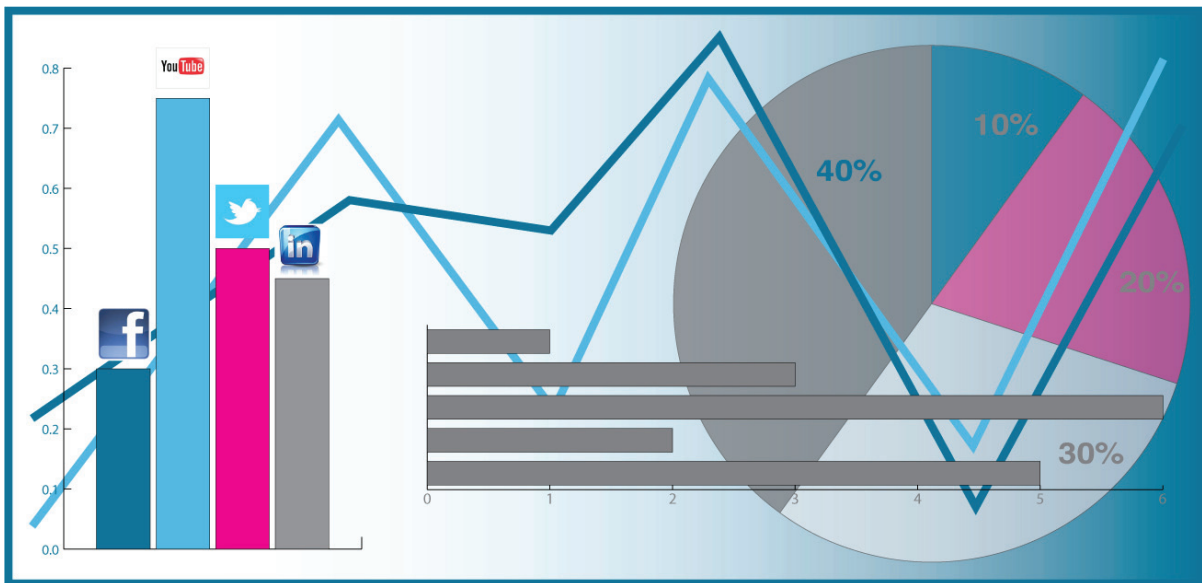


# How to Audit Your Social Marketing Efforts



This white paper is for marketing teams looking to assess the effectiveness of their social marketing programs. It aims to answer key social marketing strategy questions:

***How is my brand doing with social platforms?  
What can we do better?***

Companies of all sizes are increasingly scrutinizing social marketing in an effort to improve the return on their social marketing investment. Conducting objective social marketing assessments empowers brands to stay focused, nimble and relevant. Such audits also help savvy marketing teams identify areas of untapped opportunity for traction and growth.

## INTRODUCTION

As more brands leverage social platforms such as Twitter, Facebook, YouTube and Foursquare, in their marketing mix, savvy social marketers are asking themselves:

- **How well are we doing with social marketing?**
- **How do we compare to our competition?**
- **What can our social marketing teams do better?**

This white paper will help you answer these key strategic questions. It will assist you in developing an objective assessment of your current social marketing efforts while identifying new ways to improve the return on your social marketing investment. The paper organizes this process into four steps:

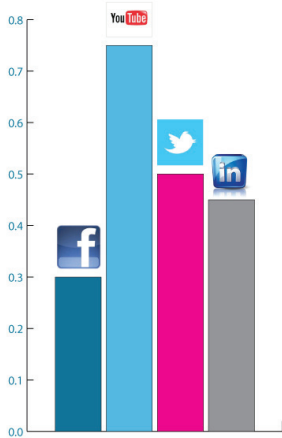
- STEP ONE:** Social Reach & Passion Assessment
- STEP TWO:** Digital Conversations, Volumes & Trending Topic Analysis
- STEP THREE:** SEO Health Checks
- STEP FOUR:** Developing a Social Marketing Effectiveness Dashboard

Before you continue, please be advised that any objective assessment needs to be rooted in your overall organizational and marketing goals and objectives. Without the proper strategy lens, you and your team may end up investing in social strategies and execution that can take you off course. If you are somewhat new to social marketing, start with our white paper on [4 Steps to Developing a Successful Social Media Program](#).

