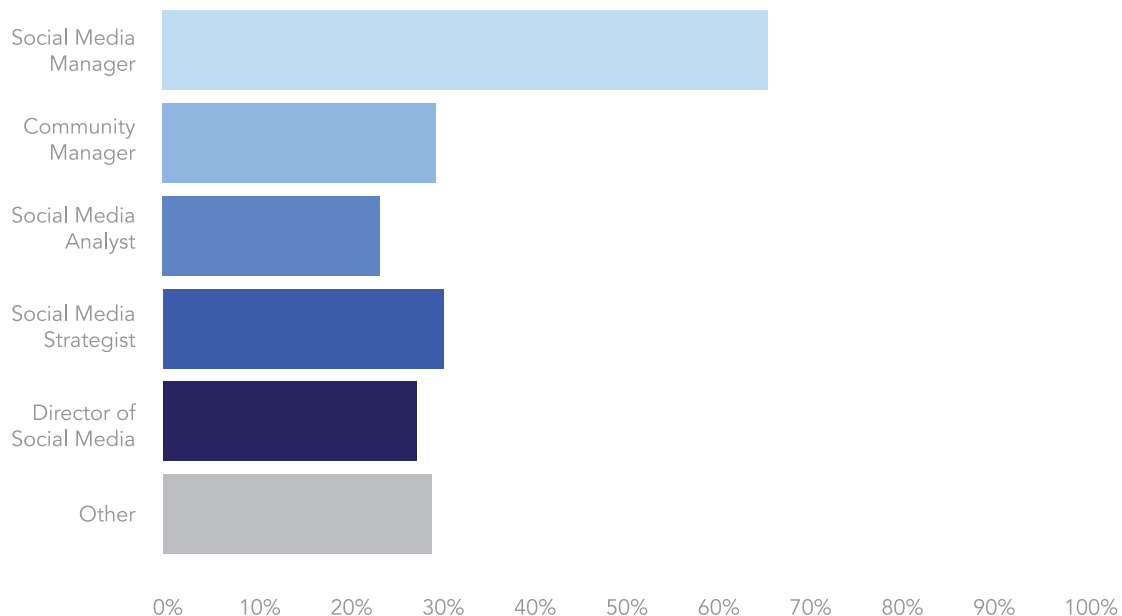
The role of “social strategist” may be a function of the director, or a social media manager. Multiple community managers may not be needed. A coordinator might be a luxury that the team doesn’t have budget for, but the strategic and tactical elements to this framework are a must. A successful social team needs to dedicate time and resources to planning and strategy, tactical execution, and measurement and optimization.

This framework is not meant to imply that community managers don’t think strategically, but rather that their core function is execution.

SOCIAL BUSINESSES

The most common role we found is that of the social media manager. Over 60% of respondents said that at least one member of their team has this role. Social media manager can often be a “catch all” title, responsible for the entire social marketing process, from planning all the way to measurement and optimization.

Which roles exist on your social media team?



Other common roles were the social media strategist, community manager, and director of social media. Thirty-one percent (31%) of respondents said that they or other members of their team are social media strategists, 30% of teams have community managers, and 28% have a director of social media.

In the “other” category, roles ranged from social media coordinator to content marketer and designer.

Each of the people filling these roles need to bring subject matter expertise that is specific to social, but as social media becomes more integrated, it is becoming more critical than ever for social marketers to understand other areas of digital marketing.

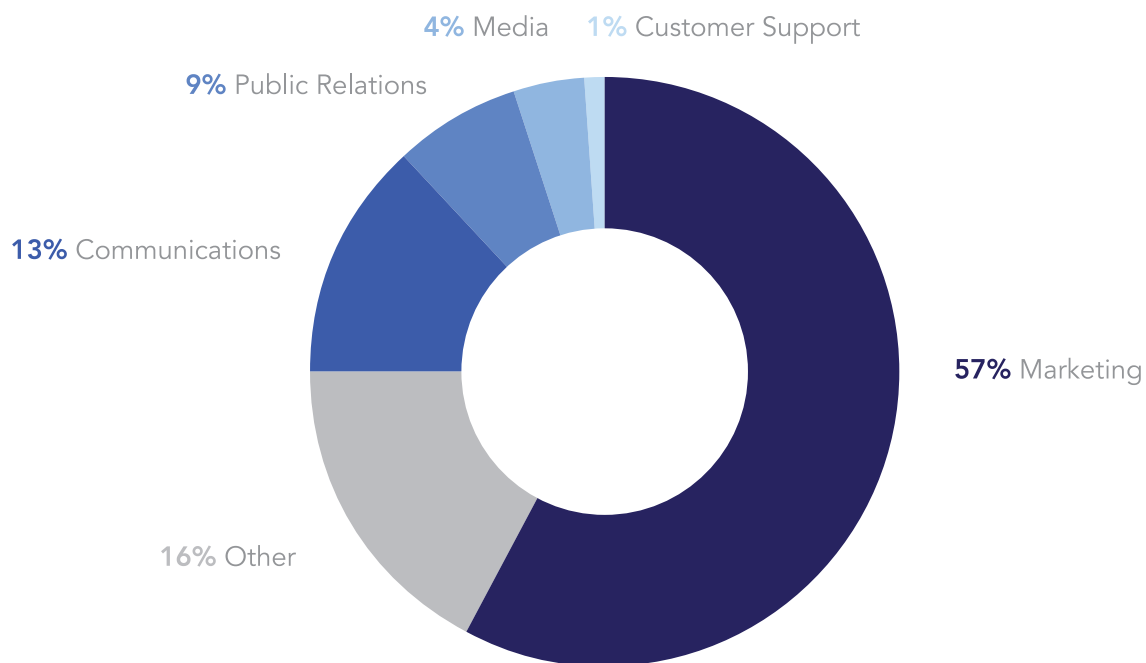
“I look for candidates who can think strategically in terms of the broader digital landscape. It’s fantastic if they have experience on social media, but having email experience or website development experience is icing on the cake. Can you connect strategic points for our clients, beyond traditional ROI? That big-picture perspective is great.”

Steve Sack, Vice President of Digital at Edelman Digital

SOCIAL BUSINESSES

The majority of social media teams are a part of the marketing organization, however at large enterprise companies, communications or public relations departments are often separated from marketing, and in some cases, social media lives there.

Which department does social media roll up to?



SOCIAL BUSINESSES

The Challenges Social Marketers Face in 2015

Simply Measured partnered with TrustRadius to survey over 600 social media marketing professionals on their practices. This survey uncovered several major challenges that social marketers face, and highlighted the way these challenges shift as teams grow.

“As companies increase their sophistication from a minimally viable social media presence to an integrated, strategic approach to leveraging social media across the organization, a few things tend to happen.

First, responsibility shifts from less than one FTE (typically in the marketing or communications department) to a small, dedicated team within one department to a team servicing multiple departments to a holistic approach, where many individuals in the company participate. Second, organizations start to leverage social media in multiple ways, from reputation management to customer service to finding advocates to market research. Finally, companies engage the help of more sophisticated technology to manage, measure, and analyze social media activities.”

Megan Headley, Research Director at TrustRadius

Below are the three major findings from the survey:

- Demonstrating the value of social programs is the number one challenge
- Social media is largely not yet integrated into the overall business
- Companies don't have the right set of tools to measure social media activities

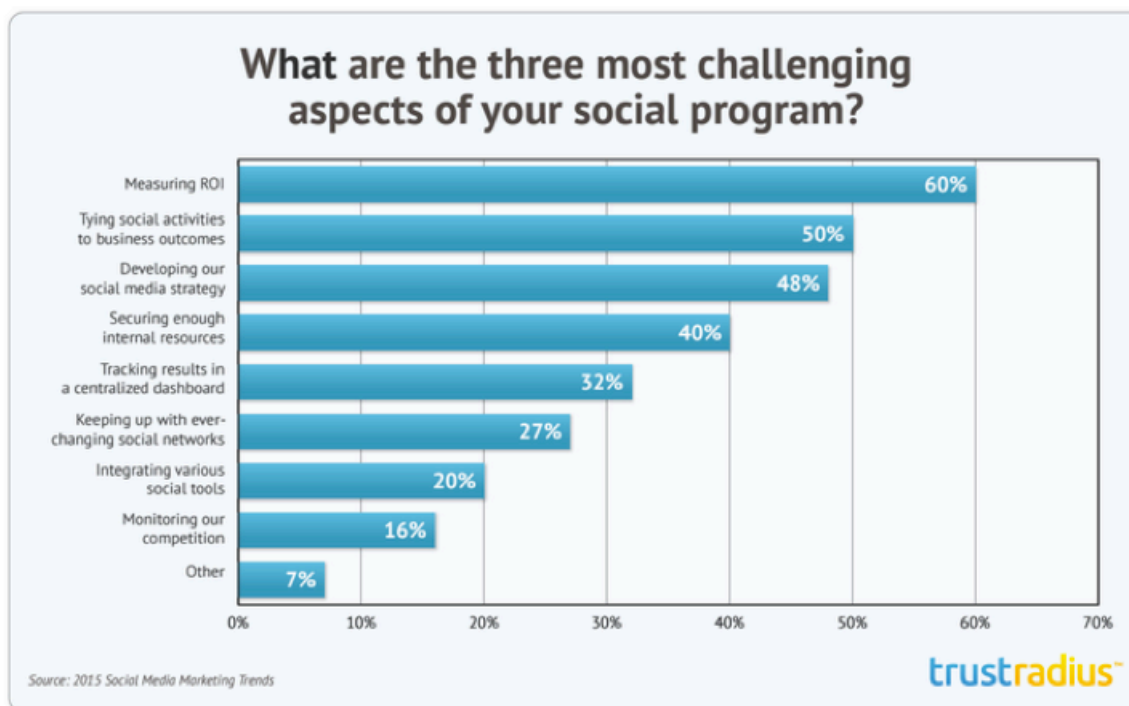
SOCIAL BUSINESSES

Demonstrating the value of social programs is the number one challenge

Companies of all sizes and maturity levels are struggling to prove the value of their social programs.

Social media activities can be difficult to quantify, and marketers are trapped between readily available “vanity metrics,” such as Likes and followers, and difficult-to-measure objectives such as brand awareness.

