



STRUCTURING A
Social Media Team

SPONSORED BY:

NASDAQ OMX | Corporate Solutions

LAWRENCE RAGAN
COMMUNICATIONS, INC.

ragan

Executive Summary

You know you're swamped trying to keep up with social media. Would it help to know everybody else is?

In a first of its kind, a Ragan/**NASDAQ OMX Corporate Solutions** survey digs into the social media profession in the corporate world, nonprofits, and government, unearthing answers to the most pressing questions that perplex the pros who juggle social media. The findings are all in our white paper, "Structuring a Social Media Team."

To map out the landscape of the profession, we surveyed 2,714 respondents online. We asked communicators, marketers, public relations pros and others whether they have someone who focuses exclusively on social media—or if they juggle social media on top of their traditional duties.

We dug deep on measurement, finding out precisely which tools your colleagues favor, and whether they're satisfied with the data they're gathering.

We were nosy enough to ask about salaries, and if they're expected to grow in 2013. And—don't tell the boss—we got respondents to spill the beans on whether the CEO supports their effort, shrugs it off, or tweets so wildly, the message suffers.

Best of all, we invited comments, enriching our results with candid outtakes from the life of a social media professional.

Respondents from for-profit corporations made up 58 percent of the total. Nonprofits amounted to 24 percent, while 7 percent came from government. (About 11 percent answered "other.")

Organizations of more than 1,000 employees constituted 28 percent of the total; the vast majority were under 1,000, and 23 percent worked for organizations employing fewer than 25.

Social media are revolutionizing communications. But if your organization isn't committing additional resources, don't feel left out. You're not alone.

Read on for the results.



Major Findings in Five Key Areas:

Staffing

Sixty-five percent of respondents do social media on top of their other duties. For those who do social media exclusively, nearly 83 percent work on teams of three or fewer.

Measurement and monitoring

Sixty-nine percent are dissatisfied or only “somewhat satisfied” with how they measure social media. Only 31 percent are satisfied or very satisfied. And many say they lack the time to track data or aren’t even sure what to measure.

Budgets and salaries

Only 28 percent saw their budgets—excluding salaries and benefits—increase this year, while 69 percent stayed the same. Prospects were only slightly better for 2013, with 62 percent of budgets remaining static.

Salaries for social media manager or director also showed wide variation, with 21 percent earning in the \$25,000-\$35,000 range, and 22 percent earning from \$65,000-\$90,000. Five percent earn top salaries, which hover above \$125,000.

Platforms and efforts

A lot of people are still figuring out social media. Only 13 percent describe their efforts as advanced. Slightly more than half agreed with the statement, “We keep our heads above water, but not by much.” Another 23 percent describe themselves as “newbies.”

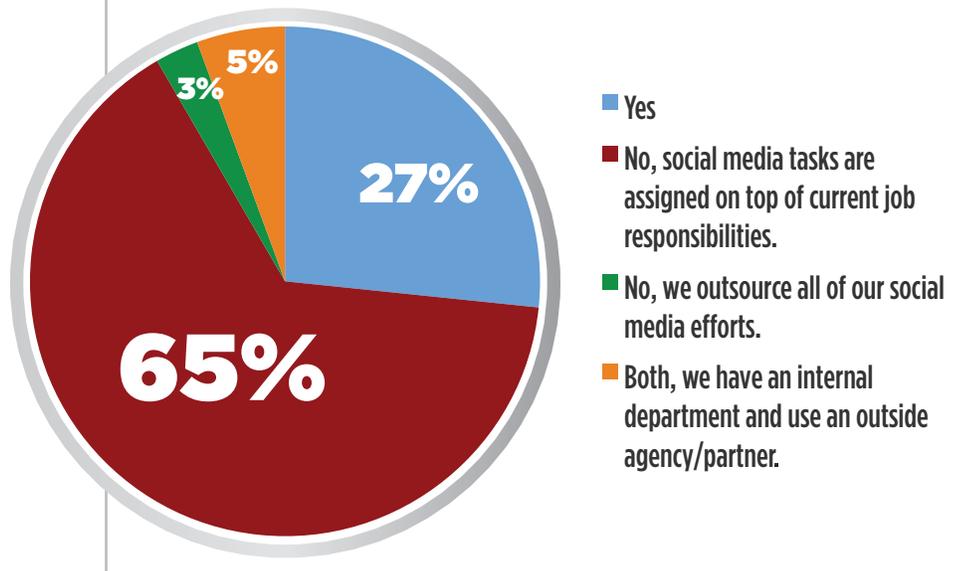
Facebook is by far the most popular platform, with 91 percent of respondents maintaining a page there. Twitter follows closely, with 88 percent, while 69 percent use LinkedIn.

Who owns social media?

“Ownership” of social media is murky, and the question may even become passé as numerous departments within organizations jump in. Slightly more than 70 percent of respondents say marketing is involved, with 69 percent reporting that public relations played a role. Corporate communications trailed, with 49 percent.

Read on to dig deeper.

Do you have a team of people who work exclusively on social media?



Staffing

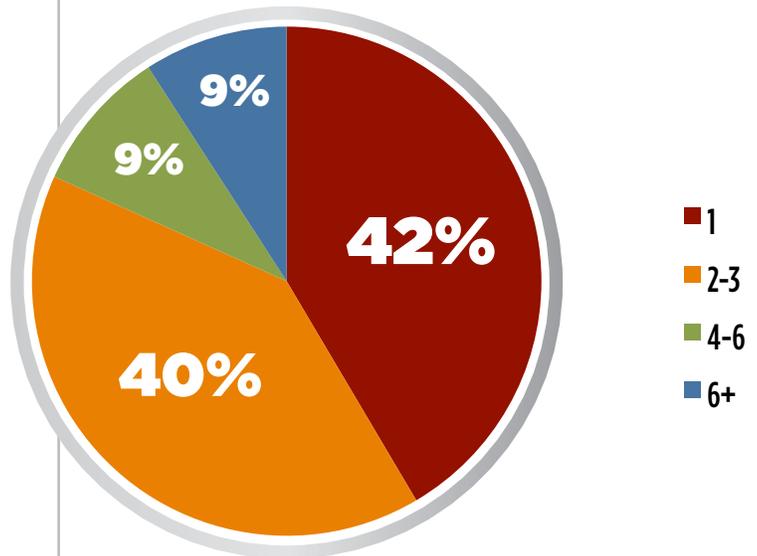
Size of Staff

Most organizations don't have an employee who focuses exclusively on social media. Sixty-five percent of respondents do social media on top of their other duties. For those who do social media exclusively, nearly 83 percent work on teams of three or fewer.

