THE FOUR PILLARS OF SOCIAL MEDIA SUCCESS



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Brand Showcase

Coca-Cola ran Expedition 206, a project where 3 "happiness ambassadors" roamed 186 countries in one year to document their search for happiness. "We made the conscious decision at the beginning that this was a local activation," Ms. Carelli said, senior communications manager-digital communications at Coca-Cola." Equally as important were the relationships formed with influential bloggers and communities. We tapped into [areas] where we might not have had as strong of a presence previously. …It pushed a lot of markets to start [new] relationships."

The campaign bolstered Coke's Facebook presences in markets like New Zealand, and in other countries – such as Argentina, Ukraine and Uruguay – local teams connected with influential bloggers as a means of promoting the program. So while Social Media played a big part in this initiative, as is was the main documenting and communications technology used, it served a higher business purpose.

http://adage.com/article/news/marketing-coca-cola-wraps-largest-social-media-

Social Media as Decision Enabler

The purpose of any piece of data you use in your business is to help you make better decisions. It's as simple as that.

Decisions can be very simple, such as replying so someone's tweet about your brand. Or they can be very complex and difficult, such as launching a new product line in the market.

Whatever the case, data is supposed to help you make those decisions faster while getting better results. It the data does not help you do that, then why are you wasting your time looking at it?

The power of social media is two-fold: it acts both as valuable data for your business, and as a conversation medium. So you can look at it to spot trends, opportunities and get insights, and then use it to act one some of those insights by participating in conversations that are going on.

But how does all this data fit into the overall business picture? Where can we use it and how best to leverage its power? Does it have an ROI in itself? If so, what is it? These are some of the questions we'll answer in this white paper.

A lot of people look at Social Media as a set of activities. They should do Monitoring, or maybe they should even Engage. They keep a close eye on KPIs such as Volume of Mentions, but when they're asked about the ROI of Social Media, they have no answer.

So what's the ROI of Social Media, then? The truth is, there is none. The question makes no sense. It's like asking what the ROI of E-mail is, or of some Gartner report you bought last month. None of these things have an ROI on their own. What you DO with them usually does have an ROI, whether positive or negative.

Social media is an enabler. It allows you to do certain things you could not do before. What you DO with Social Media has an ROI. Social Media itself doesn't.

Let's say you're running an initiative to decrease the time your Customer Service reps spend on the phone, so that you can decrease Customer Service costs. You decide to answer people's questions directly on Twitter. Calculating the ROI of this initiative then becomes easy. Yes, you've used Social Media to solve a cost problem.

You're paying for web traffic by running online campaigns on Google AdWords and on some websites. You've decided to take some of that budget and focus on creating high quality content that you share in social media. You then compute how many people that content reached. It's now easy to understand whether your initiative had a positive ROI or not. It's as simple as how much you spent versus how many people you reached versus how much you would have needed to pay to reach those people through advertising.

Again, what you DID using Social Media has an ROI. Social Media itself was only an enabler.

So it then follows that you first need to decide what your initiative or campaign is from a business stand point. Then you need to look at how you can use Social Media to get results from that initiative. Only then can you understand whether you need to Monitor social media, Engage, Analyze, or do all of these things.



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> "***Business is a dogfight.*** Your job as a leader: Outmaneuver the competition, respond decisively to fast-changing conditions, and defeat your rivals. That's why the OODA loop, the brainchild of "40 Second" Boyd, an unconventional fighter pilot, is one of today's most important ideas in battle or in business."
>
> – wrote Keith Hammonds in the May 2002 issue of Fast Company

Feedback Loops-Process Over Tools

Business literature about Feedback Loops goes even earlier. In a groundbreaking article published in 1988 in the Harvard Business Review titled "Fast-Cycle Capability for Competitive Power," Joseph L. Bower of Harvard Business School and Thomas M. Hout, a partner at Boston Consulting Group, actually cited the OODA loop. This simple OODA loop (Observe - Orient - Decide - Act) is just one example of a feedback loop you probably use daily during your work. When you run a campaign you do some research, find an angle that resonates, decide or approve your creative and media plan and then you act by running the campaign. After this first iteration through the loop, you measure your results. These results feed into the Observation phase of the next iteration: you learn more so you can Orient yourself faster and make better Decisions.

And loops like this apply to anything and everything you do in business, whether it's sales, customer support or prototyping your next product. You act, get feedback and they iterate based on that feedback. It's so basic it's not even worth mentioning.

