

A CHASE THOUGHT LEADERSHIP INITIATIVE

BRAND-BUILDING IN THE SOCIAL MEDIA SPACE



Trends, tools, tactics and tips to help guide your business
towards successful social media engagement.



CHASE 

THE SOCIAL ECONOMY AND THE DIGITAL CULTURE CONVERGE

The ascendance of social media has started a new kind of conversation among consumers and companies that is challenging the practices of traditional marketing and brand management.

From blogs and social networks to mobile devices and analytics – the social economy is being shaped by the digital culture. Consumers form online communities, interact with others who share their interests, and talk to brands they care about, forcing businesses to align their behavior with an empowered audience that is:

“Businesses don't have the choice on whether to do social media; the choice is on how well they do it.”

– Erik Qualman, [Socialnomics](#)

- Firmly in control of the message and the content.
- Unwilling to be bombarded with marketing promotions.
- Free to push back against brands.
- Willing to get advice from socially networked friends and colleagues.

They also influence purchase decisions. In his book [Socialnomics](#), social media thought leader Erik Qualman says, “Ninety percent of consumers trust peer recommendations while only fourteen percent trust advertisements. What it means: customers are going out to the social networks to ask for opinions on products. If you aren't there, you don't know what they are saying about you.”¹ Those that fail to embrace social media or attempt it without planning properly risk losing more than just ground to their competitors. So what's a marketer to do?

How do you get your arms around such a fast-paced, information-intensive field? What steps can you take to capitalize on the potential for growth? What resources will you need to cost-effectively engage consumers in social conversations and build your brand, your reputation and your bottom line? Let's begin with some insight on the current landscape.

PREVAILING ATTITUDES

The Harvard Business Review Analytic Services released a study that took the pulse of 2,100 business leaders on the relevance of social media to their companies and found:

- 69 percent agreed that social media use in their organizations would grow significantly over the next few years.
- 46 percent indicated that implementing social media programs was a core component of their company's marketing strategy.
- 61 percent believed they have a steep learning curve to overcome before they can utilize social media.
- 50 percent believed social media would not be taken seriously until its impact can be measured and results tied back to return on investment.

Realists and skeptics voiced their opinions too. Social media tools were viewed as not very relevant by 21 percent, while the smallest segment (11 percent) believed that using social media for business purposes was a passing fad.

1. Qualman, Erik, [Socialnomics](#), 2013.

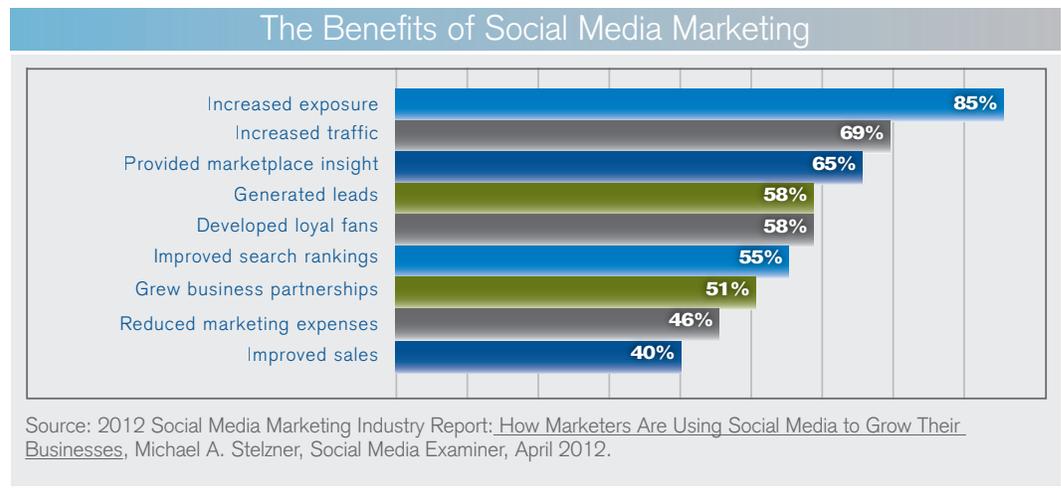
ADOPTION DRIVERS

Sensitivity to both customer expectations and attitudes ranks highly among businesses that are considering social media. Respondents to a recent online survey* of 1,050 marketing professionals conducted by Chief Marketer indicated that social media made sense for their organizations because it:

- Offers multiple touch points so that customers and prospects can find them.
- Reaches customers where they spend time.
- Meets customer expectations of seeing their merchants in the social media space.

