

# ONLINE SOCIAL MEDIA

## Public Displays of Connection. Who friends a brand?

*Gone are the days of letter-writing to the service department, the recourse of the determined, disgruntled customer. How do you manage your brand where broadcasting is easy and friends & enemies ARE the media?*



### YOUR PAYOFF FOR THIS CHAPTER

*Getting a wide-angle view of social media will help you*

- get a better strategic sense of what social media is and not just getting caught up in the fads
- working smart by knowing which tools are best for which needs, over a haphazard “we need to be on Facebook/Twitter” push

### GEAR UP:

*for practical use of this knowledge you'll want.*

- all that you needed for previous chapter, plus time!
- a picture of yourself or brand & a quick bio
- patience - social media isn't as quick as it would seem.
- discipline - to overcome certain distraction

This chapter introduces social media from a wide-angle view and then zooms in on the types of platforms that you'll encounter, giving you an overview of the tools in each.

More detailed modules on using specific tools like Facebook, blogging or Twitter will build on this fundamental knowledge in later chapters.

Online Social Media is singularly the most important development in

media in the last decade. It's an overwhelmingly fast, jargon-thickened, force for change that no marketer can afford to ignore.

Reference your glossary (at chapter's end) if you encounter terms that need more explanation.

From **eyeballs and ears, to hearts and minds** let's explore why social media is reshaping marketing as we knew it:

## MYTHBUSTING

There is a myth that social media is a way to **slash marketing budgets**, to hand digital marketing over to **tech-savvy interns** & juniors. And it's an alluring one. One that's lead many a company (even Fortune 500-sized) down a dark alley to have their reputation beaten on because of it. *Dell bad to live down Dell Hell, Nestle's reputation took a break with a KitKat.* Alluring and deceptive because it's mostly **free** to participate, establish a presence on a social media network and roll out the marketing patter. The danger lies in

treating digital as just another channel to push a message though. The rules work differently in the digital atmosphere.

Easy & cheap to get into for ANYONE to get into. **Very expensive for a big brand, if not done right.**

*Free* **Social Media** *≠* **Cheap** *The Option*

## FUNDAMENTALS



### THE BIG PICTURE

#### WHAT is Social Media?

A good way to think about social media is that all of this is actually just about being human beings. Sharing ideas, cooperating and collaborating to create art, thinking and commerce, vigorous debate and discourse, finding people who might be good friends, allies and lovers – it’s what our species has built several civilisations on. That’s why it is spreading so quickly, not because it’s great shiny, whizzy new technology, but because it lets us be ourselves – only more so.

### THE NEW MEANS OF PRODUCTION & DISTRIBUTION

#### Media Production

It used to be that the ability to create content and distribute it to an audience was limited to individuals and organisations that owned the production facilities and infrastructure to do so. In other words: ‘the media’. If you were in the video creation and distribution business you were called a TV station and employed thousands of highly skilled individuals to write, film, edit and broadcast your content through a relatively small number of channels to the public. Similarly, if you were a newspaper, you hired a team of reporters and editors, designers, typesetters, printers and delivery men, and had deals with a network of newsagents for them to sell your product to your audience. With the advent of digital technology and the internet it became a lot easier for people to create their own content,

be it images, words, video or audio. But even five years ago, it was still beyond most people’s technical skills to create and maintain their own website. Today, the ever-lower costs of computers, digital cameras and high-speed internet access, combined with free or low-cost, easy-to-use editing software means that anyone can have a live blog website up and running within minutes of deciding to do so. With a little reading and fiddling they can upload video or sound too.

#### Distribution

Production, obviously, is only half of the story. What good is great content unless you can get it to people? The innovation that has increased the reach of blogs and podcasts and has given terrific impetus to social media’s evolution is a technology called RSS (really Simple Syndication) which allows people to subscribe to a blog or website. The importance of RSS, therefore, is that it makes it much easier for blogs and other social media to build or become part of communities. They may often be small communities, but to their users they may be highly relevant and valuable.

SEARCH: the other method of distribution that is sometimes neglected in any discussion of social media is search engines. Because blogs are highly connected, in the eyes of Google the more established ones can become an authority on a niche topic.

