2013 SOCIAL MEDIA MARKETING INDUSTRY REPORT

How Marketers Are Using Social Media to Grow Their Businesses

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Letter from the author…

Hello fellow marketer!

Welcome to our 5th annual study! Social media marketing is still growing. And for businesses, social media is essential, as you’ll see detailed in this year’s report.

This 43-page report contains easy-to-digest insights into how marketers are currently using social media and their future plans.

If you’re in charge of marketing your business, you’ll want to closely examine the nearly 70 charts on following pages. I'll reveal the "not-so-obvious" findings among this data-rich content.

The report will uncover the "who, what, where, when and why" of social media marketing.

More than 3000 of your fellow marketers provided the kind of insight you won’t find elsewhere.

I hope you enjoy it! If you find value here, please let your peers know about this report.

You can find the original page for the report here: http://www.socialmediaexaminer.com/social-media-marketing-industry-report-2013/

All my best!

Michael A. Stelzner
Founder, Social Media Examiner
Host, Social Media Marketing podcast
Executive summary

This study surveyed over 3000 marketers with the goal of understanding how they are using social media to grow and promote their businesses. On the following pages, you'll discover:

- **The top social media questions marketers want answered**: We reveal the big questions marketing pros want answered about social media.

- **The time commitment**: We examine the weekly hours marketers invest in their social media efforts. This analysis will be helpful for marketers just getting started or those seeking support staff.

- **The benefits of social media marketing**: This rather beefy section reveals all the major advantages marketers are achieving with their social media efforts. We also look at how weekly time invested and years of experience affect the results.

- **Most-used social media platforms**: Discover which platforms marketers are using and how their usage will change this year. We also examine which platforms experienced marketers are using.

- **Social media sites people want to learn more about**: In this section, we reveal the social platforms that marketers are most interested in learning about.

- **Other analyses**: We also examine social media outsourcing and how marketers use other forms of marketing. In addition, we take a look at how business-to-business (B2B) companies differ from business-to-consumer (B2C) companies and whether the size of a business has any bearing on results. We also highlight significant changes since our 2012 study.

**How to use this report**: Regardless of your experience with social media marketing, there's something here for you. If you're a beginner, **take a look at the time commitment, benefits and platforms that your peers are using**.

If you're experienced with social media, **compare yourself against other marketers, see which platforms they're looking at next and determine whether you're achieving the same benefits as your more experienced brethren**.
Major findings

Here’s a quick summary of our primary findings:

• **Marketers place very high value on social media**: A significant 86% of marketers indicate that social media is important for their business, up from 83% in 2012.

• **Tactics and engagement are top areas marketers want to master**: At least 88% of marketers want to know the most effective social tactics and the best ways to engage their audience with social media.

• **YouTube holds the top spot for future plans**: A significant 69% of marketers plan on increasing their use of YouTube, making it the top area marketers will invest in for 2013.

• **Marketers want to learn most about blogging**: While 58% of marketers are blogging, 62% want to learn more about it and 66% plan on increasing blogging activities in 2013.

• **Podcasting set to explode in 2013**: Only 5% of marketers are involved with podcasting, yet 24% plan on increasing their podcasting activities in 2013—almost a five-fold increase—and 32% of marketers want to learn more about it.

• **Facebook and LinkedIn are the two most important social networks for marketers**: When forced to only select one platform, 49% of marketers selected Facebook, followed by LinkedIn at 16%.

• **Most marketers aren't sure their Facebook marketing is effective**: Only 37% of marketers (slightly more than one in three) think that their Facebook efforts are effective.

• **Increased exposure is the top benefit of social media marketing**: A significant 89% of marketers stated that increased exposure was the number-one benefit of social media marketing.

The above summary is merely a taste of what’s in this report. On the following pages, you'll find nearly 70 charts that visually convey some fascinating findings. For example, we look at which social networks are used by those who invest the most time in social media marketing and the benefits achieved by those who've been at this for years.
Top 5 social media questions marketers want answered

The top social media questions marketers want answered can be summarized in the following keywords: tactics, engagement, measurement, tools and strategies—in that order. As the social media marketing industry continues its massive expansion, the needs of marketers shift. Below are the top issues marketers are facing today with social media marketing. At least 83% of marketers surveyed felt they are struggling to answer all of the following questions:

#1: TACTICS: What social tactics are most effective?