Some 42 percent say only one person works exclusively on social media, while only 9 percent report teams of more than six people.

"I'm a one-woman show, so I do everything. But no one does my social media for me."

How many people work exclusively on social media?

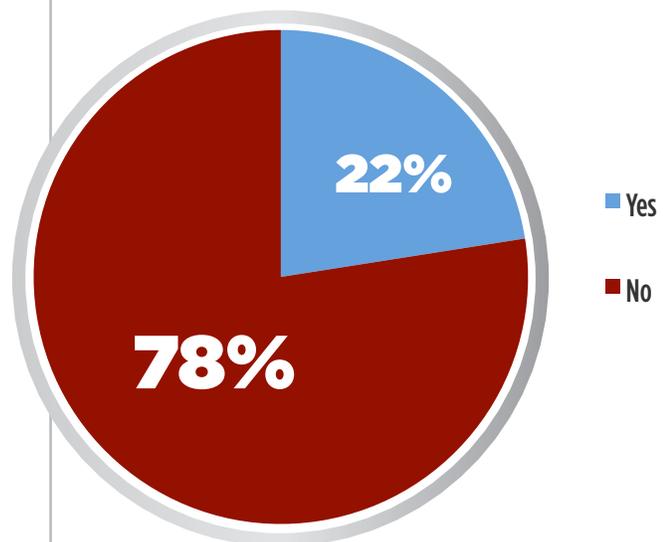


Hiring Plans

The majority of respondents (68 percent) didn't expand their social media department in 2012, and 78 percent don't plan to hire in 2013.

"We did not expand the department, but more of our clients wanted to adopt a social media element for our public relations plans."

Does your company plan to hire more people to help with social media next year?



The Role of Interns

Twenty-five percent of respondents say an intern helps with some aspect of social media, while the remainder agreed with our emphatic “No way!”

The lack of interns didn't surprise experts we interviewed. Whether to involve them, says one, depends on these questions: Is social media simply something you do because you must? Or is it an activity that involves interaction with customers and drives business?

“Yes, our social media strategy is handled by interns but, no, our interns are not in constant rotation. Each of our interns is a graduate of the university and committed to alumni advancement.”

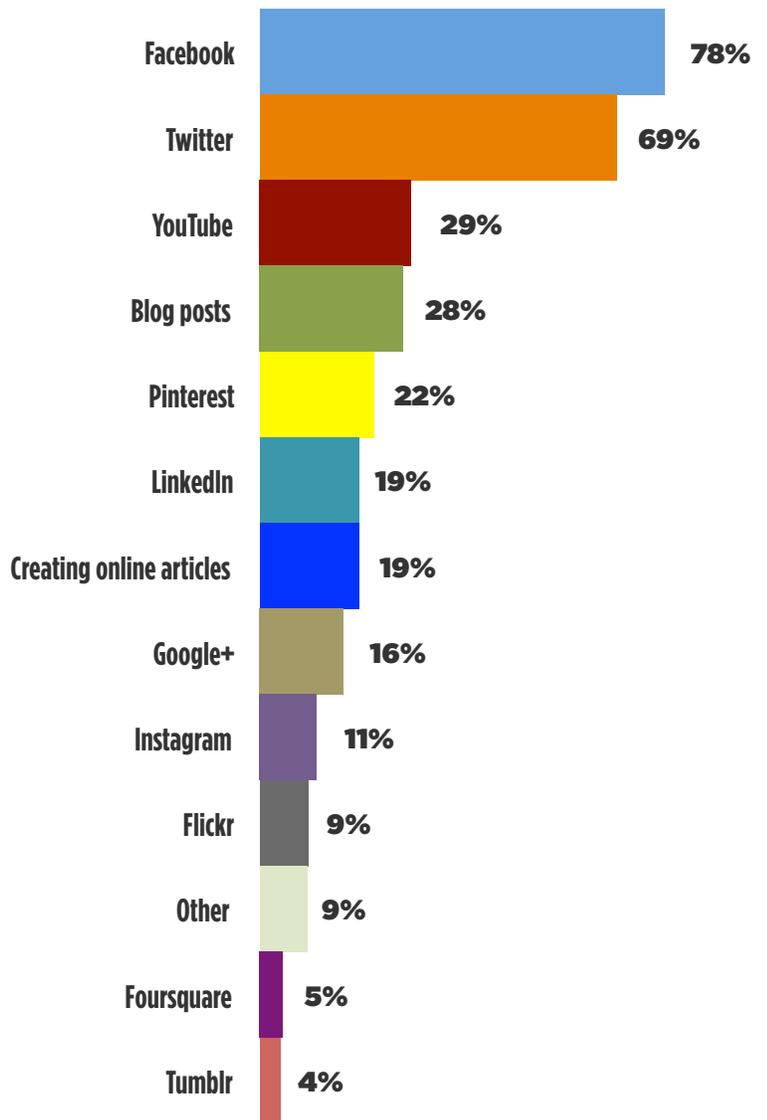
Of those who have interns involved, Facebook is the most popular place for them to help out, with 78 percent participating. That compares with 69 percent for Twitter and 29 percent for YouTube.

That doesn't mean organizations allow recent college grads to take over their voice. Several say intern-created content is reviewed before being published.

A university-based survey participant says the interns who run social media are more than just kids who know their way around Instagram and YouTube. The strategy is led by a paid intern on a two-year contract.

