ORACLE CLOUD

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How Brands Can Optimize Social Strategies with Analytics

ORACLE

Introduction

It seems as if everyone is talking about the critical nature of measuring the effectiveness and return-on-investment of social media. Brands need to know exactly which specific data is available from Facebook, how it can be used, and what it can deliver.

If you have 100,000 fans but all you know about them is that they appear to like your brand, you might be in trouble. Extracting data out of your social media efforts and analyzing it helps you pin down who cares about your brand, how they are interacting with your brand through Facebook, and how to get fans to not just like but *love* your brand. Analytics is the way to understand what drives your fans so they can move from passive likes to active engagement.

Oracle Social Marketing Cloud Service provides one of the most robust analytics components in the social marketing industry.

This white paper draws from a recent Facebook survey to investigate the demographics of Facebook fans; how fans are acquired, discover pages, and engage; and best practices on how brands can optimize social strategies.

Survey Overview

The survey looked at Facebook data compiled over a period of approximately five months—from December 1, 2011 to April 4, 2012. During the survey, more than half-a-million branded posts across 4,000 brand pages were reviewed.

Definitions are as follows:

- Engagement is a like, comment, or share
- Engagement rate is number of engagements (likes, comments, and shares) divided by impressions
- Post storytellers are users who have liked, commented, or shared a post
- Engaged users are users who clicked anywhere on a post
- Engaged user rate is engaged users divided by impressions

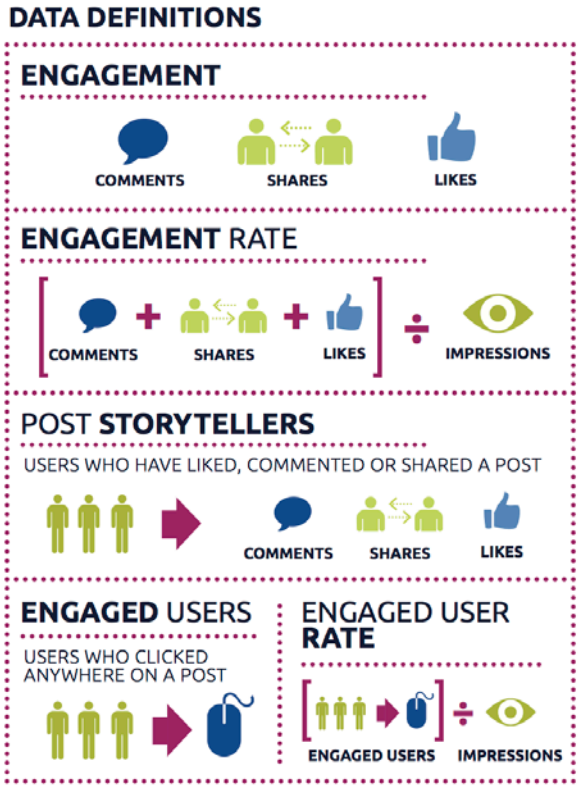


Figure 1. The terminologies used in this white paper follow these definitions.

Demographics

A 65-year-old woman in Mexico City won't respond and react to news, events, or campaigns in the same ways that a 14-year-old boy in Chicago might respond. Your fans and followers are all different, comprising a wide spectrum of backgrounds, traits, and experiences.

Age and Gender

Knowing the age and gender of your brand fans helps you target your social marketing. The largest age category in this study is, not surprisingly, the 18- to 24-year olds. Only 2 percent of brand fans fall into the over-65 age category. At 59 percent, women are also more likely to engage than men.