If you really want to get results from Social Media, it all starts with setting up a process. The process is based on setting some goals, and then aligning resources and activities that you think will get you to that goal. Only then do you look for tools to help you with those activities.

The only reason I'm bringing it up is because people rarely use it when it comes to Social Media. They see social media as a set of activities like Monitoring or Engagement that are sometimes not related in any way by a process or feedback loop. Companies monitor for Monitoring's sake without getting business feedback and iterating based on whether they're getting closer to their goals or not. And it's not their fault. Nobody gave them a map.

But it does not have to be this way. As you'll see later on, Monitoring, Analytics, Engagement, Reporting and Collaboration are part of a feedback loop we call the Social Media Lifecycle. In order to get business goals accomplished by using Social Media, you need to go through this loop over and over again. It's as simple as that. Jeremiah Owyang, an ex Forrester analyst covering the Social Media space has been advocating a similar framework since 2007. The POST framework focuses on understanding People, Objectives, Strategy and Technology before devising a social media strategy. As you can see, Technology is only a quarter of the picture.

So does this mean tools are useless? Not at all. It just means that in order to pick the right tool for the job, you need to know what you're doing first. You wouldn't buy a hammer first, and then use it to clean windows. You'd pick a tool after understanding what the job is.

So whenever you want to start using a new Social Media tool, ask yourself a simple question: "What's this tool supposed to help me achieve? And why is that goal important?"

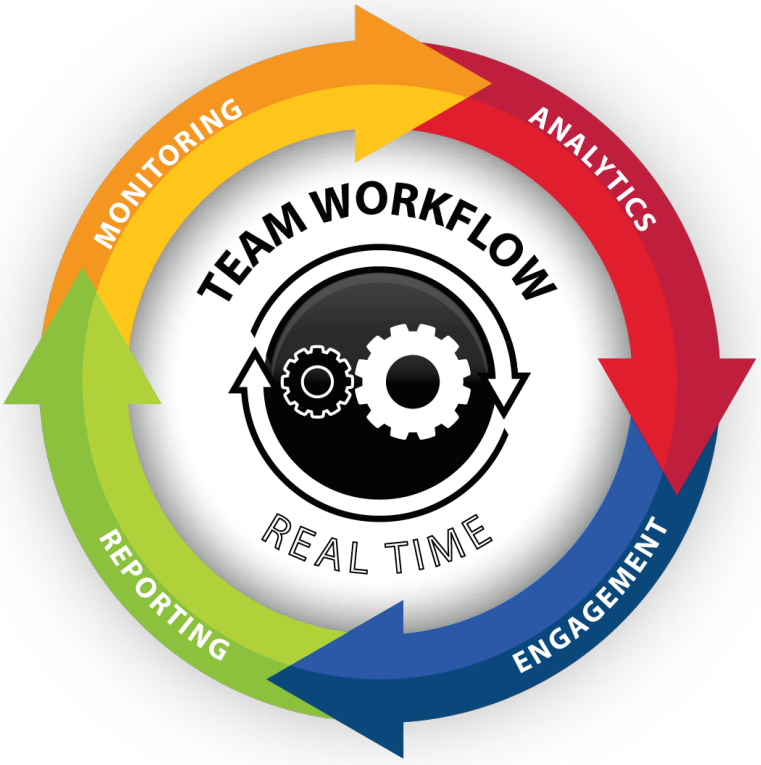
Now that we know we're supposed to set a goal, a process and a way to measure success, it's time to look at the nitty-gritty of activities and KPIs. In this next section you'll find out what Monitoring, Analytics, Engagement and Reporting are good for, and how to leverage these activities and technologies to get business results.

The Four Pillars Of Social Media Success

The Four Pillars Of Social Media Success are Monitoring, Analytics, Engagement & Reporting, with Collaboration & Workflow as a foundation powering all of them. These four pillars follow each other in a feedback loop that allows you to observe the social media environment, orient yourself by understanding what the data is telling you, make a decision and act on it. You can then measure your impact and improve your approach for the next iteration.

Monitoring allows you to grab the social media data you need in real time. You can then use Analytics to slice and dice the data so you can get insights into opportunities, threats or important trends. Based on this understanding, you decide to do something about the opportunities you identified. An example of this is engaging with critical fans or influencers in your market. You complete the circle by Reporting on key KPIs that show you whether you're closing in on your goals or not. Throughout this process you can use Collaboration and Workflow to get things done faster by bringing your team on board.