Additionally, the Harvard study found that thousands of U.S. companies believed social media and the technologies that enable it generate unfiltered consumer feedback and a better understanding of how customers perceive their brand – faster and less costly than traditional methods.

The chart below indicates that increased exposure, the ability to share value-added insight, and providing relevant content are the table-setters for improving the bottom line – from reducing operating costs to increasing business. The implication is clear. If you create a positive brand experience with socially networked consumers resulting in word-of-mouth marketing – the holy grail of the social media quest – it's reasonable to expect sales will follow.



Despite the buzz, social media offers up its share of challenges – from financial to productivity to creative. It's no surprise that issues with metrics and analysis ranked as the biggest pain point among marketers as reported in the [2012 Social Media Marketing Industry Report: How Marketers Are Using Social Media to Grow Their Businesses](#).

More than half the respondents listed the inability to calculate true return on investment and link social media engagement to sales and profitability as their greatest frustration. Additional results indicated that creating, organizing and managing social content was time consuming, the need to regularly supply fresh content was overwhelming, and managing multiple social platforms was difficult. And don't discount the importance of internal buy in. Getting staff to see the value of social media and educating them to take ownership should be added to the list.

* 2012 Social Marketing Survey, Brian Quinton, *ChiefMarketer.com*, an Access Intelligence publication, Summer 2012.

*“Build it, and they will come”
only works in the movies.
Social Media is a “build it,
nurture it, engage them, and
they may come and stay.”*

– Seth Godin,
Best Selling Author

THE TOOL KIT

The social media universe is vast and moves at such blinding speed that it's virtually impossible to keep pace with all the emerging technologies, mobile apps, web sites and blogs on the social web. Successful engagement will rise or fall on the resources selected to plan, design, launch and maintain a social media initiative. To help, we've created a kit stocked with trends, tools, tactics and tips to enable positive brand building in the social media space.

TRENDS: ADVANCING THE NEXT BIG IDEA

Going Mobile. Smartphones and tablets have become ubiquitous. In fact, they are now the key accelerator of mobile in business. Over 50 percent of the U.S. population currently owns a smart device and 70 percent use social media regularly according to global information and measurement company Nielsen. Gartner, a leading information technology research and advisory company, "Expects the number of smartphones and tablets purchased to jump from 821 million in 2012 to 1.2 billion in 2013."³ This dynamic growth gives users increased connectivity to social networks, developers a windfall opportunity for new apps, and marketers the chance to build online relationships "Since 46 percent of social media users say they use their smartphone to access social media."⁴

"As of December 2012, 45% of American adults have a smartphone."²

Web Sites Will Optimize. A recent Google study⁵ found that 67 percent of mobile users were more likely to seek out or do business with a company with a mobile-friendly web site, while 52 percent said that a bad mobile experience was a turn off to engage with a business. Rather than help their competitors, companies will recognize these sentiments and optimize their web sites for mobile devices so they can be visited, viewed and navigated more easily.

Social Media and Business Integrate. More people are relying on social media to make informed purchase decisions and resolve customer service issues. In response, brands will be compelled to use social sites for real-time interaction with customers and prospects through their websites and mobile marketing initiatives. Watch for some of the trending sites of today – Google+ for social search, Pinterest for social shopping, and LinkedIn for social branding – to align their business models with the demands of socially networked consumers.

The Convergence of SoLoMo. As smartphone and tablet usage continues to grow, we can expect to see social media, local businesses using geo-location technology to advertise and mobile device usage all intersect. Working with location-based social networking sites and mobile apps, brands will have the tools to improve the user experience through convenience, simplicity and proximity.

Analytics Advance. Technology has finally caught up with the need for more precise ROI measurement. Businesses are evolving from analyzing social media statistics like clicks and Likes to metrics that are bottom-line oriented. Companies can now spend smarter by calculating their true ROI and linking results to analyze reach, engagement, and conversion. *Google Analytics*, for example, provides insights on how social media impacts business goals and conversions resulting from social media site referrals, shows social sources that referred visitors, and what visitors are sharing from your site.

The "Phablet" Morph. As mobile device users consume more rich media content, and faster 4G networks are being introduced to support them, a larger display is becoming more desirable. Look for the mainstream morphing of smartphones and tablets into a smartphone with a tablet-like large screen to improve the user experience.

2. Brenner, Joanna, *Pew Internet: Mobile*, Pew Internet & American Life Project, pewinternet.org/Commentary/2012/February/Pew-Internet-Mobile.aspx#

3. Goldstein, Phil. Gartner: *Smartphone, Tablet Sales to top 1.2 Billion in 2013*, fiereewireless.com, November 6, 2012.