We extend special thanks to our colleagues at [Percussion Software](#), which provides Web Content Management (WCM) software that helps businesses increase traffic, drive conversion and improve social interaction. The company has agreed to be the featured brand for an objective assessment of the effectiveness of its current social marketing initiatives.



The marketing team at Percussion is new to the organization and is fully committed to increasing their social media engagement levels. While there was a good foundation in place from prior efforts, the social activity had gone cold, requiring a restart of the program. This assessment will be used as a baseline to measure their improvements and create a targeted approach to social media and SEO practices. Percussion has already been ramping up their social media efforts and you are sure to see a major transformation in the months to come.



**STEP ONE: Social Reach and Passion Assessment**



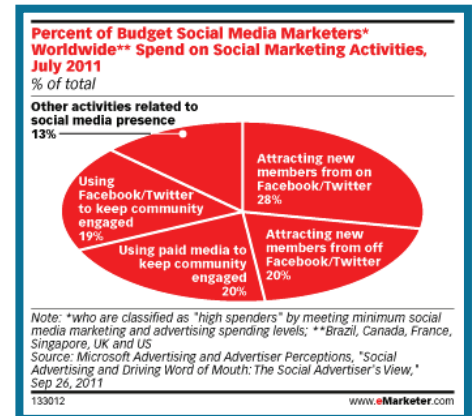
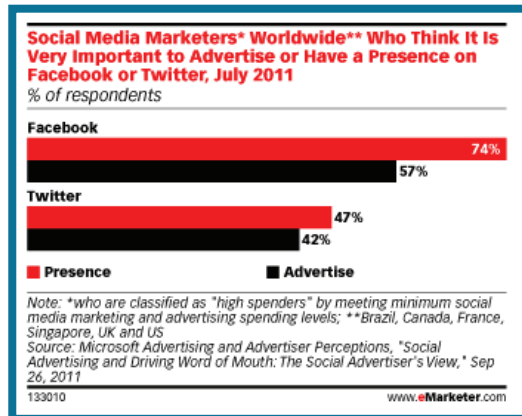
**Why this step is important**

One of the key rules of marketing dictates that you are as big as your reach and as effective as your ability to touch your prospects and customers multiple times (also known as your marketing frequency). Social marketers seem to agree.

In this step you will be answering:

1. How big is your digital footprint – fans, followers, blog subscribers - compared to the footprint of your competitors?
2. What is the likelihood that your company, brand or product is being discussed or that it will be discussed in the social realm?

In July 2011, [Microsoft Advertising](#) and [Advertiser Perceptions](#) surveyed social media marketers in six countries around the world. They found that 48% of social marketing budgets are geared toward new fan and follower acquisition on popular social networking platforms such as Facebook and Twitter. What the survey also found is that marketers value social platform presence more highly than advertising on these same platforms. For example, 74% of marketers thought it was very important to have a presence on Facebook, but only 57% felt the same way about advertising there.



<http://www.emarketer.com/Article.aspx?R=1008634>

**Let's start with some definitions:**

**Social Footprint:**

Your brand's presence on social platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, blogs, Foursquare, etc.

**Social Reach:**

Estimated number of potential or existing customers you can reach through your Social Footprint