If, say, you have been blogging about cats for a good few months, and your posts have attracted links from other blogs, then a story about new government legislation on pet ownership on your blog may earn similar ranking for searches on that subject as the local newspaper or even national media

(citation iCrossing see References for detail)

Social media is best understood as a group of new kinds of online media, which share most or all of the following characteristics: **participation, openness, conversation, community, connectedness**

## TIMELINE

*it’s been social, collaborative-conversational from the start.*

- 1973 PLATO notes
- Late 70’s BBSs bulletin boards
- 1979 Usenet
- 1985 The Well
- 1988 IRC (internet relay chat)
- 1991 Tim Berners-Lee posts “World-Wide Web: Executive Summary” to USENET Group.
- 1994 – Geocities
- 1995 birth of the wiki
- 1995 Classmates
- 1996 ICQ

### FIRST BIG WAVE

1997

Six Degrees was launched. It was the first ‘modern’ social network. Allowing users to create a profile and become friends. It drew over a million members before 2001 closed

- 1999 Napster
- 1999 BlackPlanet
- 1999 Xanga
- 1999 Epinions
- 1999 LiveJournal
- 1999 Blogger
- 1999 Napster
- 2000 DeviantArt
- 2000 MiGente
- 2001 Wikipedia

### TIPPING POINT

2002

Friendster launched and is still a very active social network, with over 90 million registered users and 60+ million unique visitors per month. Mostly Asia

- 2002 Last.fm
- 2003 Facebook (Harvard only)
- 2003 LinkedIn
- 2003 Ning
- 2003 Orkut
- 2003 MySpace
- 2003 Del.icio.us
- 2003 Second Life
- 2004 Flickr
- 2004 Digg
- 2004 Dogster
- 2004 aSmallWorld
- 2004 Dodgeball
- 2005 Youtube
- 2005 Bebo
- 2005 etsy
- 2006 Twitter
- 2006 Facebook (open)
- many niche but no BIG sites ---
- 2009 Foursquare
- 2009 Google Wave

## The 4C’s of Social Media Marketing

Content + Connections + Conversations + Community

*We don’t care about brands. we care about entertainment, utility, knowing, belonging and trust*

**Content:** that is relevant, valuable (entertaining, educational) and on time

**Connections:** easy ways to link people and context to our content and conversations

**Conversations:** we want relationships, truth, recommendations and trust, not spin

**Community:** to gather with others to solve problems, belong, grow, be seen, to take action



## MAKING IT USEFUL : the tools

### Why bother engaging?

1. Social media is where your customers are.
2. It's where they're talking about you, and your competitors.
3. It's a simple way to communicate with customers and potentials who want to hear from you

### GETTING TO GRIPS WITH THE TOOLS

There are thousands of social media platforms online. In flux, new ones launching daily as others fall away. We'll briefly look at the **types of social media** you'll encounter. Then take a quick look at today's **recommended platforms** marketers find most rewarding.

### CLASSIFICATION (BASIC)

#### Blogs

Blogs are probably the most well-known element of social media, and the heart of our online efforts. A DIY site for more detailed info, stories, showcasing achievements. We can include most other social media applications in to 'feed' our blogs. Tumblr or Wordpress to begin

#### Social Networks

Allow people to build profiles and to find & connect with friends, to share content and updates. eg. Facebook, Myspace, Bebo. DIY with Ning.com

#### Forums

online discussion communities generally around specific topics that were there from the beginning of

the Internet and still deliver powerful value. eg 4chan, DIY on phpBB

#### Content Communities

Communities that organise, review and share particular kinds of content. eg. photos (Flickr), bookmarking (del.icio.us), videos (Youtube), slides (Slideshare), reviews (Tripadvisor)

#### Microblogging

Social networking combined with bite-sized blogging, where small amounts of content (updates) are posted to a syndicated feed by RSS. eg. Twitter, Plurk, Jaiku.

#### Wikis

websites allowing people to easily add content to a communal document or edit the information on them. The best-known wiki is Wikipedia. DIY on SocialText

#### Podcasts

The audio and video version of blogs, available by subscription through services like iTunes or Podcast Alley.

### RECOMMENDED SOCIAL MEDIA

*(by ease of use)*

**Twitter** Like a large Instant Message meets conference call, Twitter is the easiest way to connect with like-minded people, develop relationships, get feedback and increase brand visibility. Twitter works very well with blogs. Be aware that following people organically as relationships develop is best, mass followings will often be construed as spam.

**Facebook** generally best for personal profiles, but features like Pages and sponsored applications can offer ways to build a brand community. Requires curation and careful strategy.

**LinkedIn** the 'grown-up' social network, its business is connecting business people. Set up LinkedIn Groups around your company or industry. Ask and answer questions. Superb for recruitment.