4. Ibid. 1.

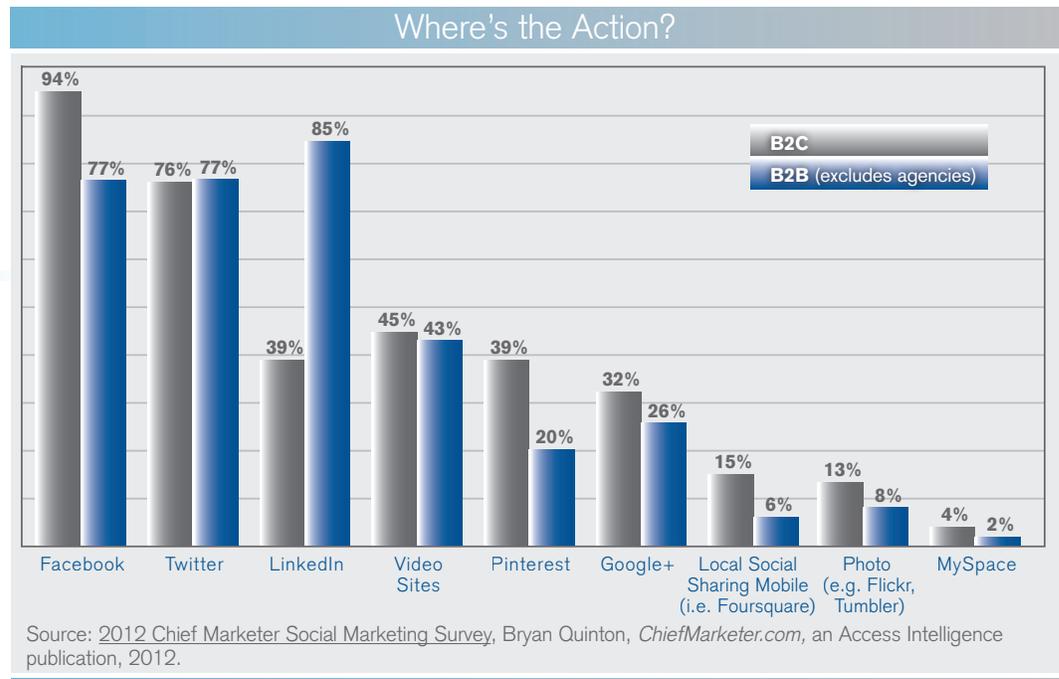
5. *What Users Want Most From Mobile Devices Today*, Google, Sterling Research, SmithGeiger, July 2012.

TOOLS: SITES THAT DRAW A CROWD

Chief Marketer, in its 2012 social marketing survey, compared the social media site choices of both business-to-business (B2B) and business-to-consumer (B2C) marketers. Collectively, the majority of respondents concentrated on the three largest U.S. social networks: Facebook (89 percent), Twitter (77 percent) and LinkedIn (63 percent). But when the results were broken out, interesting comparisons appeared.

“Our head of social media is the customer.”

– McDonald’s



Among the B2C segment, Facebook usage hit 94 percent while Twitter held at 76 percent, but LinkedIn – overwhelmingly populated by business professionals – fell to 39 percent. Conversely, in the B2B segment, the value of LinkedIn was apparent as it ranked first among 85 percent of respondents outperforming both Facebook and Twitter.

A point worth noting is where visual content-sharing site Pinterest ranked in the survey. An online pin board that lets users create, organize, manage, and share theme-based image collections, Pinterest, according to Nielsen, emerged as a social media star in 2012. Pinterest recently rolled out a version for business. Companies now can maximize their visual content, build online communities, and leverage Pinterest-driven referrals that, according to the company, spend about 70 percent more than those from non-social channels.

What about the mega sites? The following snapshots provide valuable statistics** that business leaders should know when evaluating their social media options:

Facebook. The flagship social networking site. Facebook has recently grown to over 1 billion users. Its features, functionality and sheer scale qualify it for the short list:

- 80 percent of U.S. social network users prefer to connect to brands through Facebook.
- The number of businesses that say Facebook is critical or important to their business has increased by 75 percent from 2009.
- 56 percent of customers say they're more likely to recommend a brand after becoming a fan.
- 77 percent of B2C companies have acquired customers through the site.

“ At Twitter, mobile is in our DNA ... For us, it's all about mobile, and it always has been.”