The number-one question marketers want answered (90%) is which tactics work best. This high number is likely in response to the constant changes taking place across many social networks.

#2: ENGAGEMENT: What are the best ways to engage my audience with social media?

Figuring out how to best connect with people remains high on the list of questions marketers want answered (88%). As more and more businesses become social, those who best engage will stand out.

#3: MEASUREMENT: How do I measure the return on my social media investment?

A significant 87% of marketers want to know how to measure their return on investment for social media activities. This question has been top of mind for marketers for the last three years. Clearly very few marketers have figured this one out.

#4: TOOLS: What are the best social management tools?

As interactions increase and newer social networks continue to grow, the need for tools to simplify the job of social media marketers becomes more important. A whopping 84% feel like they don't know what tools are best.

#5: STRATEGIES: How do I create a social strategy?

Creating a social strategy is still a major concern for marketers (83%). This is a positive indicator that marketers are now thinking about social media within the larger umbrella of marketing and trying to determine smart strategies.
Use of social media marketing

We asked a few questions to determine the survey participants' experience using social media to market their businesses.

Use of social media marketing

We began by simply asking marketers if they use social media to market their businesses. The overwhelming majority (97%) indicated they are participating in social media marketing. Note: This is up from 94% in 2012.

Social media is important for my business

A significant 86% of marketers said that social media was important to their businesses.

This is a slight increase from 2012, when 83% thought social media was important.
Years using social media marketing

We asked participants how long they've been using social media marketing.

Forty-seven percent of marketers surveyed have at least two years of social media marketing experience.

Note: For a detailed demographic breakdown of survey participants, see the last few pages of this report.

On the following pages, we asked marketers to rate their agreement with a few broad statements related to social media.
Measuring social media

We wanted to understand marketers' ability to measure their social media activities, so we asked them to rate their agreement with the following statement: "I am able to measure the return on investment for my social media activities."

Only about one in four (26%) agreed they are able to measure their social activities.
Effectiveness of Facebook marketing

We asked marketers if they agreed with the statement: "My Facebook marketing is effective."

To our surprise, only slightly more than 1 in 3 (37%) agreed! B2C marketers were far more likely to agree (44%) than their B2B peers (29%).

Larger businesses were much more likely to agree that their Facebook marketing efforts were effective. For example, 46% of businesses with 1000 or more employees agreed, compared to only 29% of the self-employed.
Mobile-optimized blogs

We asked those marketers who had blogs to rate their agreement with the following statement: "My blog is optimized for mobile readers."

Slightly more than one in four (28%) agreed that their blog was optimized for mobile. B2B marketers were a little more likely to have their blogs optimized (31%), when compared to B2C marketers (26%).
Integrated social activities

We asked marketers to rate their agreement with the following statement: "I have integrated social media into my traditional marketing activities."

A surprising 79% of marketers agreed that they had integrated their social media and traditional marketing activities.
A significant 62% of marketers are using social media for 6 hours or more and 36% for 11 or more hours weekly. This is an INCREASE over 2012, when 59% reported 6 or more hours a week and 33% reported 11 or more hours weekly. It's interesting to note that nearly 17% of marketers spend more than 20 hours each week on social media.
The experience factor

There’s a direct relationship between how long marketers have been using social media and their weekly time commitment. More experience means more time spent on social media marketing.

For people just beginning with social media (less than 12 months of experience), 50% spend 5 or fewer hours per week.

However, of folks who have been doing this for 2 years or longer, at least 70% spend 6 hours or more per week on social media activities.

How the time commitment varies with business size

This chart shows how different–sized businesses invest their time with social media activities.
Age factor

There’s a direct relationship between the marketer’s age and time spent marketing with social media. The younger the marketer, the more time he or she spends on social media.