**Youtube** with bandwidth getting faster, online video sharing is experiencing a surge, and one of the most popular shared kinds of content. Create a channel for your brand with how-to tutorials, demo's, previews or interviews.

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We'll be dealing with specific, practical ways to use the various social media platforms in detail in later modules.  
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**Blogs** slightly more work to set up, but your own blog should be at the heart of your social media efforts. The space no-one else owns the content or dictates 140 characters in our posts. It's our place for more detailed information, stories, draw in videos, set up an e-store, a forum, draw in Twitter feeds, then link to blog posts from Twitter and Facebook to give the content greater visibility. A must.

*Ask not what your network can do for you, but what you can do for your network*

### PRACTICAL APPLICATION

*now you know, give these a go:*

- If you haven't already, set up profiles on some public social networks like Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, Youtube, Flickr
- Listen. Get a feel for what real conversation sounds like versus marketing pitch. What draws interest? What is shared? Each network has its own points of value.
- Get in the conversation. Share industry news, research, link to great content, trends, see what your crowd finds useful and shareable. You won't know till you give it a go.

## THE BIG 3 ESSENTIAL IDEAS

*(the least you'll need to know)*

**Idea #1** Social media doesn't reward those using it as a cheap "shout channel" to broadcast marketing messages without engaging in conversation, adding value, solving problems with a community, being in the conversation.

**Idea #2** It's searchable and persistent. **What you stay sticks around.** You speak to invisible audiences so you never know who will see what you've put out there.

**Idea #3** *It is measurable*, to the smallest statistical minutiae. BUT social media ROI isn't about 'impressions' nor can its influence be weighed by traditional marketing ROI measures. And it can take longer to deliver its true impact. Stick with it.

## REFERENCE WORKS

### & RECOMMENDED RESEARCH LINKS

#### Fundamentals

What is Social Media. Direct Extract [Creative Commons licensed to Antony Mayfield iCrossing 2008] <http://www.iCrossing.com/ebooks>  
 Why Bother Engaging? (grey box) quote Henry Blodget <http://businessinsider.com>

#### Recommended readings:

Cluetrain Manifesto <http://cluetrain.com>  
 Kodak. Social Media Tips. [http://www.kodak.com/US/images/en/corp/aboutKodak/onlineToday/Social\\_Media\\_9\\_8.pdf](http://www.kodak.com/US/images/en/corp/aboutKodak/onlineToday/Social_Media_9_8.pdf) (2010)  
 American Express OpenForum. A Practical Guide to Social Media. [http://media.nucleus.naprojects.com/pdf/OPEN\\_BOOK5\\_Social\\_Media.pdf](http://media.nucleus.naprojects.com/pdf/OPEN_BOOK5_Social_Media.pdf)  
 Social Media is Here to Stay... Now What? danah boyd. Microsoft Research Tech Fest, Redmond, February 2009. <http://www.danah.org/papers/talks/MSRTechFest2009.html>  
 Social Media Marketing Hub. Hubspot.com <http://www.hubspot.com/social-media-marketing-hub>

#### Books

Groundswell: winning in a world transformed by social technologies  
 Charlene Li, Josh Bernoff. 2008  
 Socianomics. How Social Media Transforms the Way we Live & Do Business  
 Eric Qualman. 2009  
 Engage!  
 Brian Solis, Ashton Kutcher. 2010  
 Six Pixels of Separation. Everyone is Connected.  
 Mitch Joel. 2009

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## THE FLIP-SIDE

### *The Clue in the Cluetrain Manifesto\**

Conversations are held between REAL people.

In theory, the brand's authentic voice, can come from an impassioned team; but inevitably there's a **person who "channels" the brand**, they become the face or character of the brand online. The human that we can chat to if we want to know more, have an issue. Robert Scoble did it for Microsoft, Tony Hsieh still does for Zappos.

The power driving the social web isn't about the machines or technology. The company rep online is suddenly not an easily replaceable cog.