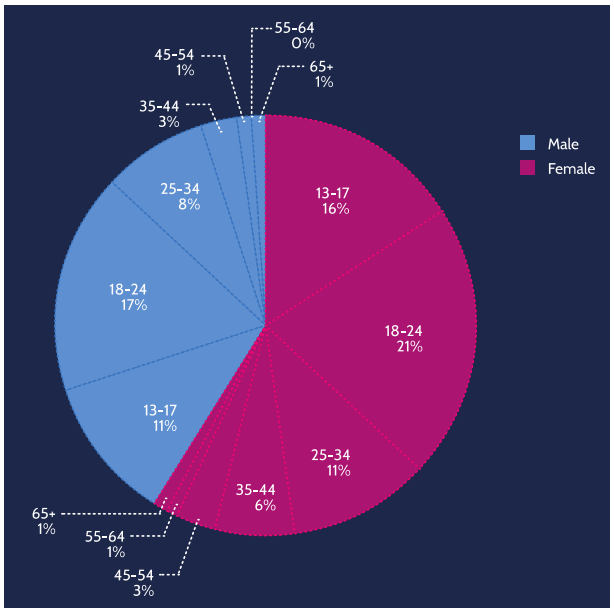


Figure 2. More than half of all brand fans are under 25, and most are female.

Geography

Whether your brand's strategy has a global or local reach, smart marketers need to know where their fans are located.

Don't ignore the potential global reach of your brand. Playing only to a U.S. audience could be costing you. For instance, if one-fourth of the people talking about your brand are in Germany but your social campaign targets English-speaking countries only, you're missing a significant opportunity to which proper data and analysis may have alerted you.

Overall, the percentage and regions of brand fans on Facebook are as follows:

- 56 percent of fans are from the U.S.
- 47 percent of post storytellers are from the U.S.
- 12 percent of fans are from Europe

- 4 percent of fans are from Mexico
- 4 percent of fans are from India

Brands can get even more granular, targeting specific cities for certain campaigns. Find out where most of your fans reside and identify cities where the fan base could be improved.

According to the data set, 5.4 percent of fans for branded pages live in New York City, with another 4.2 percent in Los Angeles. Mexico City took top international city, with 3 percent of total fans.

How to Acquire Fans

They key to understanding how people respond to your various strategies and campaigns is to know where your fans come from.

They might be learning about your company through an advertisement. They might be searching for your Facebook page. They could be seeing your company name in a friend's news feed. There are decisions to be made about whether you should buy more ads, provide more or different content, or make sure content is optimized for mobile devices.

Figure 3 shows where brand fans originate. 45 percent are from Facebook's recommended pages, with 17 percent from ads. This is followed by 11 percent from page browsers, 10 percent from page profiles, and 8 percent from timelines. Once you determine the source of your brand fans, the next step is to align your marketing strategies accordingly.

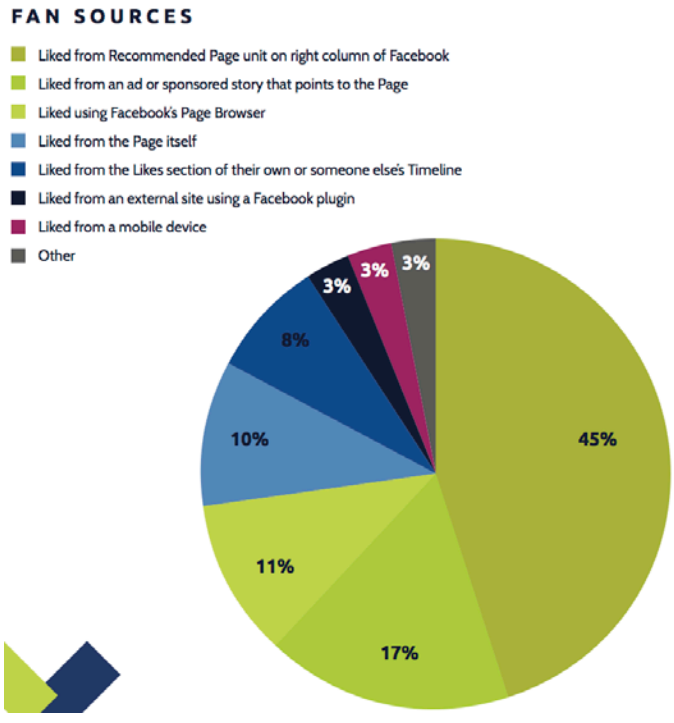


Figure 3. This chart shows where brand fans originate.

Getting to Your Page

Not everyone navigates to a brand's Facebook page through Facebook. How users get to your page matters. Knowing which sources of discovery are and aren't effective informs you as to where and how your efforts to promote the page to potential fans should be channeled. Perhaps your Facebook link on your Website's home page is not being properly placed or utilized. Or maybe your YouTube pages aren't driving content because there's no link to your page.