*– Biz Stone,
co-founder of Twitter*

Twitter. The perfect “social messaging” platform for following people and being followed from a mobile device. Functioning as an event planner, business tool, and news reporting service, Twitter communicates short messages and has become “The strongest social media channel for generating leads, outperforming Facebook and LinkedIn 9-to-1 with 82% of social media leads coming from Twitter.”⁶ Statistics reveal that:

- There are over 500 million users.
- 53 percent of Twitter’s unique viewers use mobile.
- 60 percent of Twitter’s users access the service via mobile devices.
- 77 of the world’s 100 largest companies maintain a corporate Twitter account.

LinkedIn. The world’s largest professional network recently surpassed 200 million members. With Q4 2012 revenue hitting \$303.6 million, an 81 percent increase over Q4 2011 – LinkedIn continues to be the go-to social network for people to manage their careers, promote their skill sets and create, find and share opportunities. Companies market here because over 2.6 million organizations maintain an active company profile, and:

- Over 2.6 million organizations maintain an active company profile.
- More than 1 million LinkedIn groups are listed.
- More than 1.3 million sites actively use the LinkedIn share button on their sites.
- 61 percent of members use LinkedIn as their primary professional network.
- 65 percent of B2B respondents had acquired a customer through the site.

Google+. Aligns all of Google’s peripheral products (Gmail, Google Maps, Search, Google Calendar, etc.) into one cohesive network. Engineered to be as open and as connected as possible, Google+ integrates everything searchers use at Google into a comprehensive, social dashboard. In the latest Global Web Index, Google+ was the world’s second largest social network trailing only Facebook, due in part to:

- Over 500 million people having signed up, including 235 million monthly active users.
- Over 625,000 new members joining every day.
- 51 percent of Google’s unique views coming from mobile devices.
- Google being the single most important referring domain to B2B websites, responsible for over 35 percent of all visits.⁷

TACTICS: THE MEANS TO AN END

“89 percent of US internet users search online before they make a purchase, even when the purchase is made at a local business.”

– HubSpot

Social Search. An evolving method for the way search engines factor content from a user’s social network into the results they get for their search queries. Social search hit the radar with the development of Google+ and the launch of Bing’s social search engine, and the trend has continued to draw more attention from search engines. Facebook joined the ranks by announcing Graph Search, a search engine that uses social signals to elevate more relevant, personalized results to refine search results.

Content Marketing. Brands are developing more compelling content to attract and engage consumers and position themselves as trusted experts. As they ramp up, they are becoming

** Source: 101 Essential Social Media Marketing Stats To Guide You Into 2013, Simply Zesty, December 5, 2012.

6. [2012 B2B Marketing Benchmark Report](#), Optify, Inc. 2012.

7. Ibid. 6.

publishers according to the October 2012 [Content Marketing Survey Report](#) conducted by Econsultancy. Findings among participants show that:

- Over 90 percent believe content marketing will become more important over the next year.
- 34 percent have dedicated budgets to content marketing.
- 52 percent of in-house marketers and 58 percent of agency marketers ranked increased engagement as a top-three business objective.

“The goal of social media is to turn customers into a volunteer marketing army.”

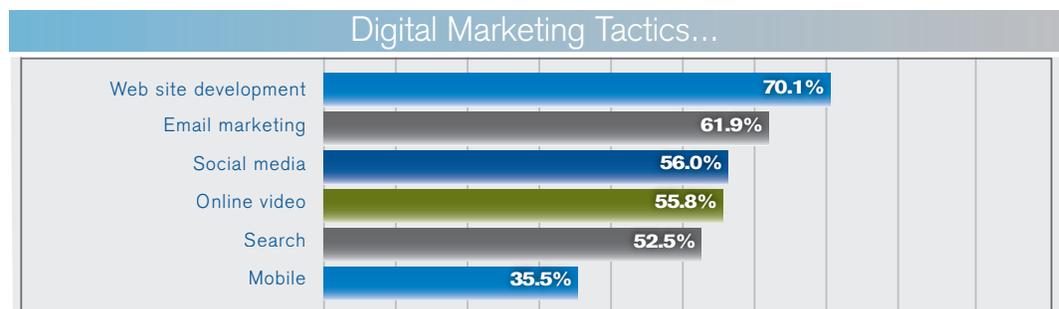
– Anonymous

Crowdsourcing. Referred to as a distributed problem solving and production model, crowdsourcing is the act of companies making an open call to a broad community to solve a problem, either through collaboration or competition. Strategically, it enables businesses to connect with consumer audiences and supports a process where the crowd (users) form into online communities, submit ideas and solutions and ultimately refine them to select the best ones. For smaller companies and entrepreneurs whose pockets may not be deep enough to fund traditional research and development, crowdsourcing provides the incubator for ideas.