In fact, 60% of the marketers surveyed listed “Measuring ROI” as their top challenge, followed by “Tying social activities to business outcomes.”

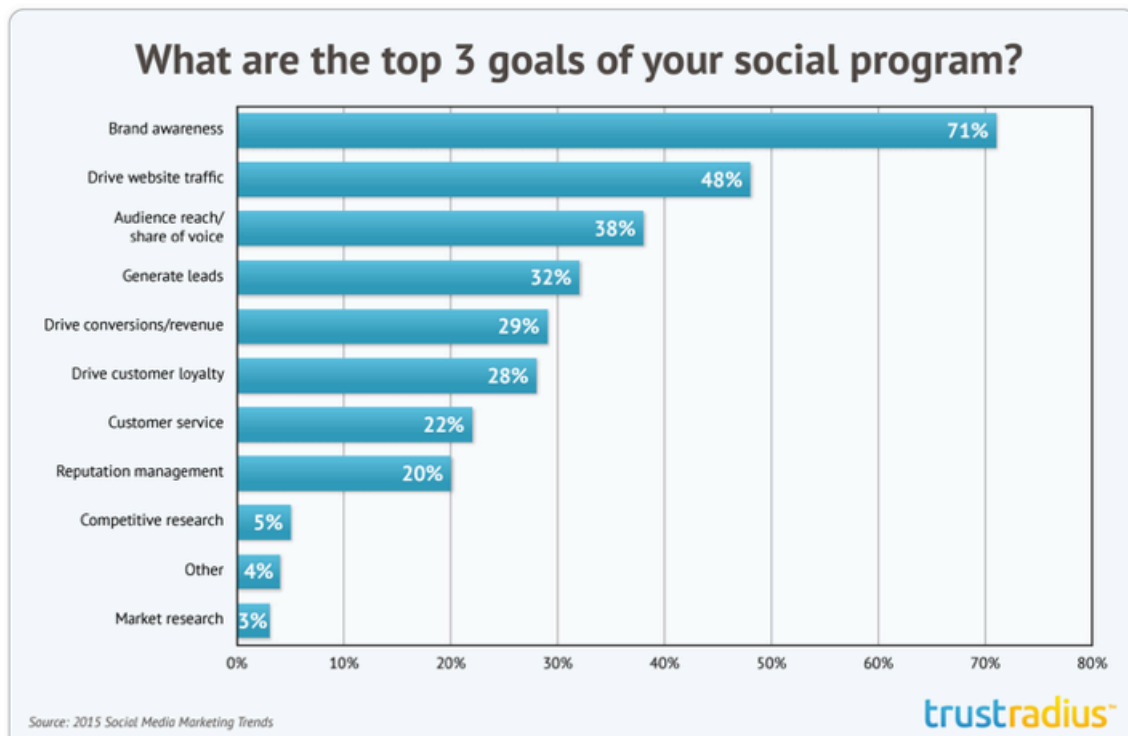


When it comes to understanding, proving, and quantifying value, social marketers are still trying to find the sweet spot.

SOCIAL BUSINESSES

Social media is largely not yet integrated into the overall business

Social media goals are not wholly aligned with overall business goals. Seventy-one percent (71%) of social marketers said that brand awareness is their number one goal.



The brand awareness focus was more common among small businesses without the marketing infrastructure and support found at an enterprise company.

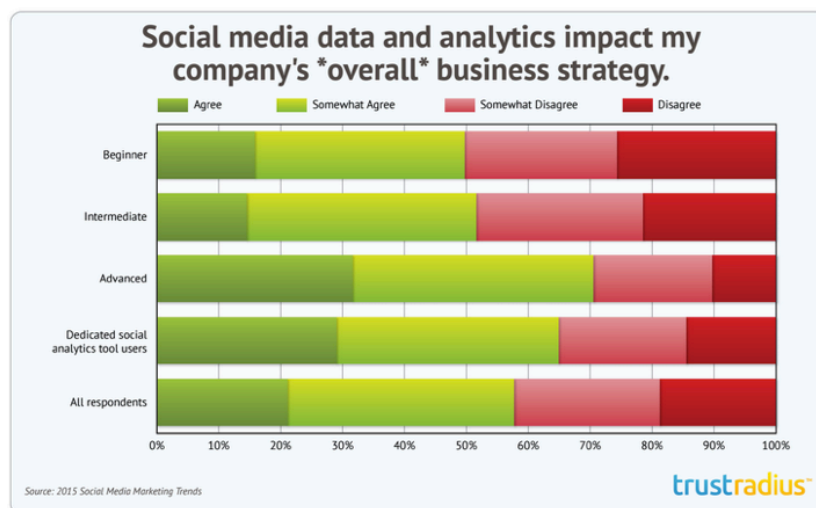
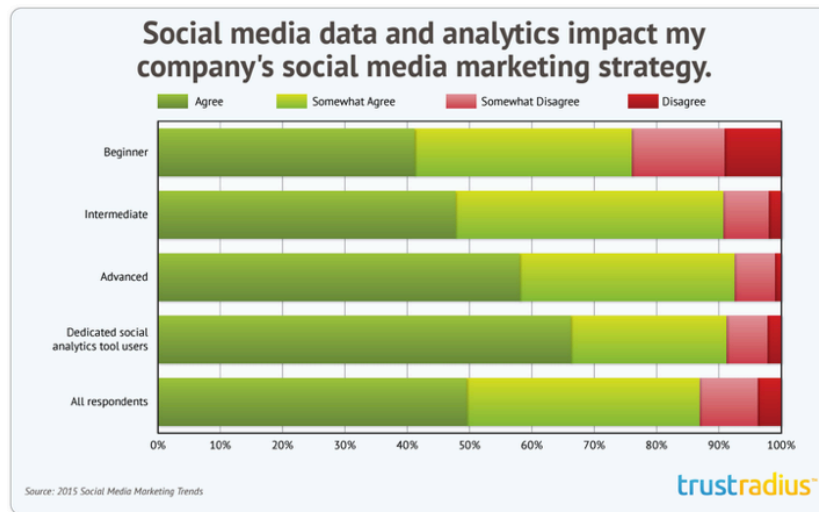
GOAL PRIORITIZATION PER COMPANY SIZE		
SMALL BUSINESSES	MID-SIZE COMPANIES	ENTERPRISES
1. Brand awareness (74%) 2. Drive website traffic (53%) 3. Generate leads (41%)	1. Brand awareness (75%) 2. Drive website traffic (50%) 3. Generate leads (34%)	1. Brand awareness (65%) 2. Audience reach/share of voice (41%) 3. Customer service (38%)

SOCIAL BUSINESSES

Furthermore, while the majority of marketers feel they effectively leverage social media data and analytics to optimize their marketing strategies, they don't feel social media data impacts their company's overall business strategy.

"We saw from our competitors that if you're going to be a successful marketer and a successful brand, you need to be using social media and digital tech well. But with the current structure, we were really isolated and fragmented."

Aaron Miller from General Mills in an interview with SocialMedia.org



While 50% of social marketers agreed that social media data and analytics impact their social media marketing strategy, only 22% agreed that it impacts their overall business strategy.

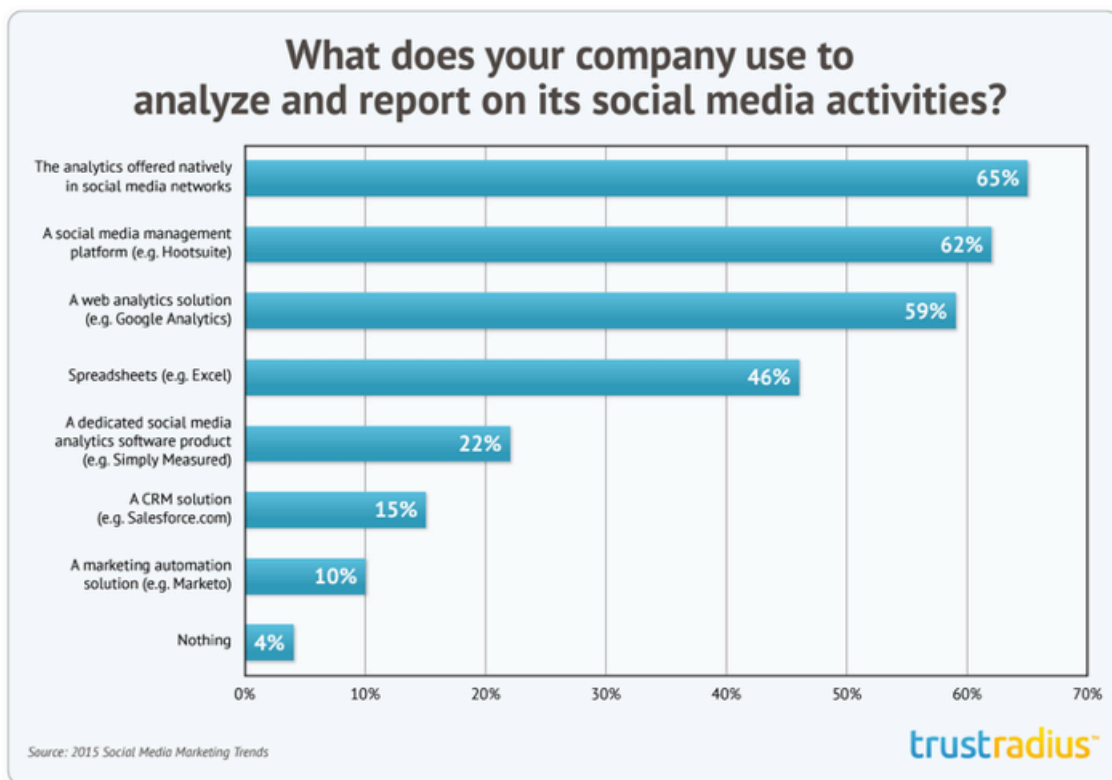
SOCIAL BUSINESSES

Companies don't have the right set of tools to measure social media activities

According to the TrustRadius survey, most marketers are using multiple sources of data and multiple technology products to measure social media activities. Because of this, many marketers still aren't able to interpret the data well enough to show value, and many aren't satisfied with their set of tools. This is a direct cause of the inability to tie social media to ROI.

“Our employees have to feel comfortable with analytics tools like Simply Measured, and understand how these tools can be leveraged for campaign insights and high-level strategy.”