Let's explore these pillars in detail.





1. Monitoring

The Social Media Lifecycle starts with Monitoring. At this stage of the lifecycle, you're trying to understand a few key issues, without necessarily doing anything about it. These are:

- Finding out what people are saying about your Brand, Products & Services.
- Understanding what people are saying about your Competitors
- Tracking key market terms relevant to your brand (if you're Audi, tracking "cars" and other similar terms)

Monitoring gives you a map of the playing field. It brings in the data you need in order to make better decisions. Think of it as a continuous, open focus group. Used wisely, it can yield valuable insights.

The most successful companies use Monitoring with a few key goals in mind:

- Identifying threats. Threats are usually negative comments around the brand or product, either made by a large number of people, or by one or a few influencers. Identifying threats quickly, before they spread and doing something about them can save a brand's reputation.
- Dealing with customer service issues. A lot of people ask people for help online if they have a problem with a product or service. And a lot more people just complain about having a bad product experience. Identifying these complaints quickly, acknowledging the problem and keeping people updated on how it's getting solved is invaluable. It can save you money and earn you fans. After all, a customer whose problem you solved is usually happier than one that did not have a problem in the first place.
- Identifying key influencers and fans. By monitoring social media, it's easy to understand who your most engaged fans are and who is influential in your industry. This is very helpful when you're trying to run social media marketing campaigns and want to seed your content. If you know who's influential and what fans are engaged, you can ask for their help to spread the content so you can reach more people.
- Identifying key conversation themes. There are many topics you might want people to consider when they're talking about your brand. With social media monitoring, you can easily find out what they're actually talking about. Once you know the key themes of interest, it's easy to tailor your social media campaigns to address those topics, whether that means driving more conversation or changing the conversation.



Brand Showcase

A boutique agency in London was given the task of creating a TV ad for a new Sony LCD TV. The ad was going to air during the Christmas holiday. By monitoring Social Media, the agency understood that people were worried about their financial situation, the imminent increase in VAT in the UK and their taxes.

However, on looking at spending habits, they realized people were spending the same as before the recession, they were just buying used items that seemed a better value choice. They focused the TV ad on "Buy the new TV and get your VAT back", to resonate with people's worries and desire to be more tax savvy. The ad was very successful. This is a textbook example of using Social Media Monitoring to support a well articulated business goal.

Best Practices

1) The most important thing to keep in mind regarding monitoring is that you need to have a full map of the playing field, so to speak, in real time. Just by looking at your brand name you'll only learn a few things. In order to really understand the whole environment you're in, you need to track your market and competitors as well.

Here's simple example. Let's say you're monitoring your brand name and you notice there are a lot of negative mentions. That's usually a bad sign, but you'll never know how bad until you put that in perspective. By tracking some of your products, competitors and market terms, you might realize that all of them have a lot of negative mentions. Maybe it's just something related to the overall market and actually, compared to the competition you're not doing that badly.

2) Real time monitoring is key. People who participate in social media are used to getting replies from the people they engage with within minutes, at most a few hours. Finding out about a negative comment made by an influencer a day late means that by the time you reply, people are not paying attention to that conversation anymore. Your own side of the story won't get any attention. So make sure that when you start monitoring social media, you do it consistently and the tool you're using delivers real time results.

3) Keep an eye on your own social media properties. When brands start monitoring social media, they sometimes neglect their own Facebook Page, Twitter account or YouTube channel. Keep in mind that if someone post something on your Facebook Wall and that post does not include the keywords you're tracking, most keyword monitoring tools with miss it. There's nothing worse than ignoring people that want to engage with you on your own properties.

Free Tools

Now that we've explored why the Social Media Lifecycle starts with Monitoring and why it's important, here are a few tools that can help you monitor social media right away:

- SocialMention - this free tool allows you to search for keywords on Twitter, Blogs and many more social platforms. It's a good place to start, although not real time.
- TweetDeck - you can easily setup Twitter searches with this free Twitter client. While it does not provide any form of analytics or insights, it does a good job at tracking Twitter in real time.



2. Analytics

After going through the first step of the Social Media Lifecycle (Monitoring), we should now have enough data to be able to make some decisions. At this point, Social Media Analytics can help us cut through the noise of data so we can spot patterns and get a high-level picture of the whole social media environment, including competitors and market trends.

