

Social Media Integration

Trends, tips and best practices for better social marketing in the real world

Social media is no longer an afterthought for brands. Today, it is at the core of almost everyone's marketing strategy.

In keeping with the increased usage of social media as a marketing tool, businesses are dedicating staff to the tactic—bad news for interns, perhaps, but good news for marketing professionals. Fifty-seven percent of respondents to ExactTarget's 2014 State of Marketing Survey had a dedicated social marketing team, though for 40% of those respondents, the team consisted of just one person.

The same percentage also planned to increase their social media marketing budgets in 2014. But while social marketing budgets may be rising, overall the discipline accounts for only a small portion of overall marketing spending. Among respondents to Chief Marketer's most recent social survey, 54% said less than 10% of their marketing budget went to social; the 2013 CMO Survey anticipated that social would account for 12% of overall marketing budgets in 2014.

One reason social marketing accounts for a relatively small portion of marketing budgets is that its costs have been relatively low. But as content becomes more visual and sophisticated, brands will

have to increase their spending, warns Brian Haven, chief strategy officer for iCrossing, a New York-based digital marketing agency.

"Content needs to get more sophisticated and rich, so costs associated with content strategy, planning, and creation will be a factor in budgets," says Haven. "The higher quality content, the more likely you will get people to pay attention. Brands should help their audience cut through the marketing clutter by providing outstanding content that they can't refuse."

Among the 2,887 participants in Social Media Examiner's 2014 Social Media Marketing Industry Report, 92% stated that social media were important to their business. One reason for this high ranking: Social Media Examiner drew its participants largely from followers of its own social media, who were therefore already more predisposed to be proponents of social.

Even so, the percentage of Social Media Examiner's respondents who viewed social media as important was up six percentage points from the previous year, showing that the discipline was gaining more adherents. What's more, among the more than 2,500 marketers across multiple disciplines who responded to ExactTarget's survey, 46% said that social marketing was core to their business. —*Sherry Chiger*



The Value of Influencers

How social influencers can add their voice to your brand



The popularity of this year's fifth-annual VidCon, which saw 18,000 people swarming Anaheim to meet their favorite YouTube stars, is just the latest piece of evidence proving that YouTube is the new Hollywood. And with their built-in, engaged fan base, digital media influencers can be extremely valuable for brands.

While celebrity endorsement is a tried and true formula, a social influencer can take a brand brief and explore it in their own voice, which their audience has come to love and consume. This adds an additional layer of credibility to a brand endorsement. Additionally, a YouTube influencer can be more efficient for your budget. Not only will you save in hiring a social influencer, but they are better able to activate their audience and engage with fans in a way that most celebrities can't or won't. With skin in the game, a social influencer works harder and is able to take things to a personal level.

FINDING THE RIGHT PERSON

First, decide what your brand's business objectives are and figure out the media consumption habits of the target market (e.g. if your target is increasing sales among millennial women, this group is likely to be social, mobile and "cutting the cord," doing more entertainment viewing on the phone and computer than on TV sets.)

Then, do research on the world of social influencers and examine these influencers' reach, relevance, frequency of publishing, and whether they've previously advocated for your brand organically (bonus!) or if they have been aligned with other brands. If they have advocated for brands in the past, were they transparent in their advertising?

Be sure to closely examine the comments on a social influencer's past videos to see what their fans are saying about them and how responsive they are to their fans. You want to make sure your brand endorser is someone who does a good job of engaging with commenters in a positive way.

Once you're done with this preliminary research, make a short list of your top choices and begin outreach. You may do this either with their manage-

ment or directly with the influencers themselves. Some digital media stars are managed by multichannel networks (MCNS), which handle groups of stars—sort of like a Hollywood agency for the YouTube world.

KEEPING THE MESSAGE ON-BRAND

After selecting the right endorser for your brand, make sure to brief them properly to ensure that they're sticking to the key brand message and following through with their promise. Give them leeway to be creative, but within parameters: for example, be sure to mention X, Y, Z about Brand A's product attributes. If you are an agency, be sure to set realistic expectations for your brand and act as a brand steward to supervise the criteria.