Notice the green and blue segments taking up a significant portion of the bar in the higher weekly hours below. Of those spending more than 40 hours per week doing social media marketing, 63% are under the age of 40.
Benefits of social media marketing

The top two benefits of social media marketing are increasing exposure and increasing traffic. A significant 89% of all marketers indicated that their social media efforts have generated more exposure for their businesses. Increasing traffic was the second major benefit, with 75% reporting positive results.

Most marketers are using social media to gain marketplace intelligence (69%) and develop loyal fans (65%).

Changes since our 2012 study: The order of benefits has remained virtually unchanged since 2012, with the exception of developing loyal fans ranking slightly above generating leads.

Also, the percentage of marketers reporting these benefits has increased across all categories since 2012. For example, in 2012, 85% reported increased exposure, 69% reported increased traffic and 65% reported provided marketplace insight.

Some questions that naturally emerge from the above chart might include, "Can I achieve more benefits by investing more time in social media?", "Are marketers who've been using social media for years gaining even better results?" and "Is there a difference between B2B and B2C?" The following charts address these questions.
Improved sales

It takes time to develop relationships that lead to sales. However, a large percentage of marketers who take the time find great results.

For example, more than half of marketers who have been using social media for at least 3 years report it has helped them improve sales. More than half who spend 11 or more hours per week find the same results and 62% of those who spend 40+ hours earn new business through their efforts.

Conversely, 57% of all marketers taking this survey report social media has not helped them improve sales. This may be because they lack tools to track sales.

Increased exposure

With as little as 6 or more hours per week, the vast majority of marketers (92%+) indicated their social media efforts increased exposure for their businesses.

Nearly all marketers (95%+) who’ve been employing social media marketing for two years or longer report it generates exposure for their businesses.
Grew business partnerships

Marketers who invest the most time in social media marketing gain the most business partnerships. Of those with 3 years or more of experience, 62%+ saw new partnerships. However, more than half of marketers who’ve invested at least 1 year in social media marketing also report that new partnerships were gained.

More than half of those investing as little as 6 hours per week in social media were able to build new partnerships.

Marketers selling to other businesses were more likely to achieve this benefit (58%) than those selling to consumers (51%).

Generated leads

By spending as little as 6 hours per week, 64%+ of marketers see lead generation benefits with social media.

More than half of marketers with at least one year of social media experience were generating leads with social platforms.
Reduced marketing expenses

Nearly half of those who spend at least 6 hours per week or more on social media efforts saw a benefit of reduced marketing expenses.

At least 62% of businesses with 10 or fewer employees agreed social media reduced marketing expenses, while only 38% of businesses with 1000 or more employees agreed.

Improved search rankings

Improved search engine rankings were most prevalent among those who’ve been using social media for two years or longer, with 62%+ reporting a rise.

At least 60% of those investing a minimum of 6 hours per week in social media marketing saw improvements in search engine rankings.

Marketers selling to other businesses were more likely to achieve this benefit (60%) than those selling to consumers (56%).
Increased traffic

A significant 78%+ of participants found that increased traffic occurred with as little as 6 hours per week invested in social media marketing.

And those who’ve been doing this for 2 years or more reported substantially better results (81%+ reported benefits) compared with those with less experience.

Provided marketplace insight

Of those with at least 1 year of experience, 68% or more found social platforms provided marketplace insight.

B2B companies (71%) were more likely than B2C (66%) to use social media for intelligence-gathering.

At least 71% of those spending at least 6 hours per week were more likely to gain marketplace insight.
Developed loyal fans

B2C marketers (71%) were much more likely to develop a loyal fan base through social media than B2B marketers (58%).

Of those who have been using social media for at least 1 year, 63% found it useful for building a loyal fan base.

Time invested makes a difference. Of those spending at least 6 hours a week, 69% found benefit—compared to 49% of those spending 5 hours or fewer per week.
Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, blogging and YouTube were the top five platforms used by marketers, with Facebook leading the pack. All of the other platforms paled in comparison to these top five. The top six have remained virtually the same since 2012.