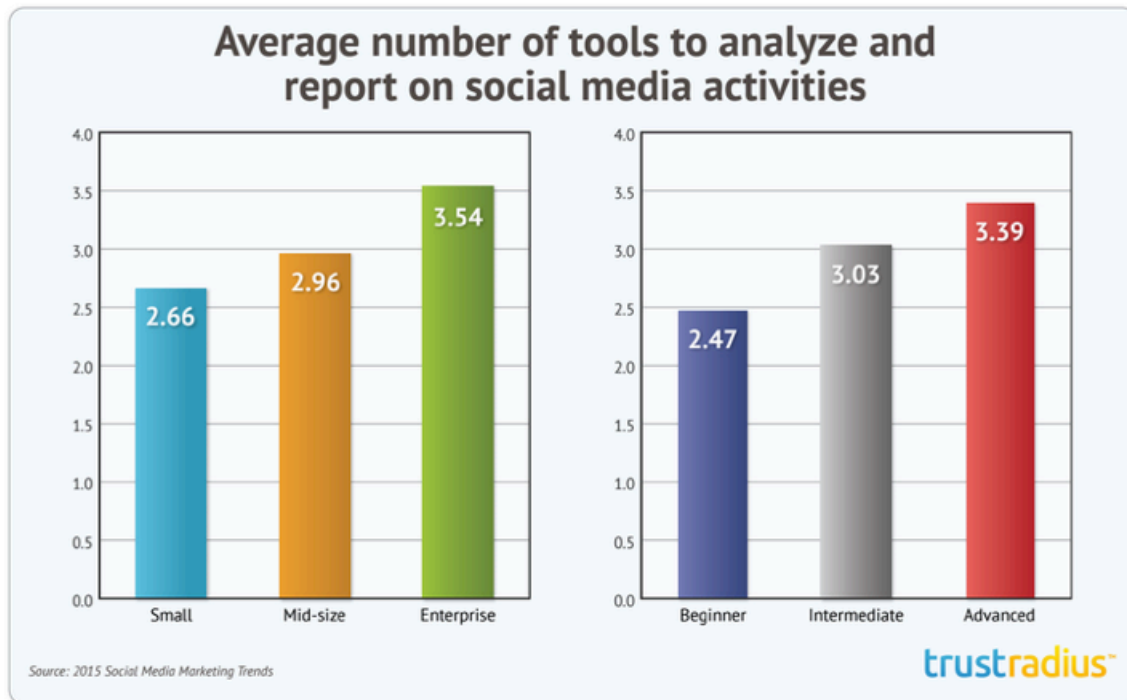
Steve Sack, Vice President of Digital at Edelman Digital



The most commonly used tools are the analytics offered natively in social media networks (64% of respondents), a social media management tool (62%), a web analytics solution (59%), and spreadsheets (46%).

SOCIAL BUSINESSES

Larger companies tend to use more than one tool to analyze social media data.



The ability to plan and measure social campaigns using data is critical when a team is at scale, but is something companies need to bake into their strategy early on.

“Post-execution, the analytics team discovers which content is performing best, down to the minute details (depending on how granular the client wants to get). Is this text overlay working for this content franchise? Are audiences more receptive to beer cans in the shot, or should we be focusing more on people? This can inform any data the brand is mining itself and help brand channel managers perform better in the future.

Pre-execution is when the analytics team informs everything from determining exactly what the desirable audience is to what the first layer of psychographics are, and anything else that may inform the creative team that may not have been obvious from inception.”

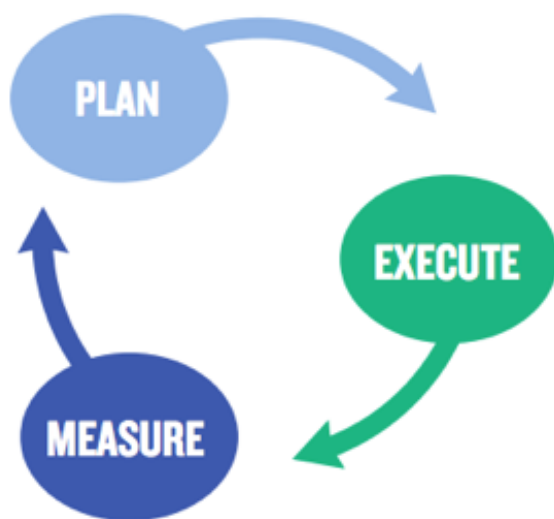
Sophia Reynoso, former Associate Director of Social Engagement for Translation LLC

2015 SOCIAL MARKETING NEEDS

Modern marketers don't have to make purely qualitative decisions. The data available for any digital channel arms marketers with the ability to quantify their entire social marketing process.

The Social Marketing Process

Social is now viewed a legitimate channel in the marketing mix, which means there are three distinct needs, just as there are in other areas of digital marketing, like email or web:



1. The ability to define and plan a social strategy.
2. The ability to execute on that strategy.
3. The ability to measure the success of the strategy and execution.

No marketing strategy is complete without coming full circle. In order to execute tactics, marketers have to plan a strategy, and in order to plan, they have to understand how their efforts make an impact.

This framework is being applied to social media more and more. Marketing teams are investing in better social analytics software to enable the planning and measurement processes, and sophisticated publishing tools to fuel their execution.

In addition, both the analytics and publishing software are getting more sophisticated.

THE STATE OF SOCIAL NETWORKS

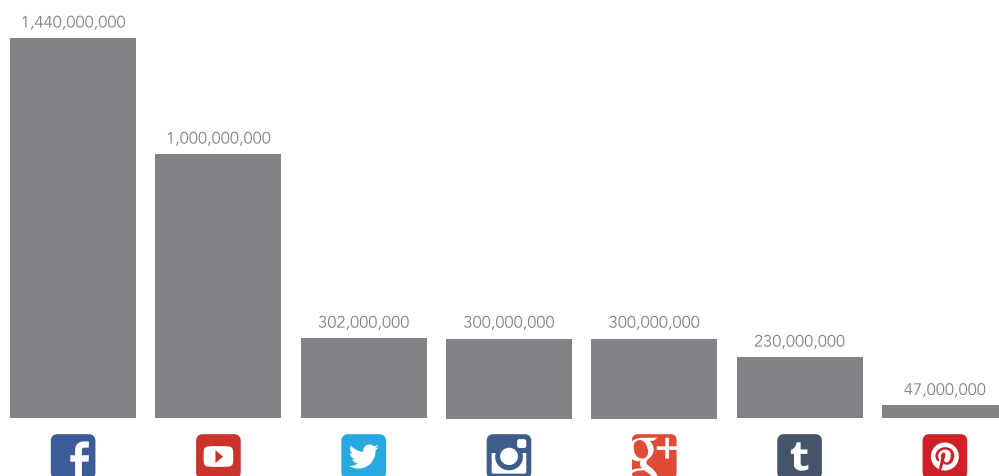
The number of social networks a brand is active on should be dependent on where that brand's audience is actively participating.

For media companies that market almost exclusively to a Millennial audience (think MTV), this means that newer networks like Snapchat and Meerkat are viable marketing channels, but this may not be the case for every brand.

With that in mind, this report is focused on seven large U.S. social networks - Facebook, YouTube, Twitter, Instagram, Google+, Tumblr, Pinterest - used by major Interbrand 100 and Fortune 500 companies to reach their target audience. While many companies use other networks, the penetration, advertising, and brand activity on these networks offers a consistent framework for understanding what best-in-class companies are doing.

The monthly active users (the number of people who sign in each month) for each of these networks provides context into why brand interest is so high.

2015 Monthly Active Users on Each Network



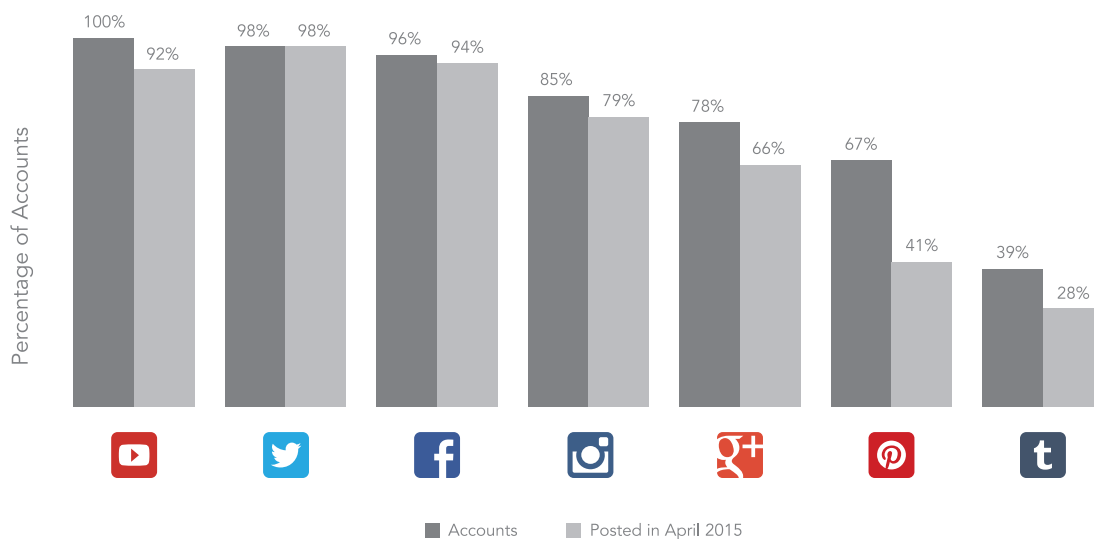
Facebook's 1.44 billion share of the 2 billion global social media users makes it the elephant in the room, and a big reason why so many companies consider Facebook to be central to their social marketing strategy.

For consumption-based networks like YouTube and Pinterest, the monthly active users total doesn't include visitors who don't sign in, but still consume content.

THE STATE OF SOCIAL NETWORKS

To create a baseline of brand activity, this report analyzed the Interbrand Top 100 Global Brands to identify the percentage of brands present on each network, as well as the percentage that posted content during the month of April 2015. This list is limited to those brands with global or U.S. specific accounts.

Percentage of Interbrand 100 Companies Using Each Network










YouTube has 100% adoption among Interbrand 100 companies, followed closely by Twitter and Facebook with 98% and 96% respectively. However, Facebook and Twitter saw a higher percentage of active brands during April than YouTube did.