Of course, working with YouTube influencers does not always make sense for every brand. You must look at the media consumption habits of your audience and determine whether YouTube is an appropriate medium to reach out to them. This type of advertising is also difficult for highly regulated industries such as alcohol, pharma or, of course, anything targeting children.

Some of the verticals that see the best results with digital influencers are health and beauty, entertainment and video games. These are all sectors where people seek advice and ideas for how to do things better, whether it's the right way to apply eyeliner or tips on how to beat a level in a video game. It's also naturally more engaging to follow these tips in a digital video format than it is to read them.

Digital and social media advertising have found success among millennials in particular because the Internet is where they are consuming video. Additionally, the buying habits of millennials are significantly more influenced by their friends' social media activities.

This doesn't mean you shouldn't experiment with tapping YouTube influencers to sell to Gen X and Boomers, too. Take a risk and do something different with your brand. It might just pay off. —*Al Cadena, senior account director, Beeby Clark+Meyler*

Award Winning Engagement

Looking for award winning social creative, with measurable results? Consider these brand-case histories shared by representatives of PRO Award winning agencies.

DOGGIE DOWNTIME

Dogswell products have long enjoyed a positive reputation in the premium pet food and treat space, but brand awareness had been lacking on a national level. Breaking through a relative “sea of sameness” has been one of Dogswell’s primary challenges, so Alcone created a social media campaign that distinguished the brand from its competitors: the Dogswell, “Unleash the Happy” campaign. The reasoning was simple—healthy dogs = happy dogs!

It’s a proven fact that happy, healthy dogs have the power to help stressed-out humans feel happier and healthier, too. In an effort to “unleash” the “Unleash the Happy” campaign message and to call attention to this relationship between dogs and people, Dogswell rallied around National Take Your Dog to Work Day (TYDTWD).

On June 20, in honor of TYDTWD, Dogswell Unleashed the “Happy” on an office full of unsuspecting stressed out New Yorkers. The entire office received an email informing them that a news crew was going to visit to report on a national story regarding rising office stress in America. Little did they know the “news crew” consisted of 20 dogs and puppies headed their way to treat the stressed out workers to some much needed playtime and cuddle time. Dogswell products were featured organically in the video, as treats for the dogs that were busy “treating” the office workers.



Dogswell “unleashed the happy” on National Take Your Dog to Work Day.

The campaign generated serious traction via social media and PR with over 262,000 YouTube views, 20,000 Facebook likes, and 5,000 shares in the first two weeks alone. Through social media, Alcone and Dogswell turned consumers into brand advocates via viewing, sharing and commenting, amplifying the video’s reach. By creating a social media strategy that focuses on positive word of mouth and the strong people-dog relationship, Dogswell influenced the consumers’ path to purchase at the awareness, consideration and decision-making stage, driving both retail acceptance of and consumer purchase of the brand’s entire line of healthful and delicious food and treats. — *Rachel Bartholomew, manager, marketing technologies, Alcone*

FOOTBALLIN’ PHONES

DirecTV needed a way to promote and differentiate its exclusive, premium NFL Sunday Ticket product in a new and exciting way beyond its traditional TV campaign.

The attention-challenged NFL fan is too distracted to pay attention to ads. They are media multitaskers, switching platforms 17 times an hour, and more likely to be texting, tweeting, checking their fantasy scores, reading emails, watching YouTube videos or updating their Facebook status than watching a commercial. It’s even worse during the NFL pre-season, when the market becomes saturated with football ads all aimed at the same audience.

So instead of creating a traditional commercial, DirecTV and Grey New York created a breakthrough, highly entertaining piece of premium digital content that could not be ignored. Two of the most iconic NFL players and brothers, Peyton and Eli Manning, starred in a 90s’-style hip-hop video, which was seeded with celebrity tweeters. “Football On Your Phone” focused on a clear benefit that only NFL Sunday Ticket Max could offer—the ability to watch a full, live football game on your phone. Or as the Mannings put it: “Your phone ain’t for callin’, your phone’s for footballin’.”