Google is, not surprisingly, the leading source for brand referrals. 81 percent of brands had users referred to their Facebook pages monthly through Google, even excluding international Google search sites. Bing generates 47 percent of referrals, Yahoo! generates 38 percent, Twitter generates 20 percent, and YouTube comes in at 11 percent.

Impression Source

Most fans (79 percent, in fact) get content directly from the brand, as opposed to a viral source. Another 20 percent get their content from paid advertisements. Don't count on a viral strategy to distribute your message. The production of consistent, quality, and relevant content will pay higher dividends than swinging for the fences in a misguided attempt to "go viral."

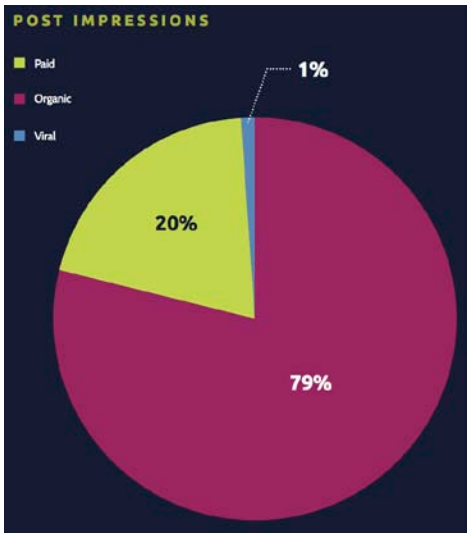


Figure 4. Most fans are getting content directly from the brand.

What Fans Want to See

Deliver the content your fans want to see. Of the half-a-million brand posts reviewed, 51 percent were links, but as Figure 5 below shows, fans are more likely to engage with status posts than any other post type. Additionally, photo posts lead to more clicks on the post. Overall, fans tend to be less engaged with links than status or photo posts.

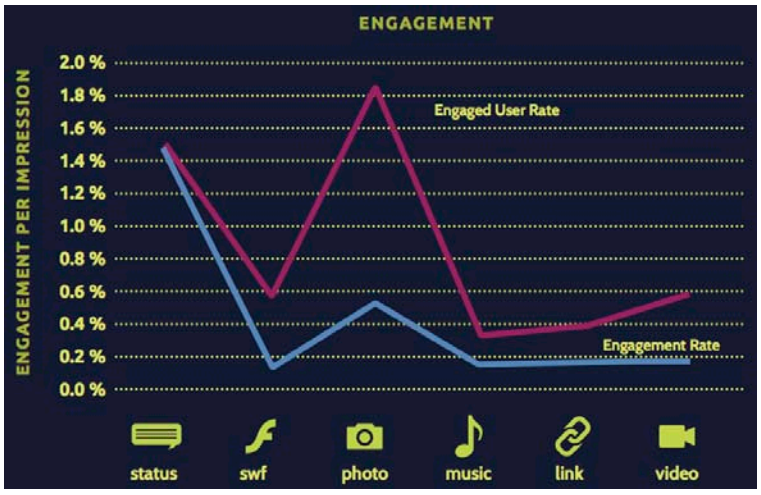


Figure 5. Fans are more likely to engage with status posts or photo posts than links.

How Fans Engage

Understanding how fans engage is another important step before you develop your social marketing strategy. Fans are significantly more likely to "like" a brand's post than to share it or comment on it. Also, people are seven times more likely to engage with a post than to post negative feedback on it.