There are a million metrics around social media you could look at. So what's important? Is it the volume of mentions? Is it sentiment?

It's none of these.

The right question to ask is "What am I trying to find out?" Based on that question, you can pick and choose the right social media metrics that provide the appropriate answers to your questions.

Insights don't fall out of the sky. Glazing over metrics all day long trying to understand what's going on is a waste of time. The effective way to get insights is to:

- Start with a question
- Gather the data that's relevant and
- Measure it using relevant metrics.

It's a very simple formula that most people who are starting out in social media simply ignore. No wonder their social media initiatives under perform.

Once you have a question in mind, such as: "Who are the people talking about my competitors the most on Twitter in a negative tone," you can start thinking about ways to find this out. There are many Social Media Metrics at your disposal, but you don't need them all to answer this question. You need to decide on which metrics help and then ignore the rest.

TOP 3 METRICS USED BY MARKETERS



TRAFFIC VOLUME



REPEAT VISITS



 # OF FOLLOWERS



Let's look at what the most common Social Media Metrics are and what they tell you:

- Volume of Mentions. This shows you how many times a specific keyword of keyword phrase has been mentioned in social media during a specific time period, a week for example. While this sounds simple enough, most social media tools compute it differently and so there are sometimes big differences between what different tools report. Some tools might take into account just the blog post where your brand has been mentioned, while others count the blog comments as well. Some take into account YouTube videos that contain the keywords you're tracking in their video description. Other tools don't support YouTube at all. There is no standard way to compute Volume at this point.
- Sentiment. This metric shows you whether the tone of a social media conversation is negative, positive or neutral. There are numerous technologies and approaches to compute the sentiment of a conversation. Some tools even use actual people that hand-score most social media mentions. There are a few key things to remember about Sentiment. Even with the best technology, the accuracy of the scoring is around 80%. However, the highly negative or positive mentions can usually be identified by most companies, so the difference in accuracy usually helps around the neutral point.
- Demographic information. This is a collection of metrics that tries to identify variables such as Gender, Location, Age, etc. based on social media conversations. This is a useful metric if you're trying to understand more about the kinds of people who are really engaged around your brand, or who are very negative.
- Share of Voice. This is a metric that brings context to other metrics you're looking at. In short, Share of Voice describes how much of the social media conversation is about your brand versus your competitors. This metric puts things in perspective, for example, when you're trying to understand whether the volume of mentions you're getting is large or small. However, there are many more creative uses of this metrics because at its core, it's a simple comparison between multiple keywords you're tracking. You can use it to understand how much of the conversation around a your brand is about a newly launched product. Or how much of the conversation around "cars" is about your car brand.
- Distribution shows you the breakdown of conversations by social sites or services (Twitter, blogs, Facebook, etc.). Most people ignore this metric, although it's very useful when you're planning engagement or marketing campaigns. Why spend money to get more fans of Facebook when by looking at Distribution and Share of Voice you can see clearly that you're growing organically and doing a way better job than your competitors?



- Reach tries to estimate how many people have seen mentions of your brand. Reach is just an estimation, and a very rough one at that, but it can sometimes be very useful. Here's how it works: if someone mentions your brand on Twitter, and she has 500 followers, how many of those people may have seen that message? The crudest estimation for that is 500, which is the maximum potential reach you could have had. However, this will never happen in reality. So better approaches start to take into account if that mention has been re-tweeted, how many of those followers usually engage with the poster's content, how active are they usually on Twitter in general, etc. As you can tell, the estimation is very rough, but can yield interesting insights if used appropriately.
- Engagement is a metrics that means different things to different people. The most common use of Engagement as a metric relates to how many people engage with the content that you create and post in social media. Likes, comments, re-tweets, shares, all these count. This is a metric that usually applies to your own social media properties, such as your Facebook Page, although you could use it to understand how many people have engaged with a mention of your brand posted by an influencer, for example.
- Trend of Fans or Followers. Do you have more Facebook fans or less Facebook fans than last month? This is one of the key metrics that someone looks at when they're starting out in social media. However, this really shows you nothing interesting on its own. It can be useful, however, in conjunction with other metrics. If you look at it in the context of Engagement, then high Engagement and a growing number of fans might mean you're posting interesting content.