Mobile activity doesn't seem to be hindering brand activity either, with 79% of the Interbrand 100 actively posting content in April of 2015.

Google+'s 66% activity during April stood out as a surprise, considering the fact that tech reporters have all but declared the network dead.

Tumblr saw smaller adoption numbers than other networks, but many brands in the media and automotive industries have found loyal and engaged fan bases on the network.

THE STATE OF SOCIAL NETWORKS

	AUDIENCE >>>	ACTIVITY >>>	HISTORY >>>
	1,440,000,000 <i>Monthly Active Users</i> 94% <i>Monthly Active Brands</i>	936 MILLION <i>Daily Active Users</i> 4 BILLION VIDEOS <i>Viewed Each Day</i>	2004 <i>Facebook Launched</i> 2007 <i>Fan Pages Launched</i> 2010 <i>Promoted Content Launched</i>
	302,000,000 <i>Monthly Active Users</i> 98% <i>Monthly Active Brands</i>	500 MILLION <i>Tweets per Day</i> 80% <i>Active Users on Mobile</i>	2006 <i>Twitter Launched</i> 2010 <i>Twitter Ads Launched</i>
	300,000,000 <i>Monthly Active Users</i> 79% <i>Monthly Active Brands</i>	70 MILLION <i>Photos per Day</i> 2.5 BILLION <i>Photos Liked per Day</i>	2010 <i>Instagram Launched</i> 2013 <i>Instagram Ads Launched</i>
	1,000,000,000 <i>Monthly Active Users</i> 92% <i>Monthly Active Brands</i>	300 HOURS <i>Uploaded Every Minute</i> 1 BILLION+ <i>Views Each Day</i>	2005 <i>YouTube Launched</i> 2006 <i>First Advertisting Partnership</i>
	47,000,000 <i>Monthly Active Users</i> 41% <i>Monthly Active Brands</i>	1 BILLION <i>Boards Created</i> 50 BILLION <i>Items Pinned</i>	2010 <i>Pinterest Launched</i> 2013 <i>Promoted Pins Launched</i>
	230,000,000 <i>Monthly Active Users</i> 28% <i>Monthly Active Brands</i>	110.1 BILLION <i>Tumblr Posts</i> 77.2 MILLION <i>Posts per Day</i>	2007 <i>Tumblr Launched</i> 2013 <i>Tumblr Ads Launched</i>
	300,000,000 <i>Monthly Active Users</i> 66% <i>Monthly Active Brands</i>	2.2 BILLION <i>Registered Users</i> 37% RECENT POSTS <i>Are Comments on YouTube Videos</i>	2011 <i>Google+ Launched</i> 2013 <i>Google+ Ads Launched</i>



THE STATE OF FACEBOOK

Facebook is a staple of our ecosystem as social users. So, naturally, it's become a staple for social marketers as well.

As a hub for discovery, information, and fan interaction, Facebook is an extension of many brands' websites, and a core component of their social strategy. Since its launch in 2004, the network has grown and changed in many ways. What began as a tool for college students to connect with their classmates is now used by 1.44 billion people every month, and not just to engage with classmates or connect with friends. For many people, Facebook is a destination for news, trends, shopping, and entertainment. Because of this diversity of content, Facebook can prove valuable to any brand, regardless of category or industry.

In 2015, video has become a central component to Facebook strategy, with over 4 billion videos viewed on the network each day. For publishers and brands that rely on content to generate traffic, Facebook is also a powerful network for driving visitors to a website. A recent Sharaholic report revealed that Facebook, on average, drives 25% of all social referral traffic.

Facebook's Audience



936 MILLION
DAILY ACTIVE USERS



798 MILLION
DAILY MOBILE USERS



1.44 BILLION
MONTHLY ACTIVE USERS



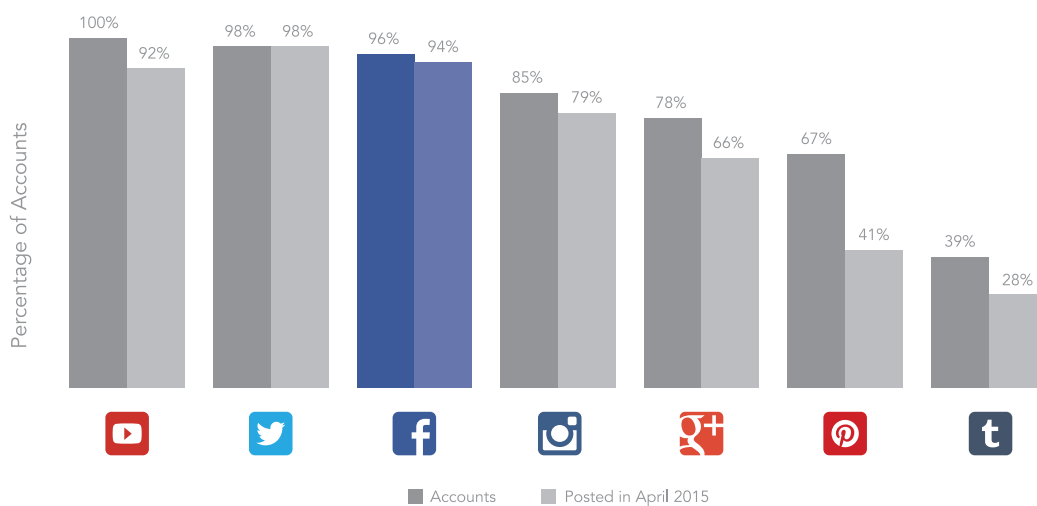
1.25 BILLION
MONTHLY MOBILE USERS



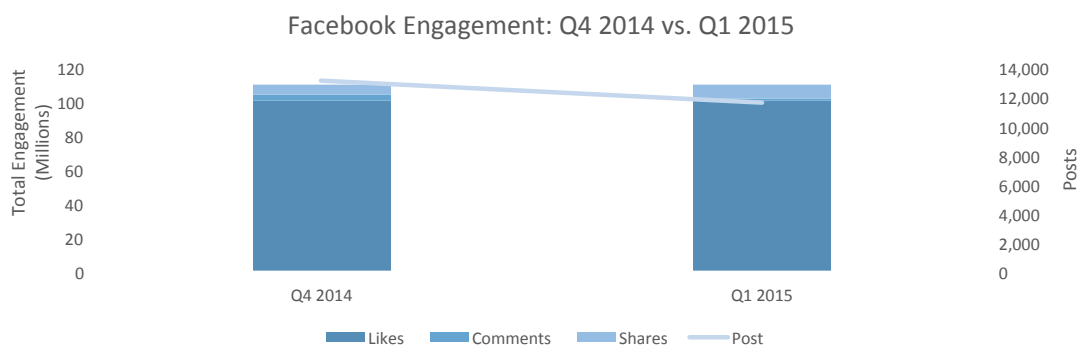
Brand Adoption

Ninety-six percent (96%) of the Interbrand Top 100 Global brands have dedicated Facebook accounts, and 94% posted content in the month of April.

Percentage of Interbrand 100 Companies Using Each Network



Overall, brands are posting slightly less to Facebook than they did a year ago, but engagement with posts has gone up significantly.

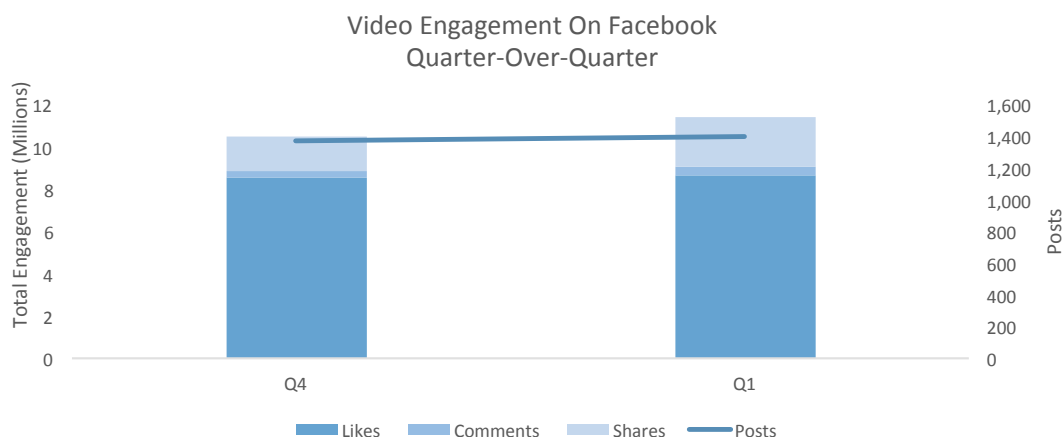


At the beginning of 2015, Facebook made a big push to eliminate spam accounts and fake page fans. The Interbrand 100 companies lost 3% of their aggregate audience from Q4 2014. The number of brand posts also dropped by 12% from Q4 2014 to Q1 2015, but engagement remained stable (dipping by only 0.11%).

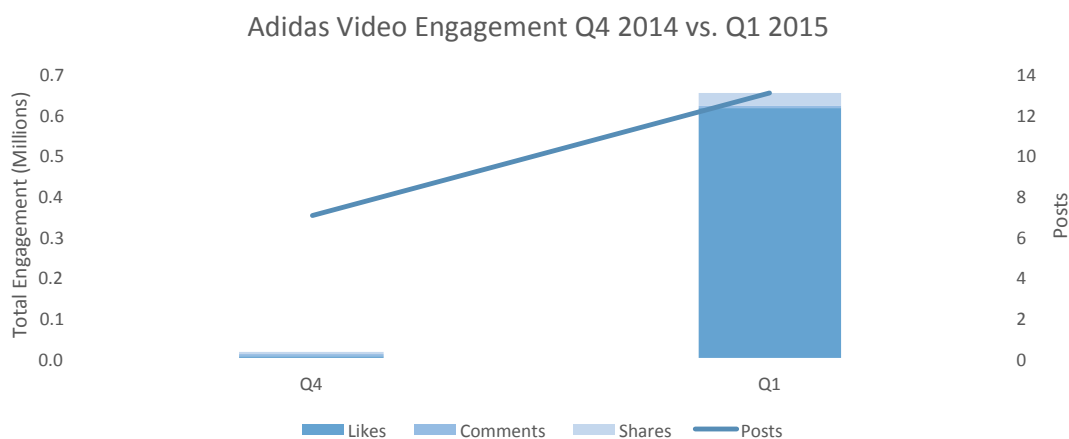


Tips for Brands

2015 is the year to focus on video on Facebook. Video has made a big impact for brands, and is a major component of Facebook's strategy to keep users engaged on the site. Make video a large focus of your Facebook marketing plan.