**Social Frequency:**

The number of times you engage with your Social Reach via your Social Footprint

**Social Amplification:**

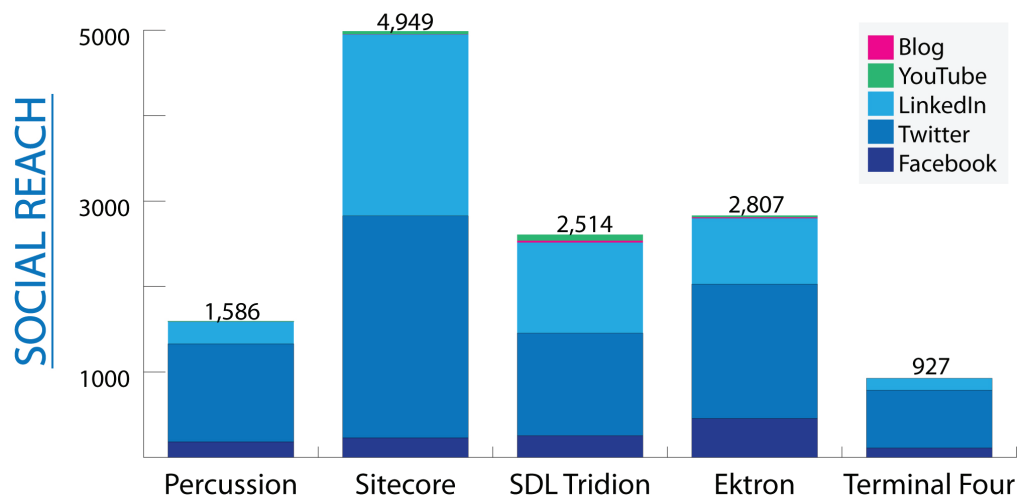
The number of times your Social Reach engages and shares with the content published through your Social Footprint

## Measuring Social Reach - Your Digital Footprint

An objective social marketing effectiveness audit starts with measuring your Social Reach against that of your top competitors.

An objective social marketing effectiveness audit starts with measuring your Social Reach against that of your top competitors. Such an audit will give you an indication of your position in the social domain relative to your competitors. For example, are you leading, doing the same, or faring worse than your competitors?

1. Start by researching your presence and that of your key competitors across all relevant platforms: Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn, YouTube, Flickr, Foursquare, blogs, forums and Google+.
2. Document the type and number of channels, and total following within each channel for your brand and those of your competitors. Your **Social Reach** is the total number of followers across all social platforms. The Social Reach for Percussion Software and its competitors is as follows:



Source: Original research conducted by Scratch Marketing + Media



In terms of Social Reach, the clear leader in the category is Sitecore with 4,949 followers across platforms (Note: this number does not include any Blog RSS subscribers, YouTube followers or Forum participants). Sitecore is investing in a cross-platform strategy, actively participating in key social platforms, leading in LinkedIn and Twitter followers and blog content. Although Social Reach is not a complete indication of your company's ability to participate and engage prospective users and customers in ongoing conversations, it is the first -- and an important -- piece of a brand's overall social marketing effectiveness.

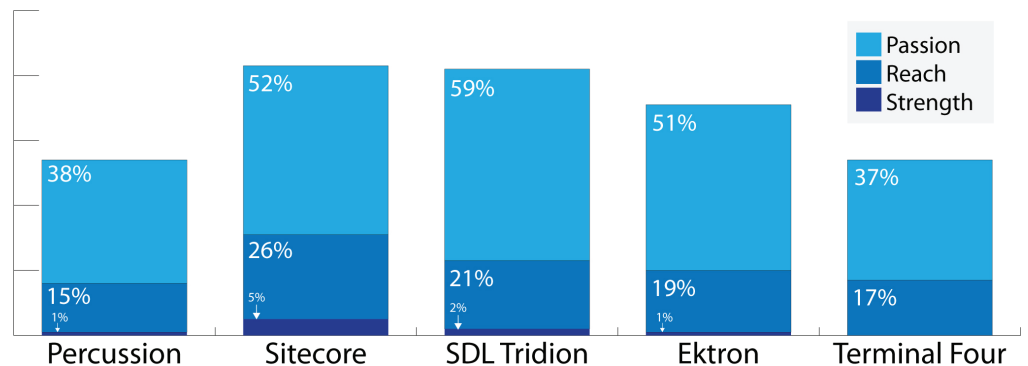
Also of note is use of video. Two players -- Sitecore and SDL Tridion -- are very strong users of video in the web content management space. Both have created impressive libraries of video content. Video may represent another content opportunity for Percussion to invest in.

3. Benchmark against your own performance and that of your competitors on a monthly basis. You will be able to see at-a-glance where your Reach is stronger and where your team needs to invest to increase your foothold compared to that of your competition. In our example, Percussion Software may want to further examine how to increase its footprint on LinkedIn and Twitter while ramping up its content (including video) creation and publishing capabilities.