“Football On Your Phone” was an epic hit of dig-

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The "Football on Your Phone" campaign resulted in 1 billion impressions.

ital, social media, PR and pop-culture proportions. DirecTV didn't just launch its new mobile feature, it launched one of the most popular music videos of the year, resulting in 1 billion impressions, \$10,555,593 in ad value, a 30% increase in sales and 600 unique PR placements. The campaign also won a 2014 Effie and a 2014 Cannes Lion. —Michelle Leo, strategic planning director, Grey New York

PERRY'S PRISM

To kick off the launch of the Katy Perry PRISM collection and reward fans, Claire's ran a seven-week Instagram sweepstakes, which ended on July 15. Entrants were asked to take a selfie with their favorite #KatyPerryPRISMCollection pieces at a local Claire's



During the seven-week sweepstakes, fans were asked to take a selfie with their favorite PRISM piece of jewelry.

SELLING THE C-SUITE

Need to make the case for social to your CEO? Tell them that it is a great way to:

- **Build a presence for your CEO.** Having the CEO (and other company thought leaders) actively engaged will increase the visibility of the program and entire organization. Second, he/she gets to see the power of social media firsthand. Especially when their kids or grandkids see them on Instagram or Vine.
- **Amplify existing content.** You've already written a bunch of cool articles but you don't now how to share it with more people, other than the five that read your blog. Why not tweet about it? With twitter, you can even promote your tweets to those not following your account.
- **Spy on the competition.** There is a chance that your competitor or its employees have twitter accounts. People use these accounts for all types of reasons. They announce customer wins, new product features, and share their content. With a good social monitoring tool, you can get a good lead on what your competitors have to offer.
- **Listen to your customers.** Often, customers will praise or complain about a product through social media. They will wish for new product features and compare your newest feature to the competitions. This is a great way to gain valuable insight. —David T. Scott, author, "The New Rules Of Lead Generation"

store, follow and tag @clairesstores on Instagram, and hashtag #KatyPerrySWEEPS for their chance to win the entire collection valued at \$2,500. Also, local prizes were up for grabs and those who hashtagged select cities were in the running to win two tickets to her concert and even meet-and-greet passes for select concert dates.

Claire's partnered with its agency of record, Sync Marketing, which managed the campaign and handled all aspects of the legal and prize fulfillment components. A social media campaign was the best way to reach Claire's target demographic: 'tween and teen girls. By doing so, Claire's was able to interact directly with their consumers, gather user-generated content, and reward its consumers along the way.

The results of the campaign proved just how much Claire's and Katy Perry are a winning combination. There were 130,303 total entries with 129,300 of them being Instagram entries. Claire's increased its Instagram follower base by 9,740 (40% growth rate). Whether it is a Facebook promotion, Instagram sweepstakes or Pinterest contest, social media campaigns are continuing to prove very successful for Claire's, and its consumers are loving every second of it. #ROAR—Julie Link, cofounder, Sync Marketing

Tasty Tactics

Tips from food marketers for better social engagement

Leveraging bloggers and collaborators on social media is paying off big-time for food brands like Kraft, Whole Foods, Horizon Organics, Coca-Cola and Black Box Wines as they see increases in awareness, customer engagement, and sales. What do these marketers seem to understand about influencer marketing better than their competitors?

1. THEY LET THE CONVERSATION BE ABOUT THE CONSUMER, NOT THE BRAND.

Influencer marketing programs work best with content that provides value to the target consumer. It should be authentic and thought provoking with subtle references to the brand, instead of being just about the brand. Marketers have to change their mindset from telling the customer about how great their products and services are to letting the conversation be about the consumer, their experiences, and their happiness.

Consumers love content that makes them laugh, cry or learn something and the best source of this kind of content is often from another consumer. The food industry gets lots of mileage from this approach since people love talking about recipes, restaurants, deals, celebrations, etc. It is much harder to get consumers to talk online about their finances, birth control, health issues or auto repairs.



Lay's found huge social success when the brand asked consumers to help them create a new chip flavor.

for vegetarian, gluten-free, non-GMO recipes for left-over Halloween candy.

Done right, visual content is visceral, inspiring, entertaining and delectably sharable. Rich content like photographs, videos and infographics get more engagement and click conversions than text alone. One month after the introduction of Facebook timeline for brands, engagement with photos and videos increased 65%, according to Simply Measured. When International Delight launched their new line of Cold Stone Creamery flavors, they leveraged food bloggers to create and share creative recipes. One blogger alone, WillCookForSmiles, garnered more than 28,000 pins on Pinterest for a picture of her White Wedding Cake Milkshake.