The Interbrand 100 saw a large increase in shares of video content during Q1 2015, and some brands, like Adidas, saw an even greater return.



Adidas's video engagement grew by 8,858% in Q1 2015.



Facebook Timeline

- 2004** thefacebook.com launched by Mark Zuckerberg, Dustin Moskovitz, Chris Hughes, and Eduardo Saverin. Reaches 1 million users in under a year.
- 2005** thefacebook.com drops "the" and becomes Facebook.com. Facebook reaches 6 million users by December 2005.
- 2006** Facebook opens to all users. 12 million users now active on Facebook.
- 2007** Facebook Pages, video, and self-service ads launch. 58 million users now active on Facebook.
- 2008** Facebook Chat launches.
- 2009** Introduction of the "Like" button. 360 million users now active on Facebook.
- 2012** Facebook acquires Instagram. More than 1 billion users now active on Facebook.
- 2014** Facebook acquires Whatsapp and Oculus.
- 2015** 4 billion videos are viewed on Facebook each day. 40 million small business pages are active on Facebook.



THE STATE OF TWITTER

Twitter exited 2014 with 284 million monthly active users and 500 million Tweets sent per day – not bad for a company that’s been public for just over a year.

Twitter is a premiere social hub for news, entertainment, and conversation, 140-characters at a time. The 2015 live-streaming-video addition of Periscope has only enhanced the network’s value as a real-time engagement and consumption platform. Twitter is the first place for many users to turn – often on their mobile devices – for up-to-the-second updates on current events, sports, and entertainment.

Twitter’s success is largely due to mobile usage, and the global nature of its brand. Eighty percent (80%) of active Twitter users are on mobile, and 77% of accounts are outside the U.S.

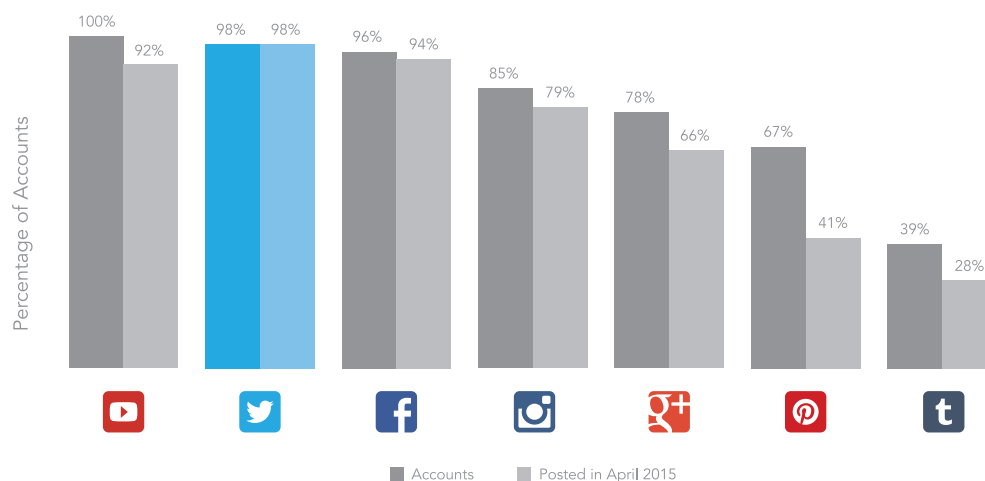
Twitter’s Audience



Brand Adoption

Ninety-eight percent (98%) of the Interbrand Top 100 Global brands are active on Twitter, and every single one of them posted content in the month of April.

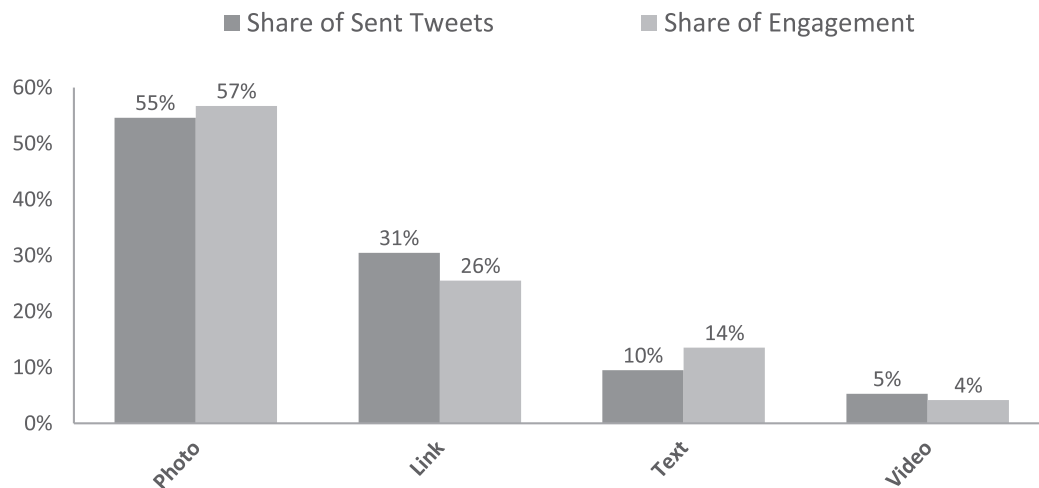
Percentage of Interbrand 100 Companies Using Each Network





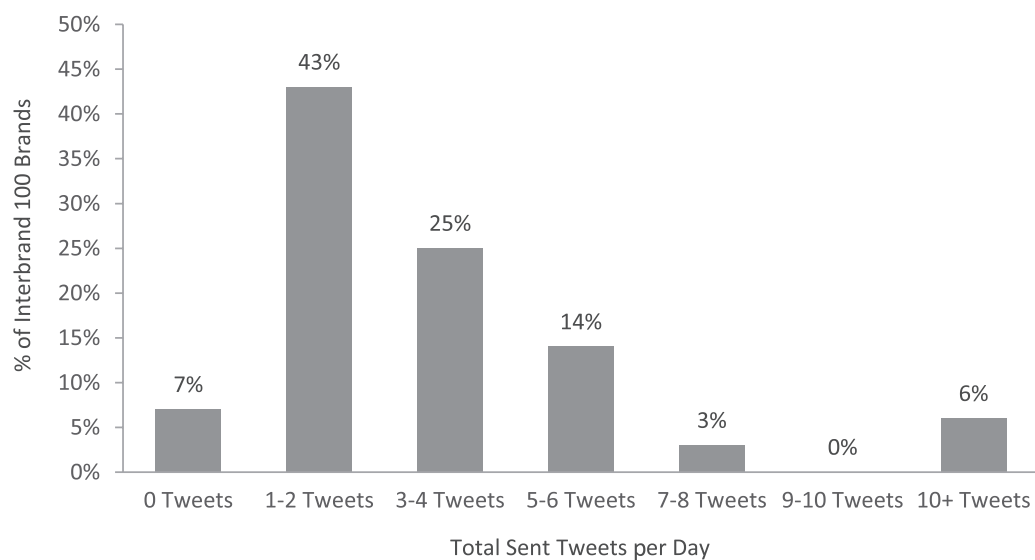
Fifty-five percent (55%) of all Tweets sent by brands include photo content.

Share of Twitter Activity and Engagement by Tweet Type



Eighty-six percent (86%) of brands Tweet 1-6 times per day (excluding Retweets and @replies).

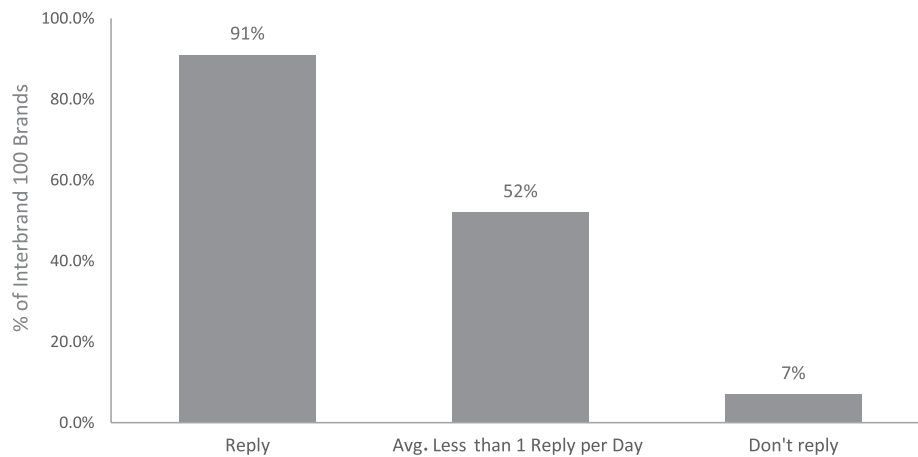
Daily Tweet Frequency of Top Brands (No RTs or @replies)





Ninety-one percent (91%) of top brands on Twitter reply to at least some of the users who mention them.

Brand Habits for Responding to Individual Users



Tips for Brands

- Regular tweeting is key to brand success. 74% of brands tweeted at least three times per day (including Retweets and @replies).
- Tweeting out links is becoming the social standard. The number of links tweeted by brands increased 72% from Q4 2013 to Q4 2014.
- Brands are interacting more with individual users, especially in the restaurant industry. @Replies made up 68% of all brand Tweets.
- The opportunity to connect with consumers is ripe on Twitter. Engagement with brand Tweets was up 105% year over year.
- Visual content works. Photos inspired 57% of all engagement with brand Tweets—a 6% increase from just the previous quarter.
- Tweets with hashtags drive more engagement than Tweets without them, but overuse causes followers to disengage.