Reputation Management. In the digital age, your online reputation quickly becomes your real world reputation, and it is vital that you remain in control of it. Brands can be put at risk quickly as open conversation travels at warp speed across the Internet. Consumers now have the power to talk back at you – even “out” your mistakes. Managing it requires daily tracking of online news and social conversations about your brand, fostering positive sentiment and actively engaging in social networking for the organization. There are many tools available to keep marketers out ahead of what people are saying about them. Google, for example offers a suite of tools including Google Alerts, Google Discussions and SocialMention for tracking news, mentions and conversations.

Blogging. Blogs are the catalyst for real-time discussion and offer immediate responses to questions, viewpoints or thoughts. Marketers value blogging because it boosts traffic as search engines favor websites that offer regularly updated content; makes Web publishing easy using automated blog software like *WordPress*; and establishes expertise as a thought leader and resource for industry influencers. Results from HubSpot’s [2012 State of Inbound Marketing Study](#) showed that the increased frequency of blogging correlates with increased customer acquisition. The research showed that 92 percent of bloggers who posted multiple times a day acquired a customer through their blog while this figure fell to 66 percent for those who blogged monthly.⁸

Budgeting. Allocating funds for marketing and advertising – either traditional or social – is predicated on a variety of conditions – from the goals set by individual companies to their financial health to the media channels that deliver the greatest return on investment. The *B2B Magazine 2013 Outlook: Marketing Priorities And Plans* survey shows how B2B marketers plan to increase their digital marketing spend. While website development ranked first, the digital media elements that drive web traffic – e-mail marketing, social media and online video – followed with social media receiving a healthy endorsement from 56 percent of respondents.



Source: [2013 Outlook: Marketing Priorities And Plans](#) survey, *BTB Magazine*, 2013.

8. Pick, Tom, [72 Fascinating Social Media Marketing Facts and Statistics for 2012](#), jeffbullas.com.

TIPS: BEST PRACTICES FOR GETTING STARTED

Get Off the Sidelines. Create profiles on Facebook and Twitter, and do the same for your business on LinkedIn. Add visual content like “how-to” videos and embed presentations to share information and build credibility. Join the conversation, create fans and drive them to your business by following peers, influential bloggers in your industry and those consumers who show interest. Reply to, comment on and share their content, plus be responsive to all feedback.

Use Best-in-Class Resources. The following web sites are rich with ideas, tips and tactics:

- Socialnomics (socialnomics.net)
- Social Media Examiner (socialmediaexaminer.com)
- Mashable (Mashable.com)
- Social Media Today (socialmediatoday.com)
- HubSpot (hubspot.com)
- Hootsuite (hootsuite.com)

Promote Yourself. Add links to the leading social networks on your web site and on all printed marketing materials so people can find you. Ask customers and brand advocates to share your content across their online communities and add Facebook and Twitter “follow me” buttons to your web site. Use a call to action so visitors can select their next step – from share, post and retweet to reblog, subscribe and bookmark.

Optimize for Search. Search engines are the 21st century’s version of the Yellow Pages. Search engine optimization uses various strategies to help web sites and web pages rank higher in Google, Yahoo and Bing. This makes it easier for consumers to find you and increases web traffic. Fresh content is a key driver. Posting it on social sites will get it indexed by the search engines, so optimize every social media post for search. Include keywords, tags and links.

Don’t Forget the Back End. While it’s easy to get caught up in the excitement of front-end marketing, the rubber meets the road on the back end at the intersection of cost vs. results. The intellectual and financial capital you’ve invested in social media can become worthless if results cannot be measured. The availability of analytical software tools like *Facebook Insights* and *Google Analytics* permit tracking of social data like fans, followers and engagements and marketing metrics like leads, referrals and conversions to ensure oversight, transparency and accountability.

THE TAKEAWAY

When you make the business case for using social conversation to build credibility, relationships and ultimately business, remember to listen, analyze and convert consumer insights into strategies that will have a positive impact on the bottom line.

As social media becomes more important to the company balance sheet, funding for online marketing initiatives will become more strategic. This is where our expertise can help. Chase solutions include credit and cash management services, merchant services, business checking products, and other financial tools and resources to help your business access working capital, improve cash flow and compete more effectively.

Chase business customers can also access an exclusive series of webinars and live, high-powered business events. All are designed to provide timely and relevant information and ideas for business owners looking to move their companies forward while giving them the opportunity to meet and network with experts and other business owners.

For more information on how Chase can provide the financial products, services and support to help move your business forward, please contact your local Chase Banker today.

“If you make customers unhappy in the physical world, they might each tell 6 friends. If you make customers unhappy on the Internet, they can each tell 6,000 friends.”

– Jeff Bezos, CEO,
Amazon.com

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