3. THEY TAKE CHANCES.

Food brands seem to take more chances when it comes to influencer marketing. Even though blunders abound, food marketers don't seem to be afraid of the high-risk, high-reward model.

For example, Lay's launched a hugely successful social media campaign where they asked fans and influencers to create a new chip flavor for a \$1 million prize. They attracted more than 3.8 million submissions, manufactured and tested 25 flavors, and pushed the top three flavors, Cheesy Garlic Bread, Chicken & Waffles, and Sriracha, out to stores for consumers to taste and vote for on social media. They experienced a 12% increase in sales and the

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"RICH CONTENT LIKE PHOTOGRAPHS, VIDEOS AND INFOGRAPHICS GET MORE ENGAGEMENT AND CLICK CONVERSIONS THAN TEXT ALONE."

2. THEY UNDERSTAND THE IMPACT OF VISUAL CONTENT.

People love talking about and tweeting, liking, pinning, collecting, tasting and sharing food. A lot. As soon as we tweet what we had for breakfast, we are planning dinner or at least searching Pinterest

TRENDS TO WATCH

1. Consumers are engaging with social media via mobile more than ever, which means marketers have some catching up to do, according to Brian Haven, chief strategy officer for iCrossing. "Marketing in mobile apps and the manner in which social networks handle marketing on their mobile platforms is still a bit nascent compared to the desktop experience," he says. "Understanding and tracking how social networks change in this area will be a big advantage to brands that want to remain on the cutting edge."

2. More consumers use more media platforms. It's called social media, rather than social medium, for a reason. Consumers use multiple networks, and depending on the brand and its objectives, some networks are more effective than others. "The key is choosing the right technology for the goal," says Steve Caputo, managing partner of Tenthwave, a New York-based digital agency. "For example, Pinterest works well for acquisition, Facebook for retention."

3. Marketers will increase their use of paid social media. This is partly because some platforms are making the organic use of their channels less effective. For instance, in spring 2014 Facebook made fairly significant changes to the algorithm that determines which posts show up on users' feeds; changes in 2014 led to a steep decline in organic reach among brands. According to a study by Social@Ogilvy, among brands with Facebook pages, organic reach dropped from 16% in 2012 to just over 6% in February 2014—in other words, only 6% of Facebook users who "liked" a brand saw that brand's posts in their newsfeed. Among brands with more than 500,000 likes, the organic reach was just above 2%. And in August Facebook informed brands that it could no longer offer consumers a reward in exchanging for their liking the brand's Facebook page.

4. Visuals are more and more important. Not only are visual-oriented networks such as Instagram, Pinterest, and Vine growing in popularity, but even traditionally text-based networks such as Twitter and Facebook are becoming more visual. "Facebook is highly visual, and tweets without imagery perform significantly lower than tweets with a picture," Haven says. "Marketers need to present something visually compelling that makes a user stop swiping and pay attention to the content their brand is offering."

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Cheesy Garlic Bread flavor was added to their family.

Tyson Nuggets used influencer marketing to help increase the sale of overstocked chicken nuggets. Influencers invented and shared unique, entertaining ways to use chicken nuggets in their holiday recipes and helped increase sales by 42%. Letting influencers get creative and create content their readers loved helped increase the exposure of the campaign and product sales.

4. THEY GET MORE MILEAGE OUT OF CONTENT BY REPURPOSING BRANDED ASSETS ON OWNED MEDIA.

Brands spend significant time and money working with influencers to create interesting blog, Facebook, and Twitter posts. That influencer content should be re-purposed onto owned media sites as well. Brands need to make sure that this content doesn't just live on the influencer site, but is also shared on branded sites. Influencer content should also be easy to share with social sharing buttons embedded in the posts.

Pillsbury garnered extra attention for their influencer content when they aggregated posts and images to a branded hub page and gave visitors a way to view, print, vote, pin, like, share, and tweet right from the branded page. —*Holly Hamann, co-founder/CMO, TapInfluence* !