Twitter Timeline

- 2006 Twitter launched by Jack Dorsey.
- 2007 Twitter breaks through at SXSW Interactive, winning the SXSW Web Award. The hashtag (#) debuts on Twitter.
- 2009 US Airways plane crash in NYC's Hudson River is shared on Twitter; the photo is the first from the scene, breaking the news before traditional media.
- 2010 Twitter launches Promoted Tweets, Promoted Trends, and Promoted Accounts.
- 2011 1 billion Tweets are sent per week. Twitter now has 100 million monthly active users.
- 2012 Twitter launches self-service advertising.
- 2013 Twitter launches Vine. 500 million Tweets are sent per day.
- 2015 Twitter launches Periscope. Jack Dorsey steps back in as interim CEO.



THE STATE OF INSTAGRAM

Instagram is one of the fastest growing social networks in history. The mobile photo- and video-sharing app, which launched in October of 2010, now boasts 300 million monthly active users, 70 million photos posted each day, and 2.5 billion Likes per day.

This incredible growth has shaken up the way social marketers think about visual content, marketing to mobile audiences, and the possibilities therein.

Instagram has become the go-to platform for users interested in both sharing visual stories, and consuming them. Because of this, brands have found a home on the network by sharing their own visual stories. The single stream feed is an attractive feature for marketers looking to make an impression with their audience.

Instagram's Audience



70 MILLION
PHOTOS PER DAY



70% OF USERS
OUTSIDE OF THE U.S.



300 MILLION
MONTHLY ACTIVE USERS



30 BILLION
PHOTOS SHARED

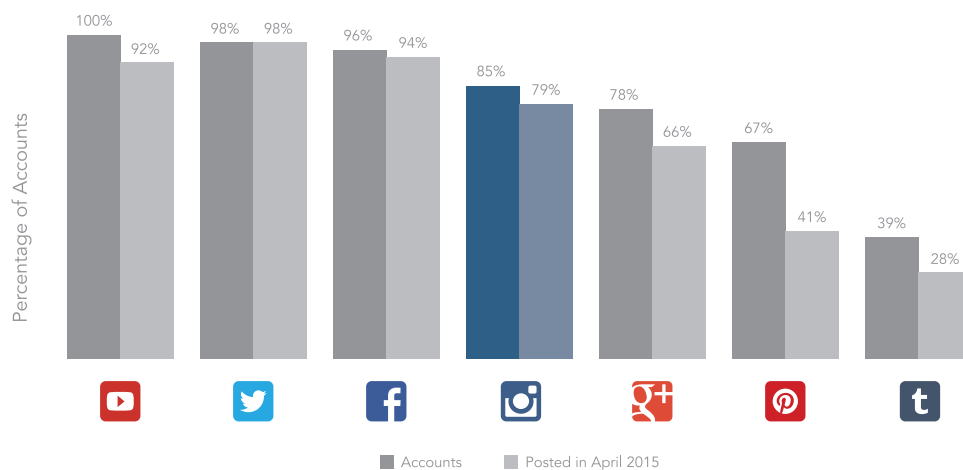


2.5 BILLION
PHOTOS LIKED DAILY

Brand Adoption

Despite being a mobile app, Instagram has attracted 85% of the Interbrand 100 companies, and 79% posted in the month of April.

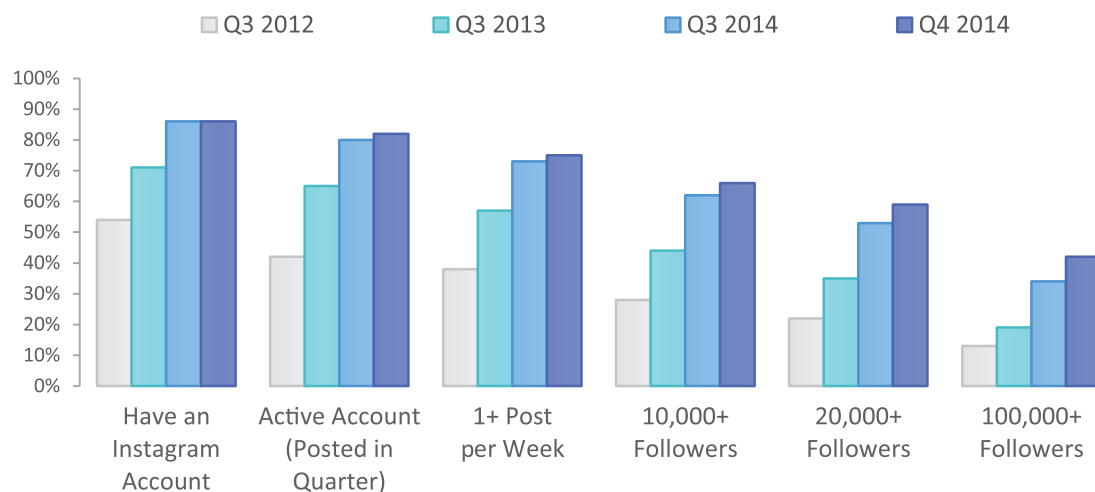
Percentage of Interbrand 100 Companies Using Each Network





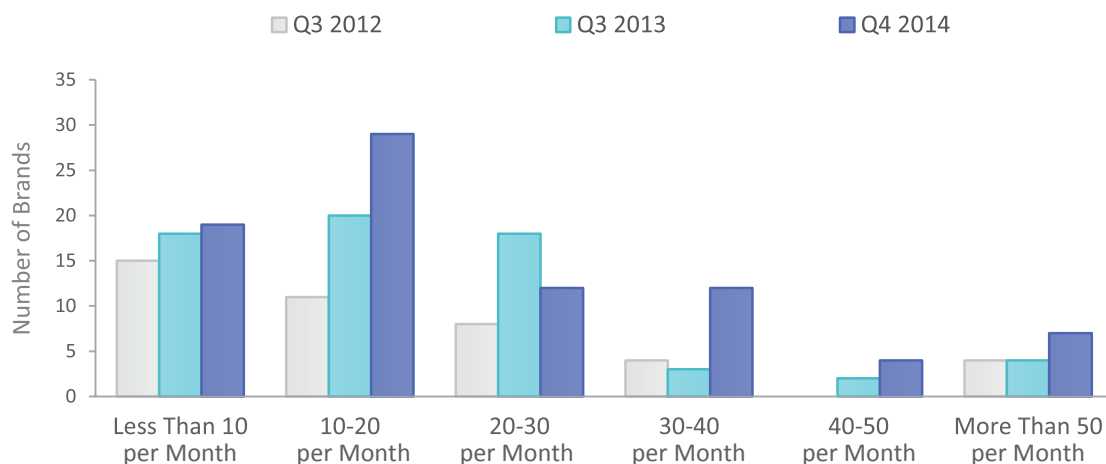
This posting rate is up from the 86% of brands that had an account at the end of Q3 2014.

More Brands Are Active & Building Large Audiences



The percentage of brands that are active and growing an audience on Instagram continues to grow every year.

Brand Posting Frequency Is Becoming More Normalized



As the network grows, brand activity is normalizing. Most brands now post between 10-20 times per month.



Tips for Brands

- Publish at least one post per week. Seventy-five percent (75%) of top brands publish at least once a week.
- Find your ideal posting cadence through experience and testing.
- Don't keep your brand off Instagram just because it's not obviously visual. Many unexpected brands have found success on the network.
- Pay more attention to caption content than length. Caption length has no correlation with engagement levels.
- Use @mentions as much as possible. Posts that mention other users in the caption average 37% higher engagement.
- Employ hashtags to enhance brand discovery. 86% of brand posts include hashtags.
- Test location tagging. Posts tagged with a location see 50% higher engagement.

Instagram Timeline

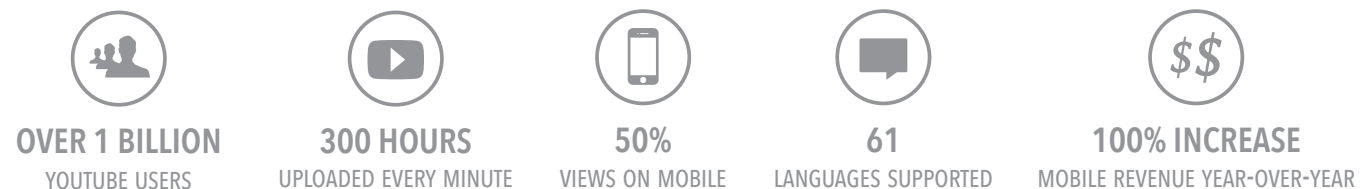
- 2010** Instagram launches as an iOS app, and reaches 1 million users in under a year.
- 2011** Over 150 million Instagram photos are posted by 10 million users.
- 2012** Instagram launches Android app, and is acquired by Facebook. Instagram launches web profiles.
- 2013** Instagram launches web feed, video, and has 100 million monthly active users. Instagram launches sponsored photos and videos.
- 2014** Instagram launches discovery, now has 300 million monthly active users.
- 2015** Instagram launches Layout, a collage app.

THE STATE OF YOUTUBE

YouTube is the only network from our study with 100% adoption. Every single one of the Interbrand 100 companies has a presence on YouTube, and every single one has posted content at one time or another.

While many visitors may ignore the engagement features on YouTube, the sharing aspect is unparalleled. Over 300 hours of video are uploaded to YouTube every minute, and generate billions of views each day. With interest like that, it's not surprising that 92% of Interbrand companies were active on the network during the month of April.

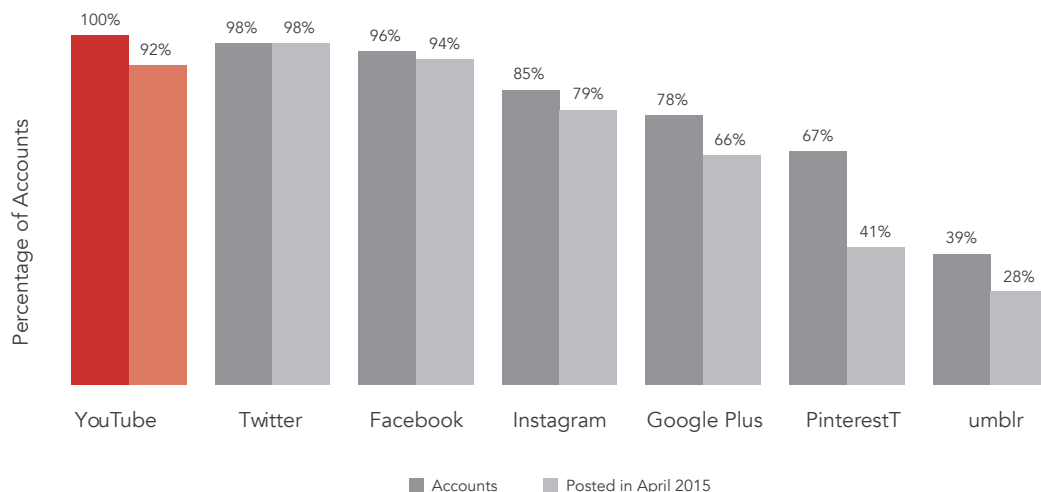
YouTube's Audience



Brand Adoption

One-hundred percent (100%) of Interbrand 100 companies have YouTube channels, and 92% posted videos during April.