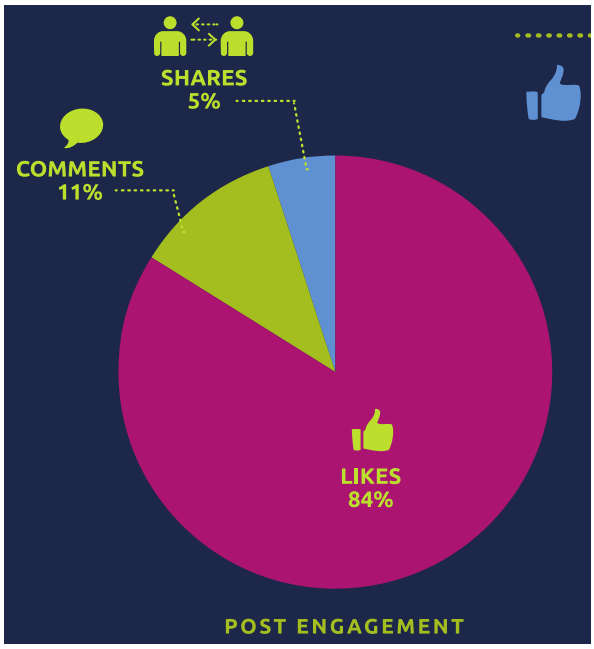


Figure 6. Fans are significantly more likely to like a brand's post than to comment on it or share it.

Negative Feedback Type

Be sure to track negative feedback. Look for what fans find annoying and what leads to hidden posts or even getting unliked. You need to know how your fans engage, and how they disengage as well. A fan who has hidden your content is a lost fan.

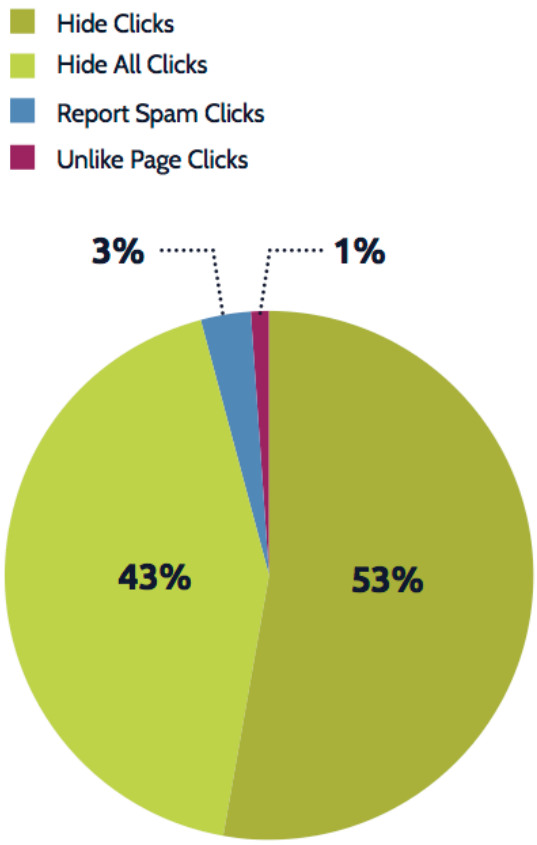


Figure 7. The most common form of negative feedback from fans is to hide clicks or hide all clicks.

Conclusion

The survey yielded two key takeaways

- **A deep-dive analytics tool is important.** The critical nature of a comprehensive, deep-dive analytics tool cannot be overstated. It is the single best method for bringing data together in an attempt to fully understand your fans and their behavior as it relates to your social content.
- **Help each brand focus on its own target.** More than half of all brand fans are under 25, and most are female. Your brand, however, attracts its own unique set of demographics. By uncovering them you can craft social campaigns designed with your fan base in mind.

The survey also identified three key questions for marketers to ask themselves about their social media strategy:

- **What are your untapped opportunities and problem areas?** You could be unaware that your brand has a sizable fan base in Europe, for example. Or your brand might be exhibiting a weakness in reaching fans who live on the West Coast. Analytics can show you untapped opportunities and shifts in focus and strategy to shore up any vulnerable spots with location-based messaging or ads.
- **How are fans discovering you?** Knowing how fans arrived at your brand's page can also reveal gaps in strategy. If there are linking sites that are not generating the expected results, it's worth making sure the link is appropriately located, attractive, and functioning. Being aware of the sites that are driving users to your page can also inform your ad and marketing decisions.
- **Which of your posts are most effective?** Make sure to engage fans using the most-effective post types available. Knowing what the type of content your unique fan base will most likely interact with will allow you to focus on the right vehicles for the messages you're trying to convey.

An analytics tool—such as the one in Oracle Social Marketing Cloud Service—can help answer these questions so that you can fine-tune your social marketing strategy.



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