We added a few new categories this year, including Pinterest, podcasting and Q&A sites (such as Quora).

**CHANGES SINCE 2012**: Social bookmarking sites continue their rapid decline from 26% in 2011 to 16% in 2012 to only 10% in 2013. Forums also dropped from 24% in 2011 to 19% in 2012 to 16% in 2013. In addition, geo–location services like Foursquare dipped from 17% in 2011 to 14% in 2012 to 11% in 2013.

Self–employed marketers were significantly more likely to use blogging (64%) than large businesses (48%).

A close examination of which tools experienced social media marketers are using compared to those just getting underway provides further insight.
Platforms used by those with less than 12 months experience

Those just getting underway with social media marketing select Facebook as their number-one choice (by a long shot), followed by Twitter and LinkedIn.

Platforms used by those with 1 to 2 years experience

For marketers who have been employing social media marketing for 1 to 2 years, Facebook and Twitter remain the top two choices.

Notice that YouTube is used by more than half of marketers in this group.

Platforms used by those with 2 to 3 years experience

Facebook and Twitter are the two standouts among the tools used by social media marketers with 2 to 3 years experience.

YouTube passes blogging to take the number-four slot for this group.
Platforms used by those with 3 to 4 years experience

Nearly all marketers with 3 to 4 years of social media experience use Facebook (96%).

This group is also very active with blogging (70%).

Platforms used by those with 4 to 5 years experience

As marketers gain experience, their marketing efforts seem to expand across all major social platforms.

Platforms used by those with more than 5 years experience

Those with the most social media marketing experience also put the highest focus on LinkedIn (92%) and blogging (78%).

A significant number are also podcasters (19%) when compared to those with less experience.
Platforms used by those who commit small versus large amounts of weekly time to social media

This chart shows where those putting in the least time are investing versus those putting in the most time. There are a few interesting findings here. Marketers investing 40+ hours per week are much more focused on Pinterest (37% more), Google+ (35% more), Instagram (34% more), YouTube (33% more) and blogging (26% more) than those investing 6 or fewer hours a week with social media.

Platforms used by B2B versus B2C

This chart shows how B2B social media use differs from B2C-focused marketers. B2C are more focused on Facebook and B2B are more focused on LinkedIn and blogging.
The most important social platform for marketers is...

We asked marketers to select the single most important social platform for their business. Because only one choice was allowed, the findings are revealing.

Nearly half of marketers (49%) chose Facebook as their most important platform, followed by LinkedIn (16%), blogging (14%) and then Twitter (12%). This chart clearly reveals Facebook is the powerhouse platform for marketers. However, it is interesting to note the prominence of blogging.

How experience impacts results

The chart to the right demonstrates how those with three or more years of experience value the various social platforms.

Note that blogging jumps to the number-two slot for those with more experience.
B2B vs. B2C

Notice the fascinating differences between B2B- and B2C-focused marketers.

Clearly Facebook dominates in the B2C space (67% of marketers select it as their number-one choice). However, in B2B, LinkedIn and Facebook are tied for number one at 29% each, while blogging and Twitter play a much more important role for B2B marketers.
How will marketers change their future social media activities?

We asked marketers to indicate how they will change their social media use in the near future. Respondents were asked to indicate whether they will increase, decrease, remain the same or not utilize various social media networks and tools.

Marketers plan on increasing their use of YouTube (69%), Facebook (66%), blogging (66%), LinkedIn (65%) and Twitter (64%), in that order. A significant 80% said they have no plans to utilize daily deals or will reduce their efforts. Sixty-five percent have no plans to utilize geo-location.

Here is a breakdown by social media channel:

#1: YouTube

For the third year in a row, YouTube is the top area where marketers plan on increasing their social media efforts.

A significant 69% of marketers plan on increasing their YouTube marketing. This is down from 2012 (76%).

![Pie chart showing the distribution of responses to social media increases, decreases, and staying the same.](image)
#2: Facebook

Facebook is clearly a top choice. Ninety-two percent of marketers are using Facebook and 66% plan on increasing their activities. Only 4% of marketers surveyed do not plan to utilize Facebook. Second only to YouTube, Facebook is an area where marketers feel they can achieve substantial results.