\* the seminal reading for Web2.0 /social media on Markets as Conversations

## STATS & SOUNDBITE SOCIAL CURRENCY *(circa mid 2010)*

*We have a stats overflow for social media - because it's measurable, fascinating and in-constant flux. Some to sample*

- Average number of tweets p/hr is around 1.3 million
- About 70% of Facebook users are outside the USA
- India is currently the fastest-growing country to use LinkedIn, with around 3m total users
- 70% of bloggers are organically talking about brands on their blog.
- 20% of Companies are using all four of the main social technologies (Twitter, YouTube, Facebook and blogs)
- The vuvuzela iphone app was no1 on itunes in 50 countries in June
- Japan vs. Denmark had the highest tweet per second rate at 3 283
- the English team's FB Page got the most likes of any country playing
- The Coca Cola sponsored hashtag #wc2010 racked up 86m impressions in 24hrs
- Wikipedia has in excess of 14m articles, meaning that it's 85,000 contributors have written nearly a million new posts in six months.
- There are more than 70 translations available on Facebook
- Facebook claims 50% of active users log into the site each day. This would mean at least 175m users every 24 hours



## BUZZWORD COMPLIANCE GLOSSARY

### Online Social Media

**@(name)** This symbol precedes people's "handles" or screen names on Twitter when a tweet is directed at them.

**#(hashtag)** employed (particularly on Twitter) to keep track of tweets that are all part of a single subject, event, or topic.

**Ajax** is a group of interrelated web development techniques used from the client-side to create interactive web applications to enhance the user experience.

**App or Applet** is any small application that performs one specific task; sometimes running within the context of a larger program, perhaps as a plugin.

**Aggregation** is the process of gathering content from blogs and other websites that provide RSS feeds. The results may be displayed in an aggregator website or directly to your desktop through a newsreader.

**Alerts** certain search engines allow you to specify words, phrases or tags that you want to keep tabs on, and deliver results of those searches by email or by RSS feed.

Useful to check whether you, your organisation, your blog has been mentioned somewhere online and respond if needs be.

**API** (Application Programming Interface) is an interface that enables interaction with other software or platforms to synchronise or "mashup" activity.

**Avatars** are the graphics used to represent a person or organisation's profile. This may or may not be a true representation of yourself.

**Back channel** emails, tweets, pictures or other messages sent between delegates at a conference. They can have a significant effect on how the session is perceived publicly.

**Beta** a website or software project released to users for testing before its official release.

**Blogs** are easy to publish websites with dated items of content in reverse chronological order, self-published by bloggers. Items – sometimes called posts – may have keyword tags associated with them, are usually available as feeds, and often allow commenting. Blogs are easy to set up, and update.

**Blogosphere** the totality of blogs on the Internet.

**Social Bookmarking** is saving the address of a website or item of content to a social bookmarking site. If you add tags, others can easily use your research too and see what you've recommended. If groups agree on the tags they'll use, collaborative research is much easier.

**Chat** is interaction on a web site through a chat application, with others adding text items one after the other. A dedicated chat room – differs from a forum because conversations happen in "real time".

**Comments** blogs may allow readers to add comments under posts, and may also provide a feed for comments as well as for the primary content. So you can keep up with conversations without having to revisit the site to check whether anything has been added.

**Content management systems** (CMS) are software platforms offering the ability to create static web pages,

document storage, blogging, wikis, and other tools. There are a host of web-based open-source CMS's where dynamic development and debugging is crowdsourced through the user-community like Wordpress or Drupal.

**Crowdsourcing** where the user-community or those outside an organisation who are prepared to volunteer their time and skills contributing content and solving problems.

**Feeds** are the means by which you can read, view or listen to items from RSS-enabled sites without visiting the site, by subscribing and using an aggregator or newsreader. Feeds contain the content of an item and any associated tags without the design or structure of a web page.

**Folksonomies** (organic online taxonomies) are created by users classifying content online, by adding tags to make sense of it in new and sometimes unexpected ways.

**Friend** (as verb) to add someone's profile to your network on an online social network.

**Forums** are discussion areas on websites, where people can post messages or comment on existing messages independently. Before blogs developed, email lists and forums were the main means of conversing online.

**Instant messaging** (IM) a way to chat to people in realtime using an IM tool like Gchat or Yahoo Messenger. Generally a good alternative to emails for rapid exchange.

**Links** are the highlighted text or images that, when clicked, jump you from one web page or item of content to another. Bloggers tend to link often within posts to reference outside content, or their own.

**Location** the nature of location and presence has been radically changed by the Internet and social media, because you can be active online in many different places, including in virtual worlds while literally geolocated in one realworld set of co-ordinates.

**Logging in** is the process to gaining access to a website that restricts access to content, and requires registration. This usually involves typing in a username and password.

**Lurkers** are people who read but don't contribute or add comments to forums. The 1% rule-of-thumb suggests about only one per cent of people contribute new content to an online community, another nine percent comment, and the rest lurk.