“We had an intern analyze how competing companies' use of social media compares to ours.”

What do interns help your company with?



Hiring and Qualifications

Both degree and experience weigh heavily in hiring. Forty-five percent say they rely on a combination of degree and experience. Some 25 percent weigh experience above all, and 18 percent consider writing skills foremost. Fewer than half a percent say they rely on degree alone.

“We have a corporate philosophy of hiring great people and finding out what they excel at before defining their role.”

As far as the ideal level of experience, about 47 percent sought one to three years. Another 44 percent required three to five years. Only 9 percent wanted more than that.

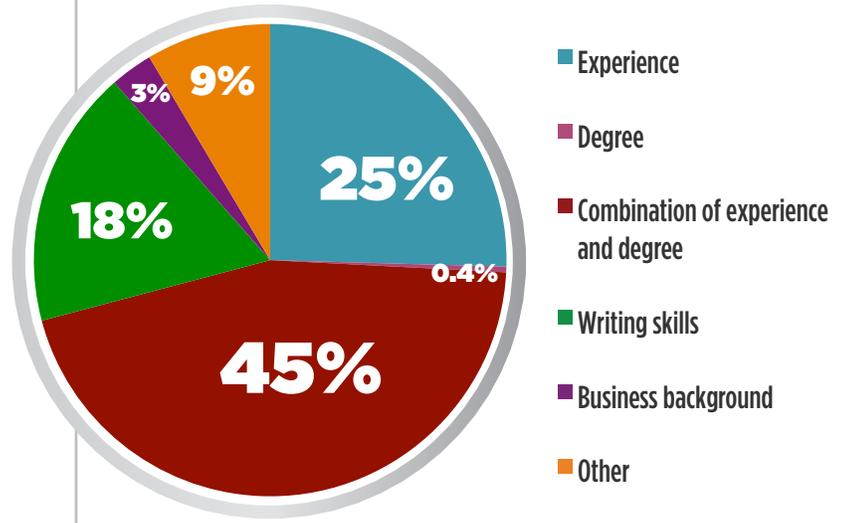
It appears there is some truth to the impression that social media is dominated by newcomers.

Education

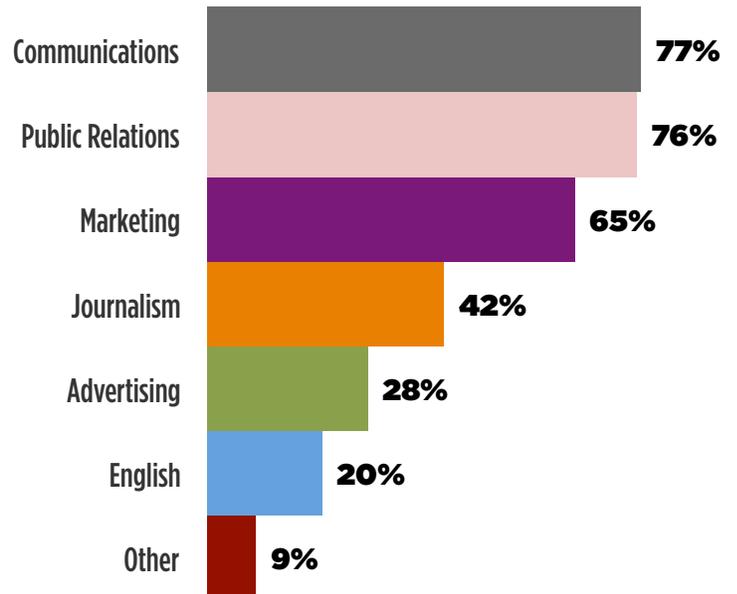
In the era of social media, an education in communications (77 percent) or public relations (76 percent) is most highly valued (respondents were allowed to click multiple answers). Marketing trailed with 65 percent. Sorry, English majors: Only 20 percent felt all those hours you spent poring over “Beowulf” made you a better candidate, compared with 42 percent for journalism.

“[We hire] someone we can trust with the brand and who understands not just social media but the relationship we have and would like to have with audiences. Someone we can trust with the passcodes!”

When hiring, what do you look for in an applicant?



Which degrees are best?



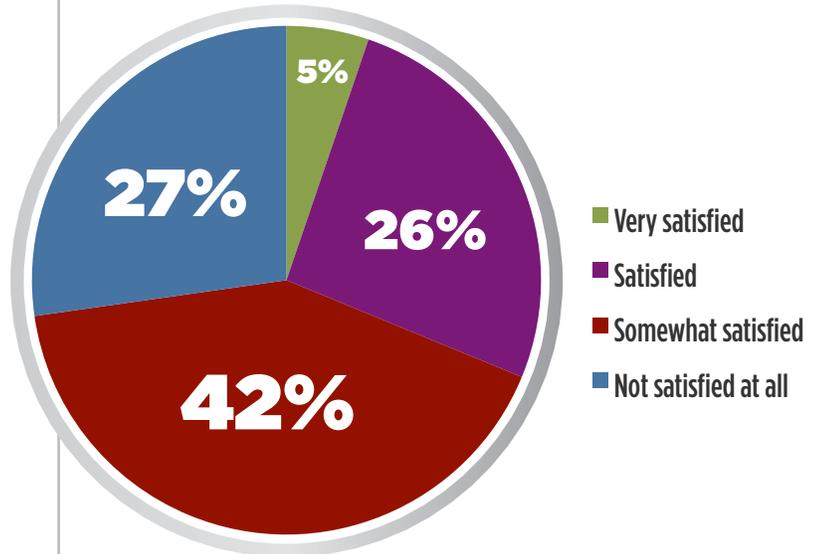
Measurement and Monitoring

Satisfaction with Monitoring

The survey revealed that 69 percent are dissatisfied or only “somewhat satisfied” with how they measure social media. Only 26 percent are satisfied, while 5 percent are very satisfied.

“I’m not sure what to measure or how. I know it’s important, but I can’t show my boss how many retweets a post received and expect him to care.”