These are the most common Social Media Metrics you'll see, although most tools out there will provide you with a different collection of metrics.

Now that you have a question you're trying to answer and you're familiar with the toolset of metrics at your disposal, you can start getting insights. Here's a way to do this for the question we had, which is 'Who are the people talking about my competitors the most on Twitter in a negative tone?'

To find that out, we need to Monitor social media conversations about your competitors. Once we have this data, we can filter it to get only negative Twitter conversations. If we now look at the Volume of Mentions, Demographics and Engagement, we might realize that most of these people are clustered in a specific location and that they're talking about a specific competitor product problem. It's easy to find answers when you know what you're looking for!



Best Practices

1. Start with a specific question in mind! I can't articulate this enough. You won't understand what the numbers are telling you until you know what you're trying to find out. Once you have that question, there are tools out there that can help you measure what you need in order to answer your question.

2. Use multiple tools for backup. I always recommend that you use a single tool for most of your social media initiatives, because different tools compute things differently. Take Volume. If you use a monitoring tool that also provides a volume count, and another tool for analytics purposes, you might find the numbers aren't the same. Having a consistent methodology throughout the process leads to better results. However, it doesn't hurt to use an additional tool every once in a while to check on your main tool. If trends don't seem consistent, your main tool might have a problem.

3. Track KPIs that have business relevance. Tracking Volume of Sentiment is nice, but it does not tell you anything of business value. Instead, why not track how many Customer Service requests you answered via Social Media, or how many people helped promote your message to their friends, for free?

BRAND SHOWCASE



LOVE A380

Publicis implemented a strategy, through the 'Love A380' campaign for client Airbus, driving measurable sales of the world's most expensive civil aircraft





3. Engagement

The first step of the Social Media Lifecycle gave you a basic understanding of relevant conversations going on. The second step, Analytics, helped you understand key threats and opportunities in your environment. That hopefully led to some decisions around how to capitalize on those opportunities. But in order to do that, you need to take some sort of action. The simplest form of that is Engagement.

Just like the first two steps of the Lifecycle, Engagement should be done with a specific goal in mind. Engagement for the sake of it is a hit and miss affair.

A few key examples of Engagement with a purpose are:

- Solving Customer Service issues
- Seeding and accelerating your campaigns or
- Dealing with PR issues.

There are many more projects you can use Engagement for, but these are the most common ones. The key to getting value out of Engagement is to know what the overall business goal is and to have metrics in place to measure your progress.

Let's say the goal is to answer Customer Service complaints originated in Social Media. The business value is then your ability to cut Customer Service costs (time spent on the phone). The metric you could use for this project is the number of customer complaints tracked and solved. Once you have this basic framework in place, you can easily setup a simple process to monitor for complaints and a basic workflow to both engage with the people complaining and solve the issues.

If you're trying to use Engagement for your marketing campaigns, the project might look completely different. The goal might be to maximize the number of people that sign-up on a certain landing page. In order to do that you could Monitor and Analyze your own brand as well as market terms to pinpoint influencers and engaged fans. Then you could engage them personally to get them to help you seed the content in social media. After it's seeded, you can keep engaging with people that are spreading your content to keep amplifying it. And the metric for this social media campaign would be the number of people exposed to the message versus the number of people clicking through to the landing page.

As you can see, once you start with a specific business goal in mind, it's simpler to understand exactly where Engagement fits and how to measure your progress.

Many marketers are wary of Engagement, however, because they don't know what to actually say and how to say it. They think that one wrong comment or remark can turn into a PR disaster for the brand. Extreme caution is advised. When brands have started to engage and want to bring new people on board the engagement team, they tell us that the new recruits don't know how to respond to people and are scared of making a mistake. So this fear is very common.

While there is some truth to those assumptions, companies that are incredibly successful at Engagement all have a very similar strategy. They setup a very simple and clear Engagement process while empowering people, they train people in social media etiquette and they embrace being human.

Let's take a look at what this means in practice.



Simple Engagement Process

If you think about it, there aren't so many brand-audience interaction scenarios. The most common might be:

- Someone replies to one of your posts
- Someone mentions you in a negative tone
- Someone mentions you in a positive tone
- An influencer mentions you, or the competition
- Someone asks you a direct question
- Someone has a problem with your product/service

Once you've identified the main scenarios, you can setup a simple process for each one. Someone has a problem with your product/service might lead to the mention being tagged as Complaint and sent to a special email address so that the problem is handled.