## Social Frequency and Social Amplification

Next, measure your ability to drive conversations and engagement compared to that of your competitors.

1. You can use free social monitoring tools like [SocialMention.com](https://www.socialmention.com) (or paid listening tools such as [Radian6](https://www.radian6.com)). Please note that there are over 100 social media monitoring vendors. For a detailed analysis of social media monitoring tools, refer to industry analysis sources such as the [Altimeter Group](https://www.altimetergroup.com).
2. Enter your brand name and jot down the results. Tip: To get more accurate results, use quotes around your brand name – e.g. “Percussion Software.” This will avoid irrelevant results.
3. Focus on the following key measures:
  - a. **Strength:** measures the likelihood that your brand is being discussed in social media (Note: Socialmention.com measures your brand mentions as a percentage of total possible mentions within the last 24 hours.)
  - b. **Passion:** the likelihood that the individuals mentioning your brand would do so repeatedly.
  - c. **Pay attention** to the number of unique authors and the average time between mentions. This will help you identify some of your supporters along with influencers who you may not be aware of.
4. Repeat these steps for your top competitors. Here’s what our quick Social Amplification Analysis revealed for Percussion Software and its peer set.



Source: SocialMention.com

Sitecore again takes the top spot, with higher overall reach and likelihood of the company being discussed across digital channels.

Note of caution: When using tools such as Socialmention.com, you won’t get fully representative or precise results. Use these indicators as directional points -- as a quick diagnosis to gauge who tends to get more mentions, your brand or those of your competitors, and the likelihood of your brand or company being mentioned in the future. Treat these results as one piece of the bigger social marketing effectiveness puzzle. If you see your brand in a less-favorable position compared to your peers, make a note of that and focus your resources on investigating the drivers behind the numbers.

### SOCIAL MONITORING TOOLS



## STEP TWO: Digital Conversations Volume and Trending Topic Analysis

### Why this is important

Assessing the volume and types of digital conversations helps you determine the size of the digital pie – it shows you the frequency, type, and vibe of what matters to your customers, prospects and opinion leaders. Assessing your inclusion in these conversations compared to that of your peers helps you gauge the effectiveness of your social marketing efforts. It also helps you assess the level of additional effort and investment required for you to continuously participate and influence these conversations.

1. Start by defining your strategic keywords. To assess your ability to successfully market via social channels, you need to start by understanding the keywords that define your category and your product domain. Carefully selected keywords are the new digital currency: Get them right, and you are off to the races.
2. Finding the right keywords. Keywords are the expressions we use when we think about and search for what we need. Understanding what your prospects and customers already know about your category can give you an advantage when optimizing all of your marketing resources for maximum return – updating your website to match user search intent, building paid advertising campaigns to meet the specific demand of your users, or creating social content that hits home with your target audience. Here’s how to determine what your keywords should be.



- a. Develop a list of all the key category and product/service keywords that describe your category and product domain. For example, Percussion Software provides software for web content management. Web content management is its category domain. Percussion’s solutions are software, tools and platforms for web content management. Its product domain keywords are “web content management software,” “content management,” “content management systems,” “enterprise content management system,” “website content management,” “web content management system,” “web content management solution,” “Web CMS,” “WCM,” “CM system” and “CM Systems.”

“Carefully selected keywords are the new digital currency...”





b. To find and select your keyword set, look for keywords that are:

**Contextual:** Choose words that clearly describe your category in unambiguous ways. For example, “knowledge management” may be too broad for Percussion.

**Targeted:** Match the intent of your prospects. For example, “what is content management?” may lure prospects looking to learn about new content management systems.

**Popular (but not too popular):** Check the popularity of your selected keywords to ensure the ones you are picking truly warrant your attention. Check to see if you are missing any important keywords. There are a number of tools to help you do that: [Wordtracker](#), [Wordstream](#), [Google’s AdWord Keyword Tool](#) and [KeyWord Discovery](#). Rather than competing with Wikipedia, which ranks second for “content management system,” Drupal, Oracle and CMS Wire, Percussion can focus on less-competitive terms such as “website content management,” which has fewer monthly searches, yet is a phrase that Percussion can quickly own and rank for on the first page of search engines.