Are you satisfied with how your company measures social media?

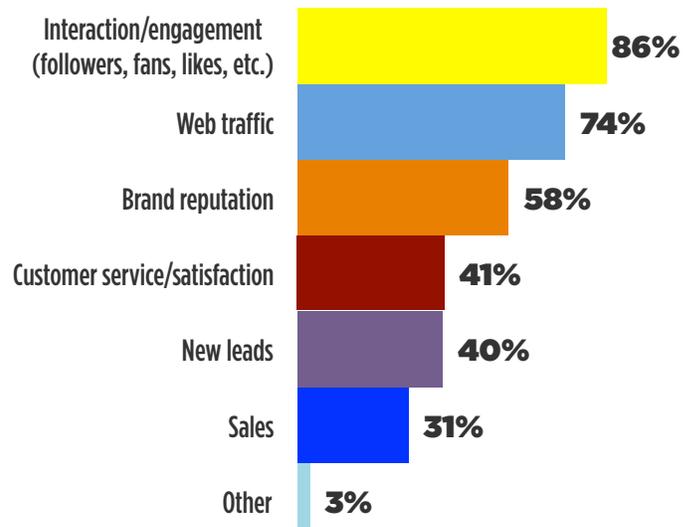


What to Measure?

Nearly 86 percent of respondents said they measure interaction and engagement, including followers, fans and “likes.” A total of 74 percent track Web traffic, while 58 percent measure brand reputation. Forty percent track new leads, and only 31 percent measure sales. Unfortunately, many respondents felt there is no industry-accepted tool to determine the value of social media efforts. They have to rely on impressions and general feedback, they say.

“Let me know when you figure out social [return on investment]/metrics.”

What does your company measure?



Most Monitor Themselves; Fewer Track the Competition

A total of 86 percent of respondents monitor what's being said about their organization, while 77 percent monitor industry news, trends and events. Fewer—57 percent—monitor their competitors.

Some organizations only monitor and respond to posts on their pages, rather than seeking out tweets and other social media comments. Several say limited staff time prevented this.

“We should be monitoring the competition but don't have the time.”

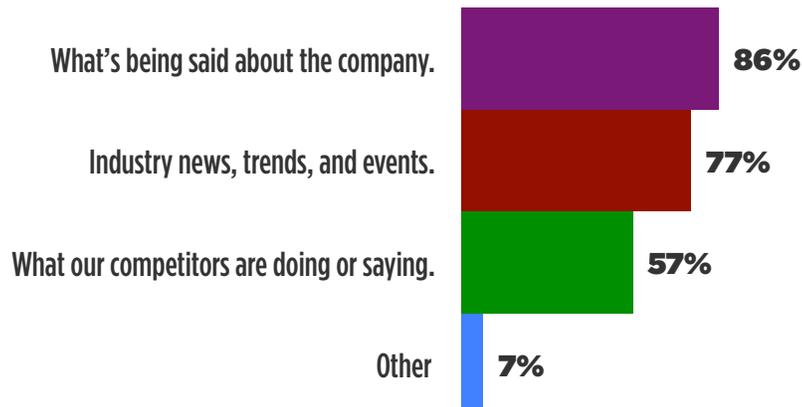
Roadblocks Trip Up Measurement and Monitoring

Many survey participants found roadblocks in monitoring. Some 65 percent said lack of time was the reason; 63 percent blamed a lack of staffing. (Another 23 percent said measuring is “too overwhelming.”) Forty-one percent blamed a lack of money.

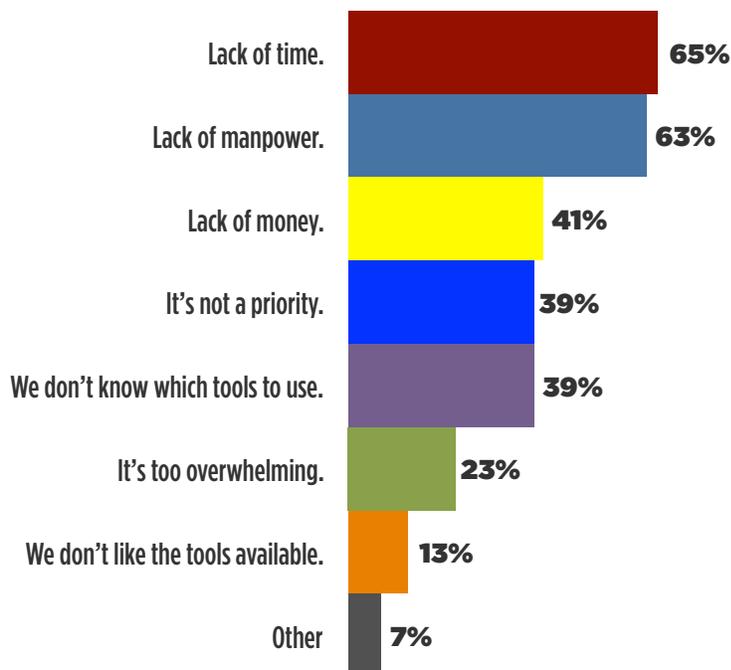
Confusion about tools also hindered monitoring. Some 39 percent agreed with the statement, “We don't know which tools to use.”

“We are fully engaged throughout the workweek and will commonly monitor the sites live. While some folks in our office choose to utilize tools such as TweetDeck and HootSuite, not all do.”

What does your organization monitor on social media?



What are the roadblocks to measuring social media?