The most important part is to trust your team members' judgement and common sense once they're trained and to setup a "when in doubt" escalation process. If someone influential mentions you in a negative tone, for example, then the team leader and the PR team should be immediately alerted.

Social Media Etiquette & Training

You can create a social media etiquette guide for your team and have them print it out and keep it on their desk so they can look over it whenever they want to engage.

However, the best teacher is practice. If you want your team to be comfortable engaging, have them create a personal blog, Twitter account and Facebook Page around one of their passions or hobbies. Have them practice posting, engaging influencers, fostering relationships and living that etiquette until they're comfortable. It's better to get their rookie mistakes out of the way early and when there's no company downside. Once they graduate from personal social media engagement, you can have them join the company team.

Being Human

People engaging with your company want to talk to a real person, not a faceless brand. The most successful social brands allow their team's humanity to show through. This goes both ways, however, and it means you need to be prepared for mistakes as well. People will make those mistakes. And the truth is they are preferable to a robotic, faceless communication style. If you've trained people in social media etiquette and have provided them with a simple escalation process, mistakes can be fixed quickly and at almost no cost. What a lot of brands actually notice is that making and acknowledging those mistakes makes them look human, so people give them a break.

TIP

A lot has been written about what is good social media etiquette. A good starter guide can be found here:

chrisbrogan.com/socialmediaetiquette



Brand Showcase

Best Buy has been one of the most committed brands in Social Media. A large part of their Customer Service is now done through social media, and all their 180,000 employees are given the opportunity to be trained and participate in social media. Their social media policy is a great example of empowering people through a few basic rules and a lot of common sense.

http://forums.bestbuy.com/t5/Welcome-News/Best-Buy-Social-Media-Policy/td-p/20492

Best Practices

1. Engagement should have a clear goal. First figure out what you want to achieve and how engagement fits in that project. You can then easily understand who and how to engage.

2. Measure the business value. Engaging isn't a goal in itself. To understand if your engagement initiatives are working or not, you need to tie them to business goals. Good examples are costs saved with customer service or advertising, campaign exposure, etc. A business goal can be as simple as creating relationships with potential customers, as measured by the number of fans on Facebook. But you need to have a business goal.

3. Train your team in social media etiquette. Start by creating a social media etiquette and then having your team practice it on their own social media accounts. Once they become proficient and comfortable at engaging with people and dealing with different engagement scenarios, you can trust that they'll do a good job on behalf of the brand.

Free Tools

Here are a number of tools to get you started:

- Facebook - believe it or not, it's still hard to beat posting from the Facebook interface, if you're only managing one page. And the Insights Facebook provides for their pages do the job when you're starting out.
- TweetDeck - one of the best Twitter clients out there, it allows you to post to multiple Twitter accounts, monitor Twitter searches, and more. Does not support multiple team members engaging, though.
- HootSuite - if you have multiple team members managing your Twitter accounts, this is a good tool to get started with.



Avinash Kaushik, web analytics guru, suggests as simple process to help you keep KPIs in perspective:

"Ask every web metric you report the question 'So what?' three times.

Each question provides an answer that in turn raises another question (a 'so what' again). If at the third 'so what' you don't get a recommendation for an action you should take, you have the wrong metric. Kill it.

This brutal recommendation is to force you to confront this reality: If you can't take action, some action (any action!), based on your analysis, why are you reporting data?

The purpose of the 'so what' test is to undo the clutter in your life and allow you to focus on only the metrics that will help you take action. All other metrics, those that fall into the nice to know or the highly recommended or the I don't know why I am reporting this but it sounds important camp need to be sent to the farm to live our the rest of their lives!"

This simple rule will save you hours of trying to optimize useless KPIs during your next Social Media Lifecycle iteration.

4. Reporting on KPIs

You started monitoring relevant topics for your brands and then you used analytics to understand what it all means. Based on that, you made some decisions and took some action, which included some form of engagement. It's now time to complete the first iteration of the cycle by taking a step back and looking at some KPIs to see how we're doing. This is the stage where we figure out what worked and what didn't and improve the process for the next iteration.

Reporting is usually done on two levels. The first is the business-level KPIs you have set for your projects and initiatives. This could be, for example, the number of leads you've generated, the reach your campaigns got, the money you saved on customer service. On this level you usually need to look at business data that's unrelated to social media. A social media tool will not help here, this data can be found in different company dashboards you might be using.