Keyword	Global Monthly Searches	Local Monthly Searches	Competition	Percussion Rankings
content management system	49,500	12,100	84%	Top 200
content management	14,800	3,600	76%	Top 100
content management systems	6,600	2,900	83%	Not Ranking
wcm	49,500	2,900	58%	Top 100
content management software	2,400	880	81%	Top 50
web content menegement system	2,900	880	77%	Top 50
web cms	3,600	880	77%	Top 50
website content management	1,300	590	78%	Top 25

Source: Google Adwords, SEOMoz

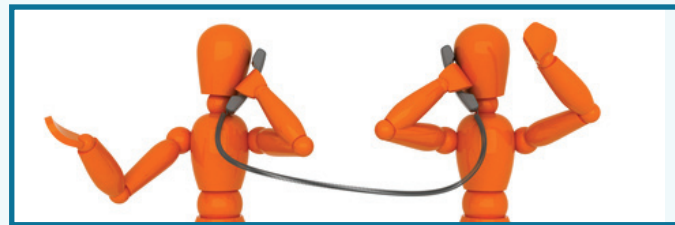
Selecting your keywords is both an art and a science. Choose wisely, and you will see an increase in traffic, higher interest in your product and more sales. Once you know your keywords, measure the digital chatter associated with them. The higher the volume of conversations, the more you may need to invest to stay top-of-mind and drive prospects and customers to your web properties. Our suggested next step helps you do just that.

3. Use your strategic set of keywords to measure digital conversations. The key questions you will be answering in this stage are:
  - a. How vibrant is the digital dialog about your category?
  - b. How many conversations happen and where?
  - c. What is your digital share of voice relative to your competitors?

### A Few Clarifying Points and Definitions:

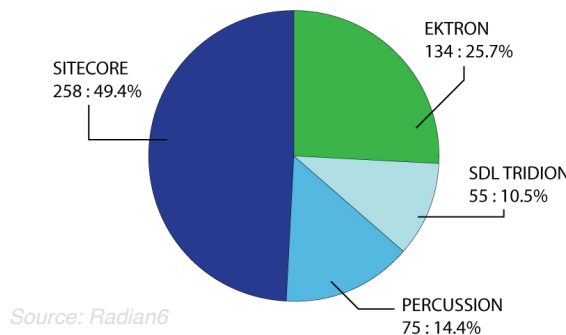
Most listening tools have limitations, (e.g. allowing you to go only 30 days back in time). This puts you at risk of examining a period of time that is not representative – when there is a relative lull in your industry, for example. Use your findings as benchmarks and revisit the statistics monthly to see if there are any major fluctuations in the volume and types of conversations and the channels where these conversations occur.

**Digital Conversations:** These include all mentions of your selected keywords across publicly open digital destinations such as social networks, blogs, forums and mainstream media sites.



**Digital Share of Voice:** is the estimated share of brand mentions for a select keyword set compared to that of its select competitors.

### Vibrancy of Digital Conversations / Digital Share of Voice

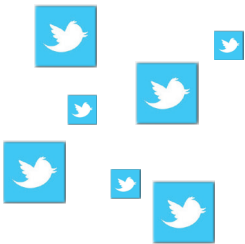


In the web content management space, within the last 30 days, there were more than 520 digital conversations across platforms. Close to 50% of those were driven by Sitecore mentions, followed by 25.7% of mentions for Ektron. Percussion was mentioned in just over 14% of all conversations.



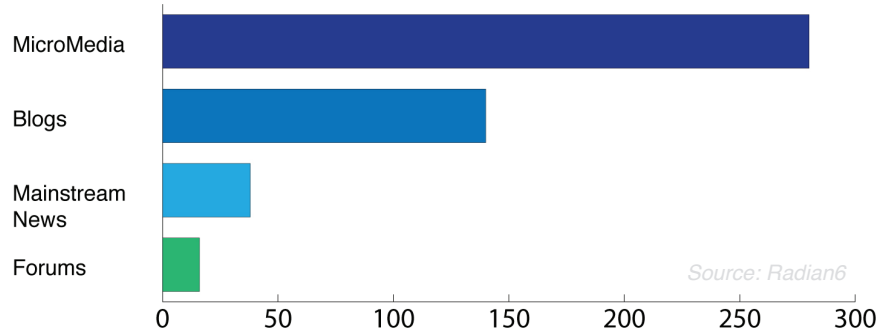
## Digital Conversations and Platforms

Most digital conversations about web content happen on micro-blogging platforms such as Twitter.