Paid Measurement Tools

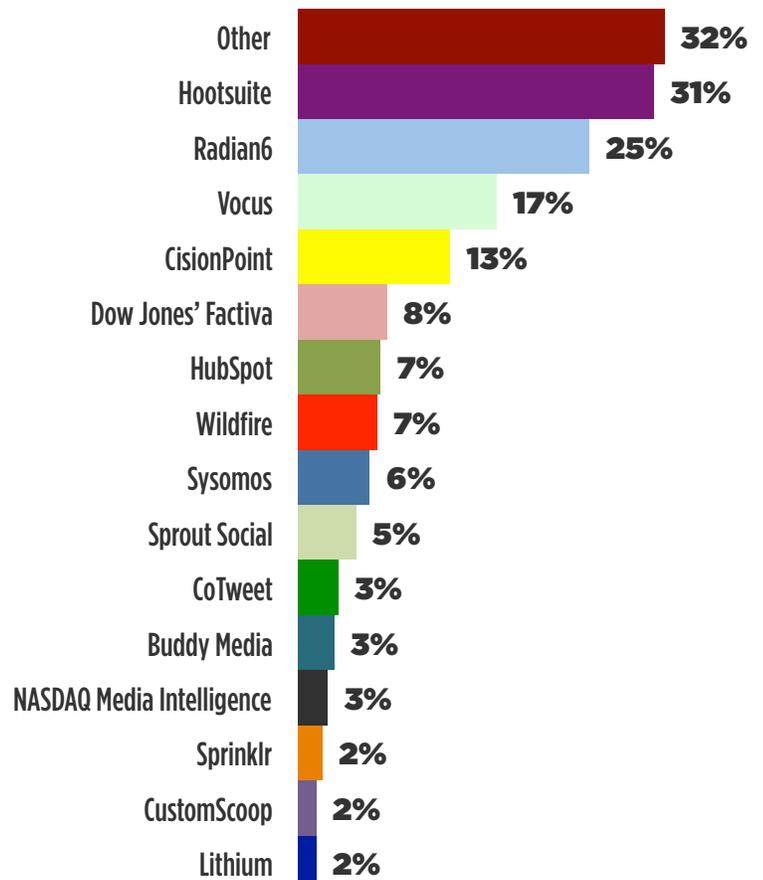
Nearly 59 percent use free tools, while 35 percent use both free and paid. Just 6 percent rely on paid alone.

Among paid tools, HootSuite holds a plurality, with 31 percent, followed by Radian6 (25 percent).

Many individuals did no tracking or couldn't name their tools. Forty-two answered variations of "none," "don't know," or "N/A" when asked what tools they use. "I'm not sure [monitoring] is actively done," one answered.

"We've yet to find a single tool that can address all of our needs. We use an amalgamation of tools and resources to track our social media efforts and success."

These are the paid tools we currently use:



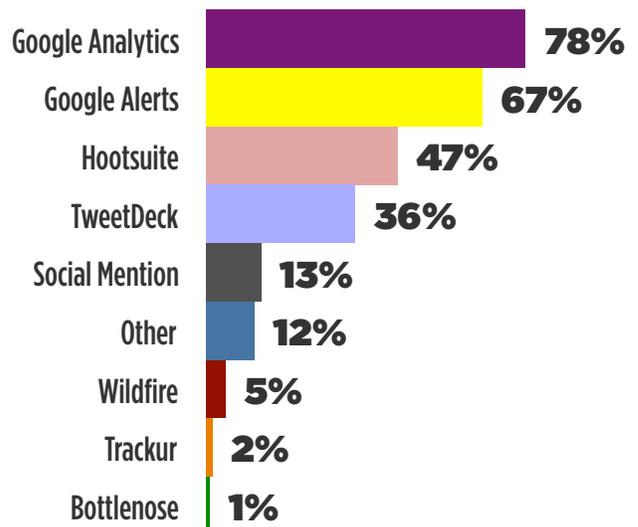
Free Measurement Tools

Google Analytics dominates the free tools, with 78 percent saying they rely on it. Google Alerts follows with 67 percent. HootSuite (47 percent) and TweetDeck (36 percent) remain popular. Social Mention, Wildfire and Trackur follow far behind.

Some of those surveyed mentioned proprietary tools, among them the respondent who uses "some homemade French tools."

"I believe there is very little data out there that is unbiased and transparent in social media world."

These are the free tools we use:

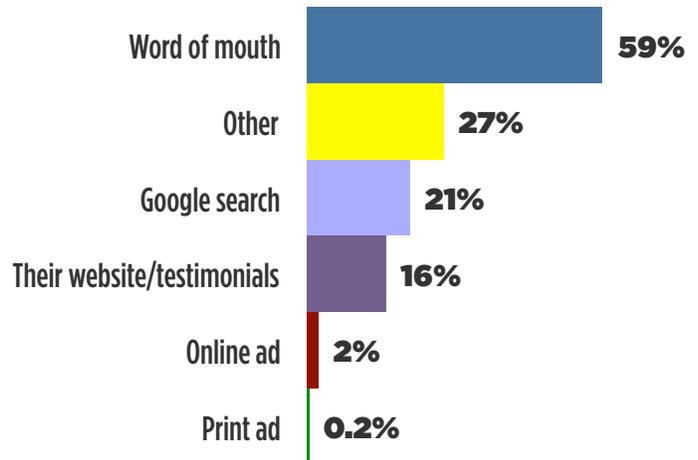


How the Measurement Service Was Found

Asked how they found their measurement service, the majority—59 percent—said through word of mouth. As in other markets, Google continued to be a powerful means of finding a measurement service, with 21 percent saying they used the search engine.

“Our agency found [our measurement service] for another client and knew we were looking. So, they had us interview them along with some others. We found them to be the most robust and cost-effective.”

How did you find that service?