Percentage of Interbrand 100 Companies Using Each Network

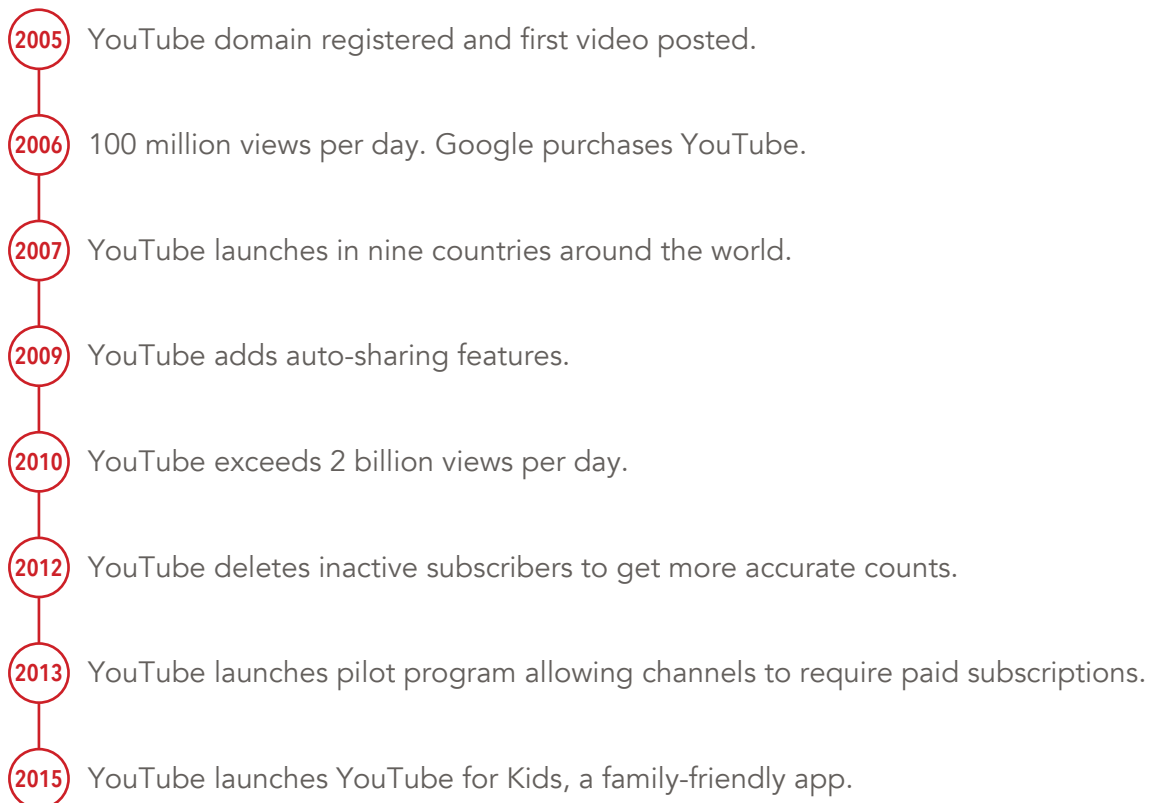




Tips for Brands

- Know what your best type of content is, and maintain a regular schedule.
- Reach out to communities that are relevant to your videos.
- Get specific with your tags, especially if you're new.

YouTube Timeline





THE STATE OF PINTEREST

Pinterest has been raising brand eyebrows for some time now due to its ability to connect social and commerce.

Billed as “an online scrapbooking service,” Pinterest allows users to share and discover anything on the web, from recipes to products, linking directly to the catalog page. Over 50 billion items have been pinned to date by Pinterest’s 47 million monthly active users.

In March 2015, Pinterest raised \$367 million in a round of financing that valued the company at \$11 billion. Pinterest has spent the first half of 2015 allowing publishing platforms to access their new API in an effort to enable brands to market on the network more effectively.

Pinterest’s Audience



50 BILLION
ITEMS PINNED



1 BILLION
BOARDS CREATED



66% OF CONTENT
FROM BUSINESS WEBSITES



47 MILLION
MONTHLY ACTIVE USERS



80% TRAFFIC
FROM MOBILE



2 MILLION PEOPLE
PIN PRODUCTS PER DAY



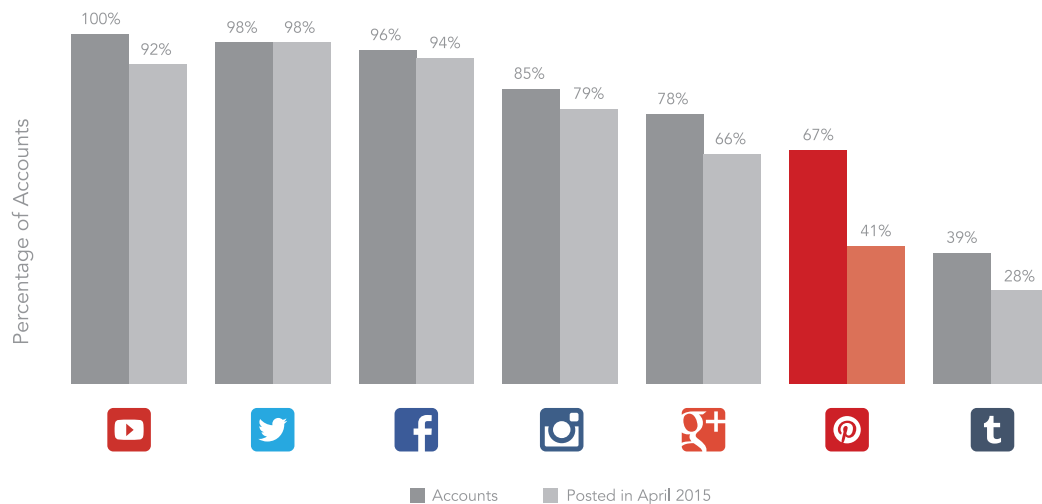
79 MILLION
UNIQUE U.S. WEBSITE VISITORS PER DAY



Brand Adoption

While 67% of the Interbrand 100 companies have accounts with Pinterest, many are using their accounts as placeholders. Only 41% of brands actively posted in April 2015.

Percentage of Interbrand 100 Companies Using Each Network



Tips for Brands

- Be sure to use general, highly searchable terms in your pin description, the origin URL, and your original photo title.
- Create a foundation of evergreen content: content that is not news-, time-, or even product-based, such as how-to images. This will increase the chances that your pins get recycled through Pinterest and retain their positions on the top of search results pages.
- Form a Pinterest community by creating community boards that allow followers to add pins.
- Varying your posting timing can expose your brand to different segments of the Pinterest population and lead to more exposure, repins, and followers.



Pinterest Timeline

- 2009** Pinterest is founded.
- 2010** Beta status is closed. Pinterest is named "Best New Startup" by TechCrunch.
- 2011** Named TIME's "50 Best Websites of 2011" and iPhone app is released.
- 2012** Pinterest becomes the fastest site ever to break the 10 million unique visitor mark.
- 2013** 48.7 million users globally.
- 2014** Pinterest launches Promoted Pins.
- 2015** Pinterest adds "Buy it" button.



THE STATE OF TUMBLR

Tumblr allows a creative flexibility that brand marketers can't find on other networks, and the platform enables that creativity in an impressive way. This is a focus that the network has held true to since being purchased by Yahoo.

"As a creative canvas, Tumblr empowers brands to tell their story unconstrained by text or cookie-cutter pages."

Marissa Mayer, CEO of Yahoo

Tumblr has over 234.6 million blogs, with more than 110.1 billion posts to date, and has attracted some of the biggest brands in the world. This is largely due to the customization and creativity that Tumblr encourages. Brands on Tumblr can build a blog using one of the thousands of templates the network offers, or by designing their own in HTML. Few social networks allow this type of flexibility.

Because of this creative canvas, Tumblr has attracted a passionate audience that turns to Tumblr for entertainment, and this has given brands the ability to tell their story in unique ways that wouldn't fly on other social networks.

Tumblr's Audience



234.6 MILLION
BLOGS



110.1 BILLION
POSTS



230 MILLION
ACTIVE USERS



77.2 MILLION
POSTS PER DAY



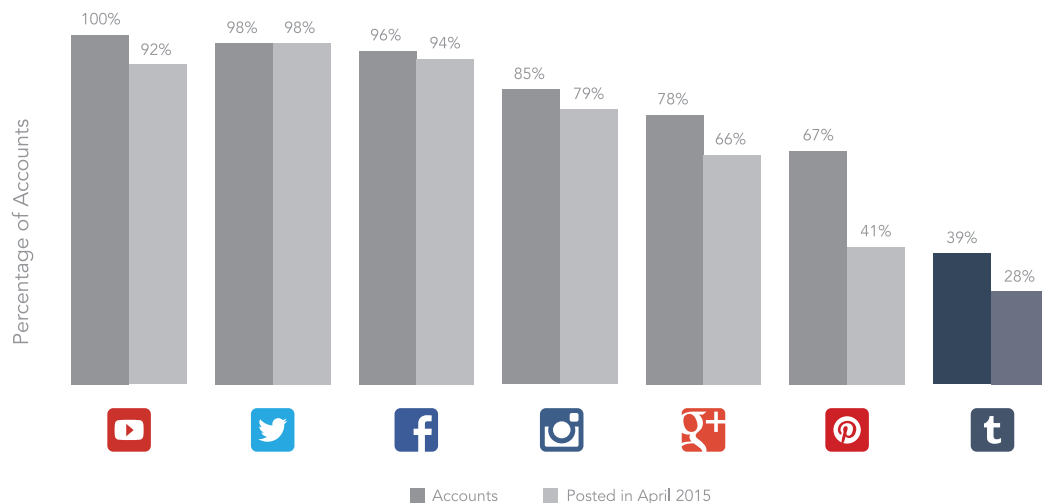
42% OF TRAFFIC
COMES FROM THE U.S.