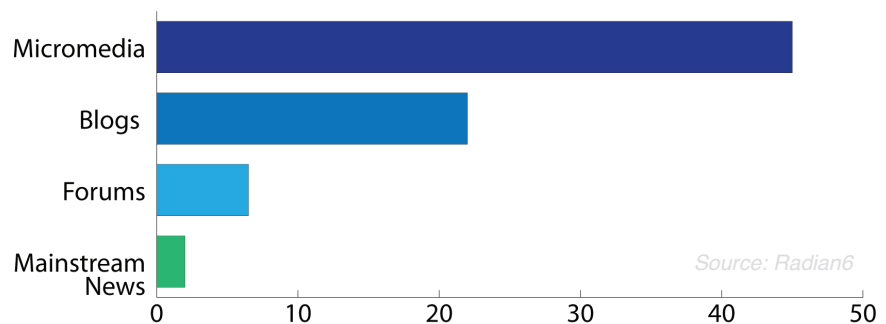
Most of the digital conversations about web content management happen on micro-blogging platforms such as Twitter and blogs, as shown in the chart below:

**INDUSTRY CONVERSATIONS**



Looking at the distribution of mentions for Percussion, we see that these follow the industry dialog. That indicates Percussion is investing the appropriate digital channels. The Percussion team may want to invest more resources to gain a more dominant position in this dialog.

**DIGITAL CONVERSATIONS MENTIONING PERCUSSION**



The final step in your objective audit of your social marketing effectiveness is focused on your company's ability to rank high in organic search results.

## STEP THREE: SEO Health Check

### Why this is important

Search is the second most popular activity online. It is likely that your prospects and customers use search to find out about new products, services and solutions to suit their needs. Your ability to be found -- and ranking on the first page of search engines for these targeted searches -- is key to your company's ability to grow its following and get more people engaged.



Here are the steps for conducting a quick Search Engine Optimization (SEO) Health Check:

1. Use SEO assessment tools to get the insights you need:
  - a. **Free tools:** HubSpot's websitegrader.com is a great way to get started.
  - b. **Paid tools:** [SEOMoz](#) is among the best SEO Health Check tools currently available, and we highly recommend it.
2. Important metrics to include in your SEO Health Check:
  - a. **Your overall website grade:** The overall grade of your SEO marketing effectiveness.
  - b. **Linking domains:** The number of unique sites linking back to your website
  - c. **MozRANK:** SEOMoz's general, logarithmically scaled, 10-point measure of a website's global link authority or popularity

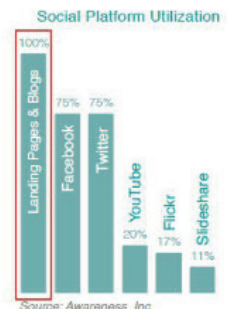
Percussion vs. Competitors SEO Assessment:

Company	Percussion	Sitecore	Ektron	SDL Tridion	Terminal Four
Site Grade	98	99	98	90	97
Linking Domains	233	1,388	1,079	1,585	162
Blog Score	93	23	92	N/A	N/A
Moz Rank	5.4	6.1	5.9	5.6	5.6

This quick analysis shows that Percussion is doing relatively well compared to its competitors. Its overall SEO score is on par with the best-in-class companies within its peer set. Its high blog score indicates that Percussion is publishing often and is offering content that its users are finding of value. The relatively low number of linking domains for Percussion is an area where its team may want to focus more of its efforts. By creating more inclusive content, inviting outside industry experts, boosting targeted engagement with online influencers, and focusing PR efforts, Percussion can likely gain market share from its competitors.