Budget and Salaries

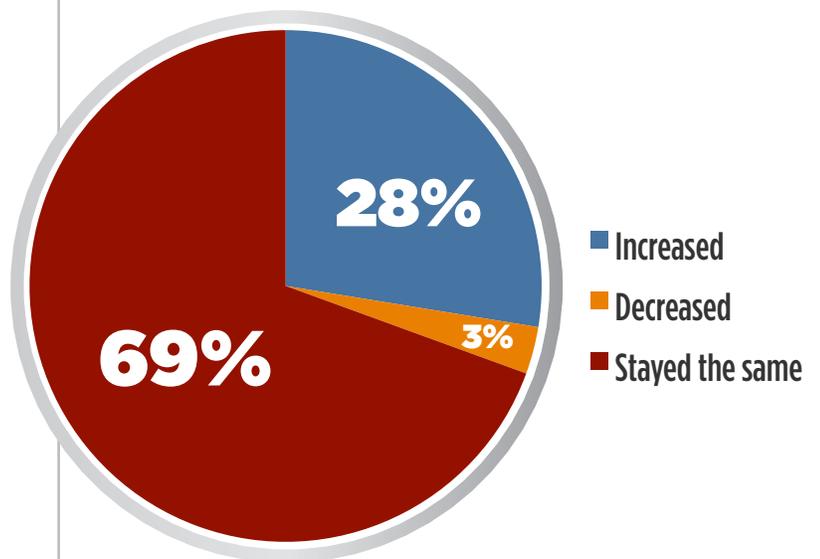
Little Growth in Sight

Only 28 percent saw their budgets—excluding salaries and benefits—increase this year, while 69 percent stayed the same. Prospects were only slightly better next year, with 62 percent of budgets projected to remain static.

Only 2 percent will see a decrease in 2013, compared with 3 percent this year.

“Few understand the value of SM presence. And fewer understand the way SM can function as a tool for us.”

My 2012 social media budget:

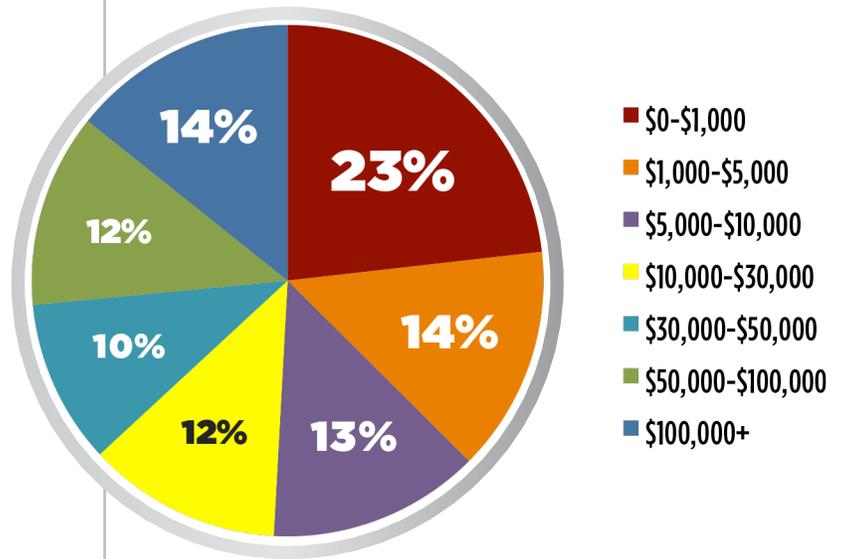


Most Budgets Are Small

Twenty-three percent listed budgets (excluding salaries and benefits) of less than \$1,000. About 27 percent had budgets exceeding \$50,000, with just 14 percent exceeding \$100,000.

“We have a \$0 budget; social media is an afterthought. We are successful at it because of the passion of the people involved.”

What is your social media budget (excluding salaries and benefits)?



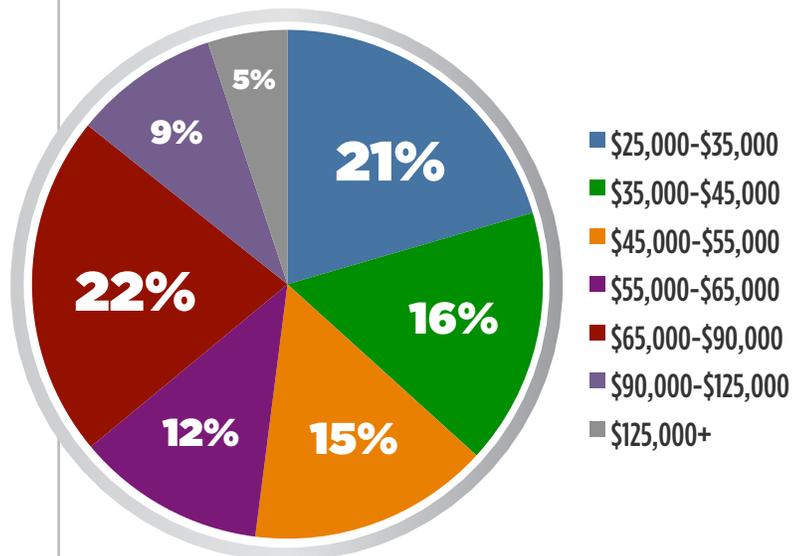
A Snapshot of Salaries

What does—or should—a social media manager earn? The numbers that emerged represent a wide range of compensation. Salaries clustered \$25,000 to \$35,000 (21 percent), largely among small organizations, and around \$65,000 to \$90,000 (22 percent).

The survey offers only a snapshot, since it didn't break down answers geographically. Respondents worked for corporations, nonprofits and government. And organizations define the role in different ways. But survey results fall within ranges of observations by several other sources.

Of those in the lowest salary range in our survey, 43 percent worked for organizations with revenues of under \$1 million. Another 19 percent earned annual revenues ranging from \$1 million to \$5 million.

What is the salary range of your social media manager/director?



One participant, commenting about lack of money as a roadblock, added, “‘Lack of money’ refers to salaries for the job being low.”