**Mashups** are the combinations of various web-applications and platforms with each other to either create a new web services or to improve usability on the primary site.

**Newsreader** is a website or desktop tool (client) that act as an aggregator, gathering content from blogs and similar sites using RSS feeds so you can read the content in one place, instead of having to visit the sites themselves.

**Online** being connected to the Internet.

**Offline** as expected, not connected to the Internet.

**Open-source** "software whose source code is available under a license that permits users to study, change, and improve the software, and to redistribute it in modified or unmodified form. It is often developed in a public, collaborative manner" - Wikipedia

**Peer-to-peer** refers to direct interaction between two people in a network. In that network, each peer will be connected to other peers, with the invitation to share and

**Permalink** is the web-address (URL) of a specific item of content like an individual blog post, rather than the address of the primary web page with tons of content to sort through.

**Photosharing** is uploading your own images to a photosharing website like Flickr. You can add tags and offer people the opportunity to comment, or even remix your photos if you add an appropriate copyright license.

**Platform** is the software framework or system within which web-based tools work and can add upon.

**Plugin** consists of a computer program that interacts with a host application or platform to provide a very specific function "on demand". Add-on is often considered the general term comprising plug-ins, extensions, and themes.

**Podcast** is an audio (or video - sometimes vodcast) content that can be downloaded through a website or service like iTunes to listen or view offline.

**Post** is an item on a blog or forum.

**Presence** showing that you are available for contact by instant messaging or on chat. **Profiles** are the information that you provide about yourself when signing up for a social networking site.

**Reader** another name for newsreader

**Remixing** social media offers the possibility of taking different items of content combining them in different ways. Please note, you can do this with other people's content if they invite it by adding an appropriate copyright license.

**RSS** is short for Really Simple Syndication. This allows you to subscribe to content on blogs and other social media and have it delivered to you through a feed.

**Sharing** is offering other people the use of your text, images, video, bookmarks or other content by adding tags, and applying copyright licenses that encourage use of content.

**Flashmob** a large and sudden gathering of people - generally to do something odd or funny then disperse as quickly as they arrived. Flashmobs are organised by viral emails or through mobile or social networking channels.

**Social gaming** games like Farmville, played across a social network. Distinct from dedicated Massive Multiplayer game worlds like World of Warcraft.

**Social media** the term for the web-based tools and platforms people use to publish, converse and share content online.

**Social networking** sites the online places where users register, create a profile for themselves, and socialise and share with other registered users using a range of social media tools including blogs, video, images, tagging, lists of friends, forums and messaging. Think Facebook or Myspace.

**Subscribing** is the process of adding an RSS feed to your aggregator or newsreader.

**Tags** are keywords attached to a blog post, bookmark, photo or other item of content so you and others can find them easily through searches and aggregation. Tags are to the user's choosing & cluster to form folksonomies.

**Tool** a software application that either interacts with the Web from a local computer or is web-based, to enable

you to do stuff online.

**Trackback** or linkback a method to see who has linked to a specific post or permalink. Generally listed in the comment section of blogs as part of the conversation.

**Troll** "*someone who posts inflammatory, extraneous, or off-topic messages in an online community, forum, chat, room or blog, with the primary intent of provoking other users into an emotional response or of otherwise disrupting normal on-topic discussion.*" - Wikipedia

**Tweet** a post or update on Twitter.com or one of the applications that uses its API

**UGC** or user generated content is text, video, music or other content developed and shared by user, not the platform owners upon which it is shared.

**Videosharing** the video version of photosharing on sites like Youtube.

**Virtual worlds** online worlds like Second Life or World of Warcraft, where you can create an avatar of yourself, socialise and co.create that world with other residents.

**Web 2.0** term coined by O'Reilly Media in 2004 to describe blogs, wikis, social networking sites and other Internet-based services that emphasize collaboration and sharing. It associates the idea of the Internet as a platform.

**Web-based applications** tools created by commercial and opensource organisations providing a growing range of free or low-cost utilities including email, calendars, word processing, and spreadsheets that can be used on the web rather than your desktop. (Remember cloud computing).

**Widgets** stand-alone applications you can embed in other applications, like a website or desktop, or mobile to help you do stuff online, like draw in an RSS feed.

**Wiki** is a web page/s that can be edited collaboratively by a group of people online. Wikipedia, is the best known wiki. They can also be used as a really quick way to set up a web site.

**XML** (Extensible Markup Language) is a set of rules/standard for encoding documents online and to transport and store data in a fashion suited to the social web.