One additional way to drive engagement and mentions from within the industry that Percussion may want to pursue is the use of landing pages for its content. Landing pages are web pages built to address the specific search needs of your prospects. They are keyword-rich and are used by best-in-class companies as exemplified by [a recent study conducted among over 100 companies](#), such as Major League Baseball, Sony, Starwood and Carlsberg, using the Awareness social media management platform.

The Art of the Landing Page



## STEP FOUR: Developing A Social Marketing Effectiveness Dashboard

Developing a social marketing effectiveness dashboard will help you benchmark and track your progress and continuously identify opportunities for growth. Moreover, the dashboard will provide you with an objective way of measuring your social marketing effectiveness so you will minimize wasted effort and get the most return for your social marketing investment.

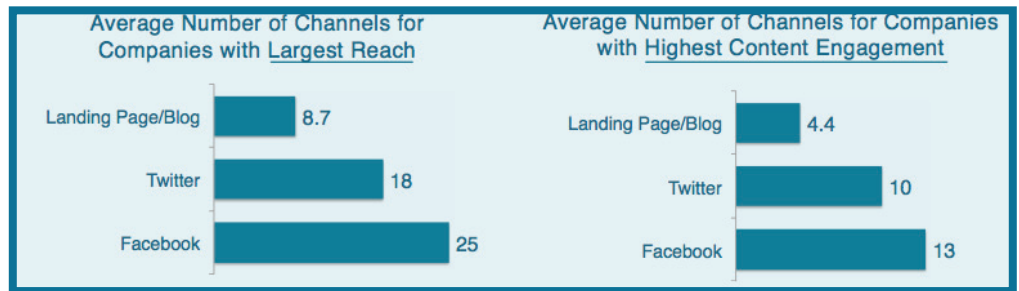
Customize your dashboard to meet your needs and business objectives, then treat it as the tested way to diagnose issues and discover areas for improvement. Update it monthly so you can quickly diagnose both issues that require your team’s attention and new opportunities for growth. For example, based on our quick analysis in steps 1 through 3, we would suggest that Percussion track these key areas, represented in the table below, on a monthly basis.



Company	Twitter	LinkedIn	Blog	YouTube	Social Strength	Social Reach	Website Grade	Linking Domains	MozRank
Percussion	1,146	257	2 blogs: 3 authors total	5 followers	1%	1,586	98	233	5.4
Sitecore	<b>2,596</b>	<b>2,123</b>	<b>3 blogs: 46 authors, frequent</b>	<b>210 followers</b>	<b>5%</b>	<b>4,949</b>	<b>99</b>	<b>1,388</b>	<b>6.1</b>
SDL Tridion	1,201	1,059	22 authors, frequent	442 followers	2%	2,514	90	1,585	5.9
Ektron	1,572	770	11 authors	19 followers	1%	2,807	98	1,079	5.6
Terminal Four	677	140	N/A	N/A	0%	927	97	162	5.6

### Increasing Social Reach

1. Build presence anywhere it matters – across all relevant platforms. Best in-class brands have presence across multiple social platforms. Earlier this year, [Awareness examined top-performing brands](#) in terms of greatest social reach and follower engagement using the Awareness social media management platform and found that companies using the Awareness Hub have at least 13 Facebook Fan pages and 10+ Twitter profiles.



2. Optimize your social presence for popular search terms. Make sure your profile and company descriptions across all your digital properties include your strategic keyword terms, carry a consistent look, and convey the same message.
3. Update all of your digital properties with your social platform icons and links.
4. Monitor for keyword mentions across platforms in real time. You can use free tools such as Kurrently.com, which captures Twitter and Facebook open posts, or advanced Twitter search if your digital conversations are driven by this platform. You can also use the Awareness Hub to save your searches and monitor the dialog. For more information on how you can use the Hub, learn about our [Social Intelligence Dashboard](#).