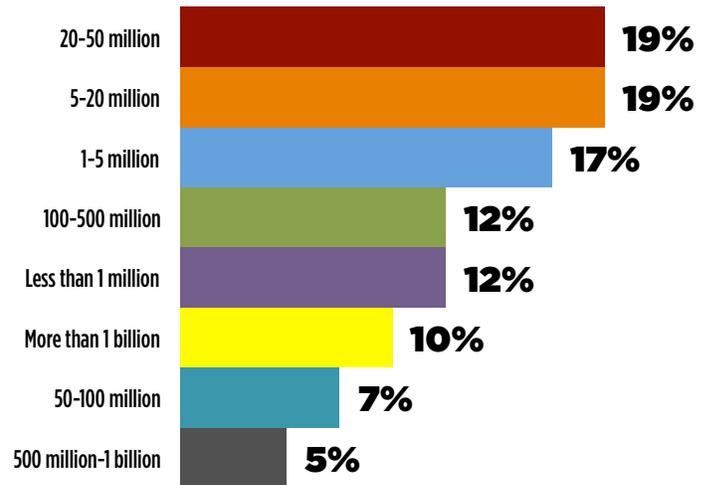
Breaking Down the Salaries

At the top end, 55 percent of those reporting salaries more than \$125,000 worked for companies with yearly revenue of more than \$1 billion. Another 35 percent reported revenue of more than \$100 million, up to \$1 billion.

At this level of compensation, however, the sample was small, with only 20 respondents saying their organization's manager or director is banking the big bucks. Two worked at organizations with revenue in the \$5 million to \$20 million range, while 11 worked at organizations where revenue tops \$1 billion.

The salary figures were most evenly distributed among all organizations, regardless of size, at \$45,000 to \$55,000. Twelve percent of those in that range work for organizations with revenue of less than \$1 million, while 10 percent clock in at corporations with revenue topping \$1 billion.

Company revenue of those making \$45,000-\$55,000



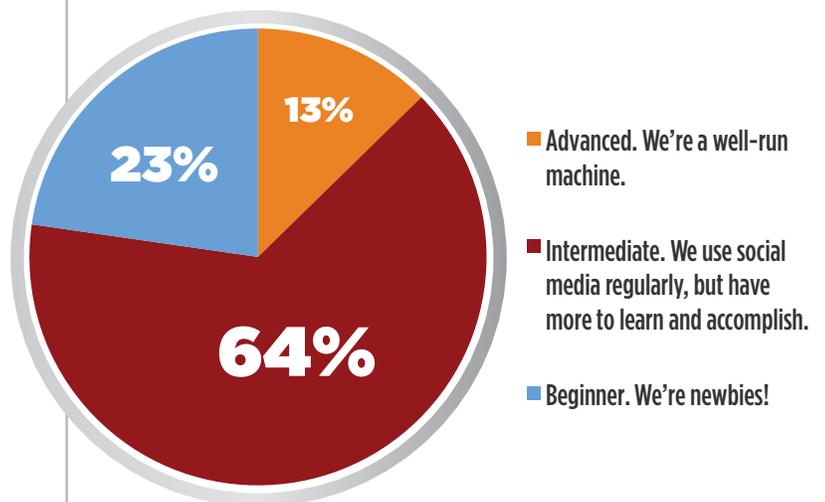
Platforms and Efforts

Most in the Field Are Still Figuring It Out

Just 13 percent of communicators said their organization was "an advanced, well-run machine." A total of 65 percent said they use social media regularly but have more to learn and accomplish. Another 23 percent rated themselves "newbies."

"Unless you're at a top-five consumer brand or agency, I don't see how anyone can consider themselves advanced. It's just growing too fast."

Which of the following best describes your organization's social media efforts?



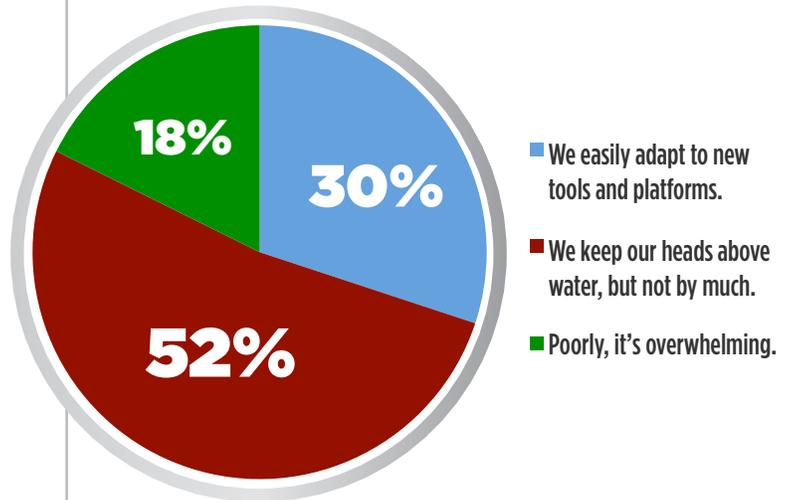
How Well Do You Keep Up?

The survey offers a bit of encouragement for those who feel they're struggling to catch up. Though most don't consider themselves advanced, nearly a third of respondents—30 percent—agree that they "easily adapt to new tools and platforms."

Others found the task harder, as new platforms are launched seemingly every week. Some 52 percent agreed that they "keep our heads above water, but not by much." Another 18 percent confessed to being "overwhelmed."

"We are the classic case of the cobbler's children having no shoes. Despite being a full service communications firm, we are so busy, focused on our clients' campaigns, we are still trying to create sustained momentum in our own social media space."

How well does your organization find the time to keep up with new social media tools and platforms?



Top Goal: Increase Brand Awareness

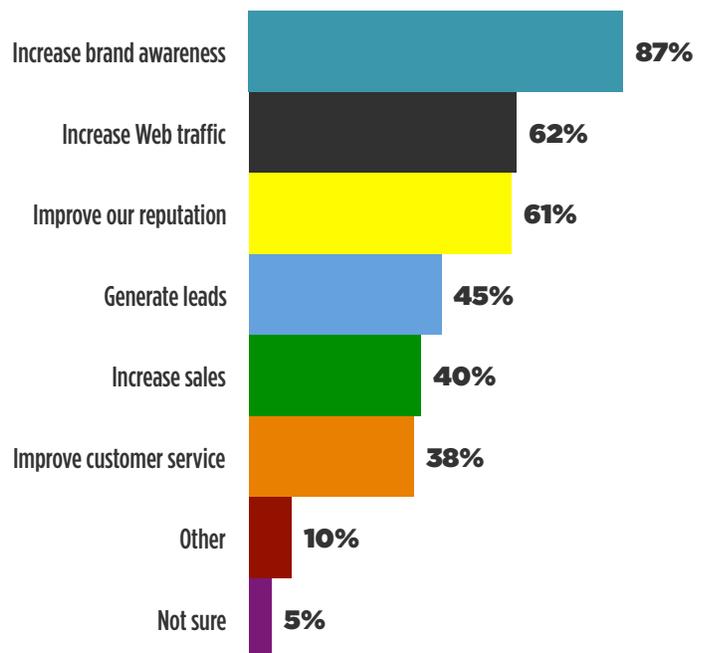
So what's it all about? What's the purpose of this frenzied tweeting and posting that has you hunched over your iPhone, warding off trolls and Facebook spammers during your anniversary dinner?