Seventy percent of B2C plan on increasing Facebook efforts. Social media newcomers (77%) were more likely to increase their use of Facebook.

#3: Blogs

Blogs remain a strong area of focus for social media marketers, with 66% indicating they'll increase their blogging activities. Note: blogging came in just a hair below Facebook (#2). Blogging jumped from #4 in 2012 to #3 this year.

B2B marketers are more likely (71%) to increase blogging activity compared to B2C marketers (62%). At least 70% of small businesses are looking to increase blogging, compared to 58% of large businesses.

The last few years have seen a decline in these numbers. In 2012, 68% were increasing activities, 75% in 2011 and in 2010, 81% of marketers planned on increasing their blogging.
#4: LinkedIn

Jumping from #6 in 2012, a significant 65% of marketers plan on increasing their use of LinkedIn.

As expected, B2B marketers are significantly more likely to plan on increasing their use of LinkedIn (78% of B2B vs. 54% of B2C).

Social media newcomers (75%) were more likely to increase their use of LinkedIn. Enterprise-level businesses were least likely to increase their use (69%).

#5: Twitter

A majority of marketers (64%) will increase their activities on Twitter, slightly down from 69% in 2012 and 73% in 2011.

Large businesses are about 10% more likely to increase Twitter activities than small businesses.
#6: Google+

Google+ is on the radar for many marketers. Most businesses (53%) plan on increasing their Google+ activities (down from 67% in 2012), while more than 1 in 4 have no plans to use Google+.

Fifty-seven percent of B2B marketers will increase Google+ activities, compared to 50% of B2C.

Male marketers (58%) are more likely to increase their Google+ use than female marketers (51%).

#7: Pinterest

More than half of marketers plan to increase their use of Pinterest. Considering how new the social network is, these numbers are impressive.

B2C marketers are significantly more likely to increase Pinterest activities (57%) versus 44% of B2B.

Female marketers (54%) are also more likely to increase their use than male marketers (47%).
#8: Photo Sharing Sites

Thirty-eight percent of marketers plan to increase their use of photo sharing sites like Instagram.

B2C marketers are significantly more likely (44%) to increase activities than B2B marketers (29%).

Younger marketers are far more likely to use this form of marketing (48% of 20- to 29-year-olds vs. no more than 33% of those over the age of 40).

Marketers with 5 or more years of experience are more likely to increase activities here (45%).

#9: Forums

Only 29% of businesses will increase their forum activities, while nearly half of marketers have no plans to use forums.

In 2012, 40% of marketers had no plans for using forums. Now that number has jumped to 47%.
#10: Podcasting

While only 5% of marketers are currently involved with podcasting, a significant 24% plan on getting involved this year—a nearly five-fold increase!

This is a significant finding and likely fueled by (1) more than 1 billion smartphone users, (2) Apple’s introduction of a dedicated podcasting mobile app and (3) major auto manufacturers like BMW and Ford integrating podcasting into new cars.

Thirty-one percent of marketers with five or more years of experience plan on increasing podcasting activities. B2B marketers are more likely to increase activities (27%) compared to B2C marketers (21%).

#11: Social Bookmarking

A mere 17% of businesses plan on increasing their social bookmarking activities with sites like StumbleUpon (down from 30% in 2012), while 65% have no plans to use social bookmarking.
#12: Geo-location

Only 16% of marketers plan on increasing their use of geo-location services like Foursquare, down from 23% in 2012.

Male marketers (19%) are more likely to use geo-location than female marketers (13%).

#13: Q&A Sites

A significant 74% of marketers have no plans to use Q&A sites (like Quora).

Indeed only 14% of marketers plan on increasing their activities with these types of platforms.
#14: Daily Deals

At the bottom of the list are daily deal sites like Groupon and LivingSocial.

A significant 80% of marketers have no plans to use these types of sites, down from 72% in 2012.