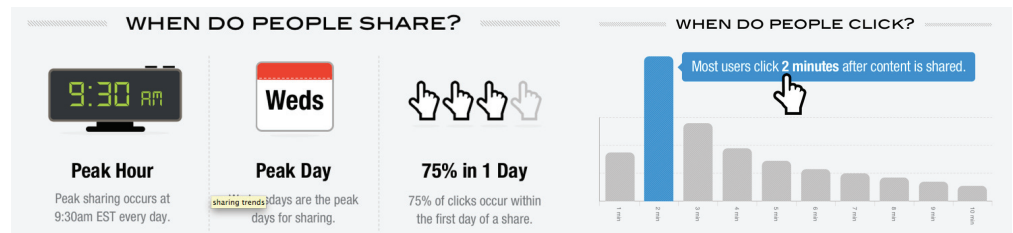
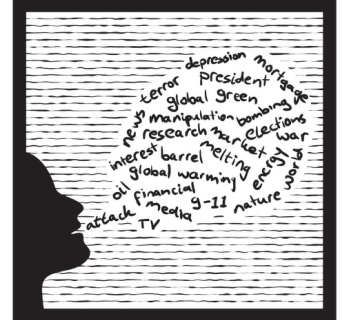


## MAXIMIZE YOUR IMPACT!

Most people share content around **9:30AM ON WEDNESDAYS** and 75% of your clicks will happen within **TWO MINUTES** of publishing

### Increasing Social Strength and Passion

1. Bank on popular keywords. Develop targeted content that you can publish across all your key social media platforms.
  - a. To learn how to increase engagement, download the Awareness white paper on [11 Strategies to Increase Engagement](#).
2. Identify and follow influencers across platforms. Opinion leaders have the power to amplify your messages across platforms and help you increase your Social Reach, Passion and Amplification. Here are a few ways to identify influencers:
  - a. Use the Twitter “Similar to profile” function. Once you identify new influencers to follow, find and engage with them on all relevant platforms -- their blogs, Facebook pages and LinkedIn profiles.
  - b. Use free tools such as [Klout.com](#) and [Tweeow.com](#). You can search by name or keyword.
  - c. Paid tools such as [Traackr](#) and [SocMetrics](#) let you identify top influencers by topic or subject areas. This is where, again, your top domain keywords would come in handy.
3. Know when to publish for maximum impact. As you continue to grow your reach, you will be publishing more content that is targeted to the needs of your users. Maximize your efforts by publishing when your posts will have the most impact. According to a recent infographic by [Jennifer Van Grove from Mashable](#), most people share around 9:30 a.m. on Wednesdays. Expect that 75% of the clicks will happen within two minutes of your publishing.





## Measure and Adapt

Update your social marketing effectiveness dashboard monthly. Continue to diagnose issues and opportunities to improve your social marketing effectiveness. If you are focused on growing your social marketing effectiveness to generate new business, download our free 30-page eBook on [The Social Funnel: Driving Business Value with Social Marketing](#). Drawing on the experience of more than a dozen nationally and internationally recognized marketing experts such as David Meerman Scott, Paul Gillin, Erik Qualman, and Jason Falls, as well as representatives from social marketing's top-performing brands including Major League Baseball, Demandware, Carlsberg, and Starwood Hotels, this eBook helps CMOs lay out the steps and best practices to get the most value from social media investments.

The social realm is very iterative and dynamic. Your social marketing strategy should be too. Use this guide to gauge the effectiveness of your social marketing efforts to date. Update your social marketing effectiveness dashboard monthly to stay on top of your industry and competitors and to implement new best practices. The added benefit of your social marketing effectiveness dashboard is that you will always have your key social performance indicators at your fingertips. This way you can always be able to answer the questions, "How well are we doing with social?" and "What we can do better?" for your senior executives.

### About Awareness Inc.:

Awareness is the leading provider of enterprise-class, on-demand social marketing management software (SMMS) for marketers to publish and manage social content, engage with their audience and measure the effectiveness of their social media activities across multiple social media channels. The Awareness Social Marketing Hub is built upon Awareness' expertise with some of the worlds leading brands and marketing agencies including MLB, Sony Pictures, Comcast, Likeable Media, Associated Press, Cox Communications, Mindjumpers and American Cancer Society.

The [Awareness Social Marketing Hub](#) is built to address the challenges marketers face managing multiple social channels. The Social Marketing Hub is the first enterprise-class application for serious marketers who want to plan, implement and measure meaningful social media strategies across the organization.

### Connect with Awareness Inc.:

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