Brand Adoption

Tumblr has the lowest adoption rate among Interbrand 100 companies, but those that use it, use it religiously. Media brands and automotive companies have found success on Tumblr.

Percentage of Interbrand 100 Companies Using Each Network



Tumblr posts have longevity. Twenty-nine percent (29%) of reblogs on posts from the Interbrand 100 come after 30 days. The shelf life of content on Tumblr is longer than most other networks.

Tips for Brands

- Use the tools that Tumblr provides. Their marketing blog (marketr.tumblr.com) and brand resources provide tips and tricks that any brand can use.
- Focus on amplification. Tumblr posts last longer than other networks, but only when created with longevity in mind.



Tumblr's Timeline

- 2007** Tumblr founded by David Karp. After two weeks, Tumblr has 75,000 active users.
- 2009** Tumblr acquires Tumblerette and launches first iPhone app.
- 2010** Tumblr reaches 1 billion posts.
- 2012** Tumblr launches first major ad campaign with Adidas.
- 2013** Yahoo acquires Tumblr.
- 2014** Tumblr ads included in the Yahoo advertising network, and Tumblr launches video ads.

THE STATE OF GOOGLE+

Google+ may be the most powerful social network you never use. Integrated with YouTube, Gmail, and several other services, Google+ has over 2.2 billion registered users.

Google's mission is to organize the world's information and make it universally accessible and useful. This is pervasive across Google+, with a strong focus on accessibility and discovery. Google+ recently added a feature called "collections" that acts as a pin board to help make information accessible. This is the most recent in a long line of additions meant to bolster Google's overall mission.

Despite criticism about declining adoption and low engagement, Google+ has attracted 78% of top brands, and 66% actively posted in the month of April. Brands have found that the audience that is on Google+ is interested in following and engaging with them.

Google+'s Audience



2.2 BILLION
REGISTERED USERS



9% OF USERS
POSTED PUBLICLY

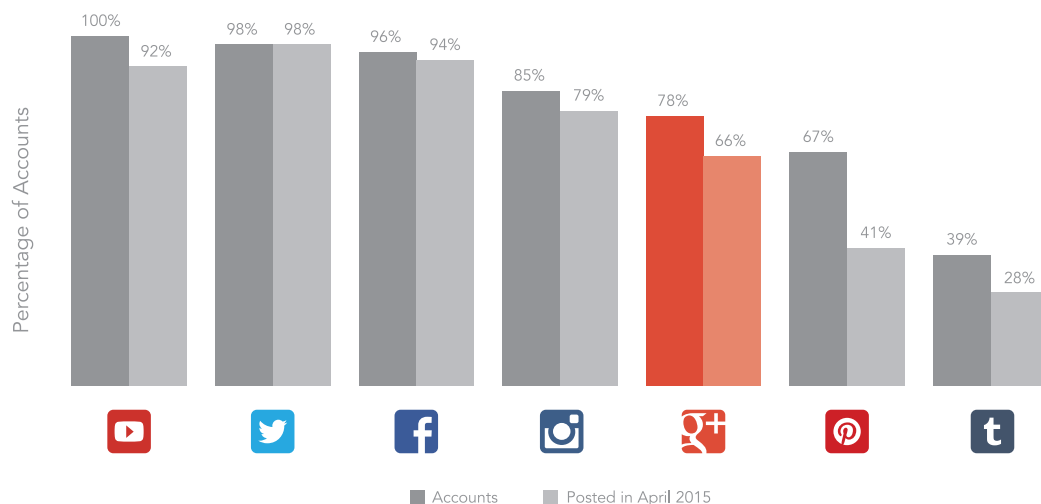


37% OF USERS
MOST RECENT POSTS ARE
COMMENTS ON YOUTUBE

Brand Adoption

Google+ has 78% adoption among Interbrand 100 companies, and 66% used the network in April.

Percentage of Interbrand 100 Companies Using Each Network

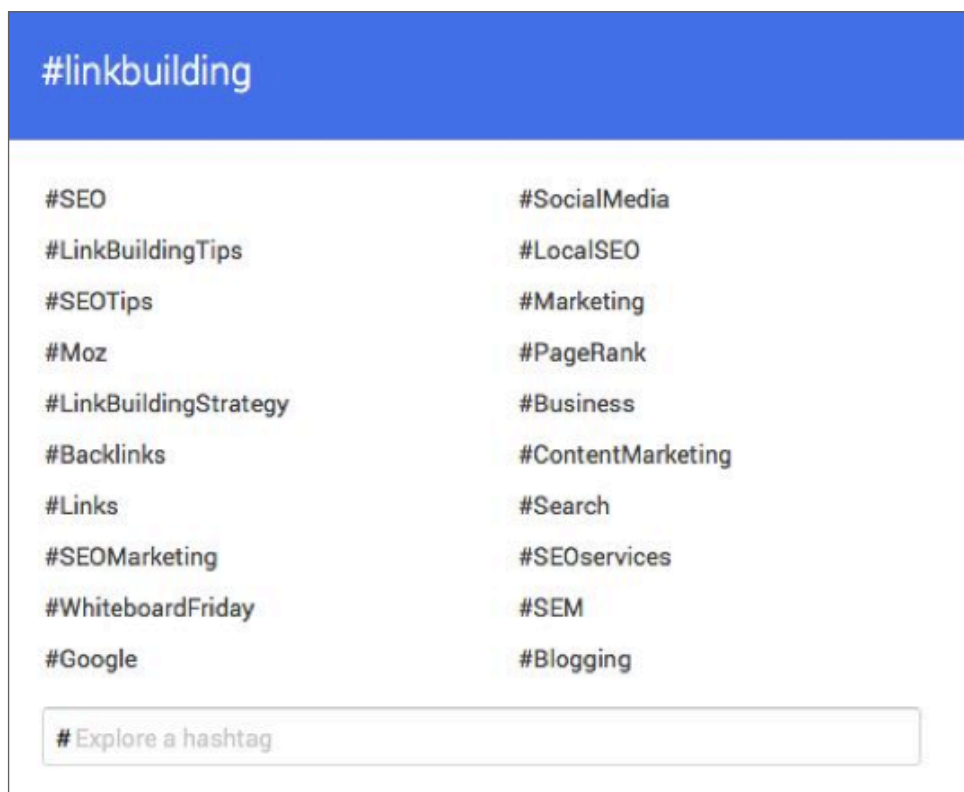


Only 62% of the Interbrand Top 100 Brands are active on Google+.



Tips for Brands

- By adding your circles and select individuals to your share settings, you trigger a notification for those users that you've shared a post directly with them.
- Google uses hashtags and semantic analysis to form relationships between topics. For example, consider this hashtag search for #linkbuilding. Notice the related topics Google associates with link building:



- Much like Facebook's popular commenting plugin, you can embed Google Plus comments on your own blog. What makes this so powerful is when visitors leave a comment, they are given the option of sharing your post to their own Google+ followers.



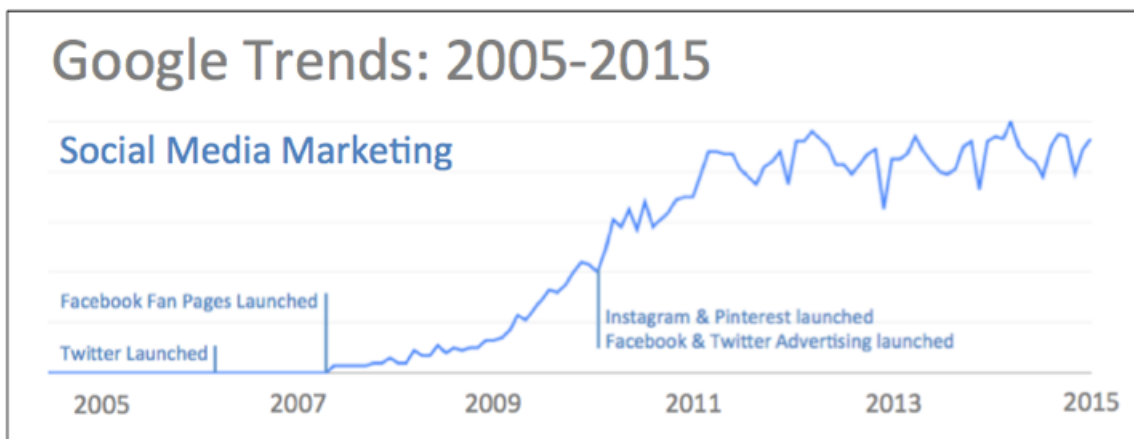
Google+ Timeline

- 2011 Google+ is launched.
- 2012 Google+ hits 400 million users, and Google Hangouts is introduced.
Google+ account required for commenting on YouTube.
- 2014 Google authorship removed.

CONCLUSION

While the level of sophistication among social marketers has continued to grow, this greater sophistication doesn't mean its evolution is complete. Marketing programs constantly evolve, and social media is no exception. The real challenge will be for social marketers to understand the relationships and inter-workings of other digital marketing channels, develop a common language with other teams, and continue to measure and improve programs.

As the [Social Marketing Trends Report](#) by TrustRadius concluded, many marketers still struggle to identify the ROI of their social media programs. By understanding and analyzing their audience, competition, and their own efforts on each network, developing a complete strategy that maps to overall company goals, and viewing social media as the complex but holistic ecosystem it is, social marketers will continue to prove their value in 2015, and beyond.



Source: Google Trends

ABOUT SIMPLY MEASURED

Simply Measured is the most complete social analytics solution, empowering marketers with unmatched access to their social data to more clearly define their social strategy and to optimize their tactics for maximum impact.

Our goal is to put the tools to understand business data in the hands of business users. We think reporting should be simple, attractive, and accessible for everyone – not just data scientists. Our software streamlines the process from data to deliverables and eliminates the countless hours spent on everyday reporting tasks. We do this by putting cloud data sources at your fingertips, providing a marketplace of best practice reports, and allowing you to generate beautiful solutions on the web, in Excel, and in PowerPoint with a couple of clicks.

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