However, in order to understand what impact Social Media had on these business KPIs, we need to look a level below, at the Social Media KPIs we decided on tracking. So if you're trying to see how much money you save on customer service, it's worth understanding how many issues you manage to resolve through social media, so you can then go to the business-level and see how much it would have cost to resolve them on the phone.

As you've seen in the Analytics chapter, tools provide you with an endless supply of KPIs you could be tracking. Some will be relevant to your goals, others will tell you nothing, or worse, they will confuse you. A good rule to keep in mind as you're getting used to reporting is that less is more. Don't be tempted to keep track of tens of KPIs just because you can.

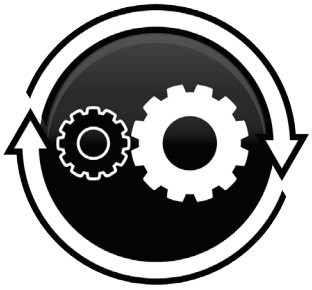
This problem has plagued reporting as long as reporting has been around. The same problem is faced every day by marketers reporting on campaigns or web analytics. Let's learn from their experience.

Best Practices

1. Business KPIs are the most important. Before reporting on anything, make sure you understand the business goal you're trying to achieve, and how you're going to measure it. Only then can you understand how a social media initiative can help and what social media metrics are relevant. This is how you should think about it:

2. Less is more. Once you know your business goals and how social media fits into that you might be tempted to look at too many KPIs, just because the tools provide them. Resist this temptation. A couple of well chosen KPIs are far more powerful than 10 confusing KPIs. By sticking to this rule, you'll progress much faster, because you won't waste time and resources trying to optimize your initiatives for KPIs that don't matter. Stick with the basics and you'll get far.

3. Be consistent in what you track. If you've chosen your KPIs, stick with them. Don't change what you report on every month, because that's a sure recipe for analysis paralysis. You won't be able to tell whether you're making progress or not. A couple of good KPIs that you track consistently are better than changing your metrics every month in search of the perfect KPI. Sure, you might discover along the way that your KPIs don't give you as much insight as you hoped. Then choose one or two other KPIs to track alongside the old ones. Or if you really, really need to replace the initial KPIs, make sure you can convert your old KPIs into your new ones in some way.



Collaboration And Workflow

Collaboration is not one of the Pillars, it is the foundation on which all Pillars stand. When you collaborate with your team on your social media projects, you get a geometric effect. It's like putting gas on a fire. You can get through the social media loop so much faster and learn so much more.

You will use Collaboration during Monitoring, Analytics, Engagement and potentially even Reporting. Having more people on the team with clearly defined roles and goals will help you make massive progress.

Collaboration has two parts:

- Setting up a process that members of your team can follow - for example, someone might be in charge of tagging certain negative mentions and assigning them to someone else for resolution
- Setting up the tool and the user permissions so that each member (mostly) sticks to what they need to do - for example, someone that only needs to monitor for negative mentions might not get access to posting on the company Facebook Page

The purpose of Collaboration and Workflow is twofold. Workflow helps you semi-automate some of the recurring tasks you need to do, like flagging negative mentions, or assigning a specific type of mention to a specific team member. Collaboration helps you move through the feedback loop faster, so you can learn more and improve quicker every time.

Starting out, you might not have a team to help you out, or maybe the team is very small. This is perfectly OK, as you want to get your feet wet throughout the whole process, so you own it. Once you're getting good at most social media activities you need to perform, you'll know where you need additional team members to improve the effectiveness of what you're doing.

Best Practices

1. Own the process first - there's no use to bring 20 people on board to handle social media if you don't understand the process first. Go through the process yourself, or with a couple of team members until you understand the pain points and best practices. It then becomes easy to see where you need additional people and what they have to do.

2. Set up a simple process for your team - share the whole process with every team member, so they understand how they contribute and why they need to do what you've assigned them.

3. Automate some of the internal-facing tasks - It's perfectly fine to automate the assignment of some mentions to a certain person of the team, if that saves you time and effort. Never automate customer-facing tasks, like replying to a certain type of mention. Even if that same problem pops up every day, a real person needs to reply, because automated responses will easily be spotted. Some people considerautomated responses in social media as the worst thing you can do.

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