Only 7% of marketers plan on increasing their marketing efforts here (down from 12% in 2012).
We asked marketers which social media platforms they most want to learn more about. **Blogging took first place as the area marketers most want to learn about, displacing Google+, the leader from the 2012 report.** Google+ dropped from 70% in 2012 to 61% this year, while blogging increased from 59% in 2012.

With the exception of blogging and Google+ swapping positions, those in the third- to sixth-place slots remained the same since 2012, with LinkedIn jumping from 52% in 2012 to 56% this year.

Larger businesses are significantly more interested in learning about photo sharing sites like Instagram (46% of marketers working in businesses with 500 to 1000 employees).

B2C marketers are more interested in learning about Facebook (64% B2C vs. 52% B2B), Twitter (54% B2C vs. 50% B2B), Pinterest (52% B2C vs. 43% B2B) than their B2B counterparts. And B2B marketers are far more interested in learning about LinkedIn (63% B2B vs. 51% B2C). Male marketers are 6% more likely to want to learn about Twitter and YouTube.
What follows are tools marketers are interested in based on how long they've been using social media marketing.

**Marketers with less than 12 months social media experience:**

The top tools marketers with this level of experience want to learn about are blogging (66%), Facebook (65%) and LinkedIn (64%).

**Marketers with 3+ years social media experience:**

For these experienced pros, Google+ (55%) tops the list, followed by blogging (53%) and LinkedIn (51%).

It is interesting to note that in 2012, social bookmarking took the second spot with 49% and now has dropped to 35%.
We asked marketers if they were outsourcing any of their social media marketing efforts. The overwhelming majority said no. Those outsourcing dropped from 30% in 2012 to only 26% this year.

These are the tasks that marketers are outsourcing to third parties:

- Design/development: 15%
- Content creation: 11%
- Analytics: 10%
- Monitoring: 7%
- Status updates (tweets, ...): 6%
- Research: 6%
- Strategy: 5%
- Community management: 4%

Design and development, content creation and analytics are the top three areas that social media marketers are outsourcing.
Use of other forms of marketing

We asked social media marketers what other types of marketing they were using. The top three were email marketing, search engine optimization and event marketing—the same top three as 2012 and 2011.

More experienced marketers were far more likely to participate in mobile marketing (26% of marketers with at least 5 years experience, compared to 15% of those with 1 to 2 years experience).

B2B marketers were more likely to employ search engine optimization (64% B2B vs. 59% B2C) and event marketing (66% B2B vs. 54% B2C).

Female marketers (62%) are more likely to use event marketing than males (56%).
Survey participant demographics

We leveraged social media and email to find participants for our survey. We started with a post on Twitter in January 2013. It simply said, "Take the 2013 Social Media Marketing Industry Survey. Participants get free copy" and included a link to the survey. The message was retweeted hundreds of times by other marketers. In addition, many people posted links to the survey on social media platforms. We asked survey participants to help spread the word about our study. Finally, we emailed a list of 200,000 marketers and asked them to take the survey. After 9 days, we closed the survey with 3025 participants.

Here are the demographic breakdowns:

Survey participants

The largest group that took the survey work for small businesses of 2–10 employees (32%) followed by the self-employed (21%). Twenty-three percent of people taking the survey work for businesses with 100 or more employees.

Slightly more than half (56%) of survey participants focus primarily on attracting consumers (B2C) and the other 44% primarily target businesses (B2B).
Age of participants

Most survey participants (72%) were between the ages of 30 and 59. The median age was 30 to 39.

Gender

Females edged out males, representing 62% of all participants.

Country

Most participants (57%) were based in the United States, followed by United Kingdom (9%), Canada (7%) and Australia (5%).
About Michael A. Stelzner

Michael Stelzner is the founder of Social Media Examiner, author of the books *Launch* and *Writing White Papers*, and host of the Social Media Marketing podcast—a top 10 marketing podcast on iTunes.

Social Media Examiner is one of the world's top 5 business blogs according to *AdAge* and Technorati. More than 207,000 people receive Social Media Examiner in their email inbox daily. Social Media Examiner also hosts the largest social media marketing conference, Social Media Marketing World.

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