Asked about their social media goals, 87 percent said to increase brand awareness. Sixty-two percent sought to boost Web traffic. Some 61 percent were out to improve the organization's reputation.

Many respondents say they use social media to promote thought leadership. Some say their goals are to listen and learn, and a teaching hospital uses the new digital platforms to recruit faculty, staff and medical residents.

Improving search engine optimization, engaging current customers, expanding a donor base, and building a community of donors all were goals that respondents mentioned.

What are your organization's social media goals?



"We really look at social media as a way to show the personality of our firm. We also look at it as a way to share our expertise and thought leadership in the industry, which in turn, we hope, will increase leads and potentially sales."

Choose Your Weapon

Facebook is by far the most popular platform, with 91 percent of respondents maintaining a page there. Twitter follows closely, with 88 percent, while 69 percent use LinkedIn. At the bottom of the list are Instagram (17 percent) and Tumblr (9 percent).

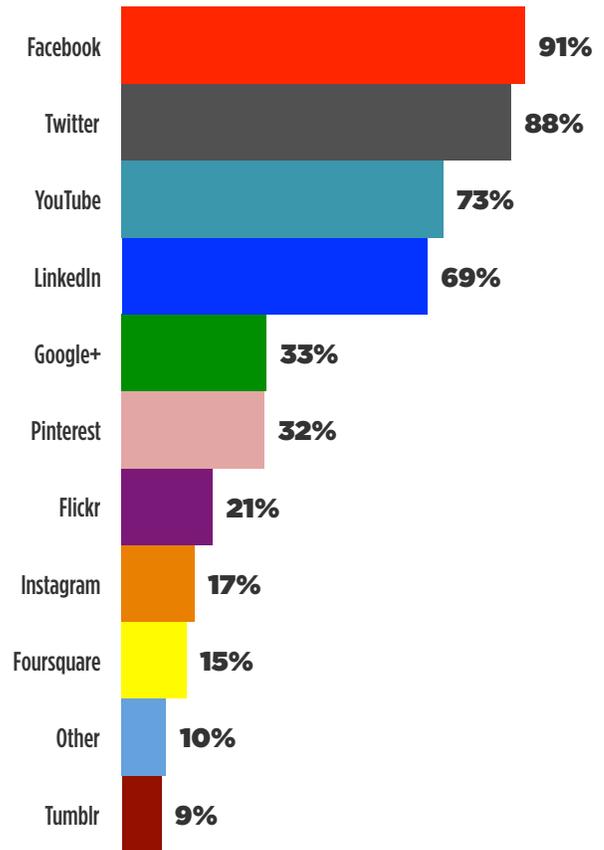
Many commenters mentioned other social media beyond our multiple choices. Foremost among these were Vimeo and WordPress blogs. Others swore by reddit, Storify, StumbleUpon, Digg and Picasa.

International social media earned mentions. One respondent touted the Russian websites Odnoklassniki, Mail.ru and VKontakte. And let us not forget China: Sina Weibo, Renren, and Youku won endorsements.

But some are crying, "Enough!" saying there are too many platforms and too little time.

"We stick to FB, Twitter, LinkedIn and YouTube. Given the nearly endless possibilities contrasted against finite resources, you have to make choices."

Which social media platforms does your organization use?



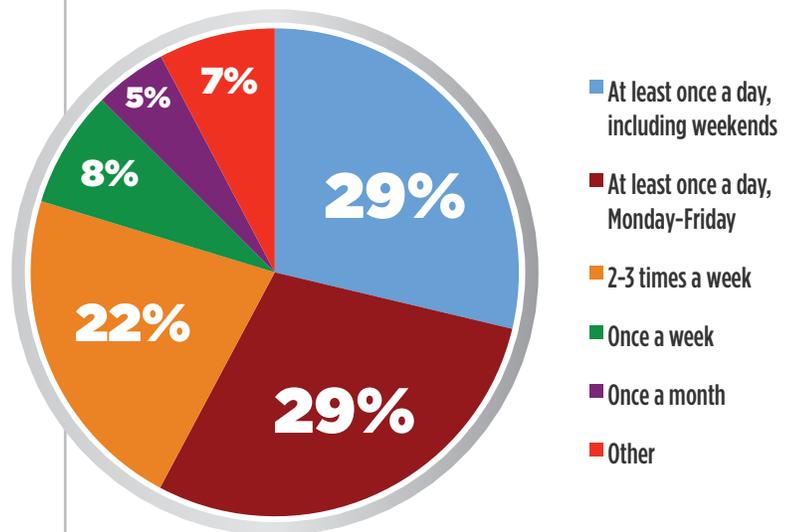
Frequency of Posts

A majority (58 percent) post at least daily, although half of those don't post on weekends. About 22 percent post two or three times a week, with the remainder posting less frequently.

Several commenters also referred to times of year when many comments go up, such as during the academic year or legislative sessions. One agency respondent wrote, "For clients, daily; for ourselves, once a week."

"Twitter is daily, including weekends. Facebook is less frequent, mostly focusing on events and undergraduate events. YouTube depends entirely on whether we have time and hands to do video."

How often does your organization post on social media?



Types of Content

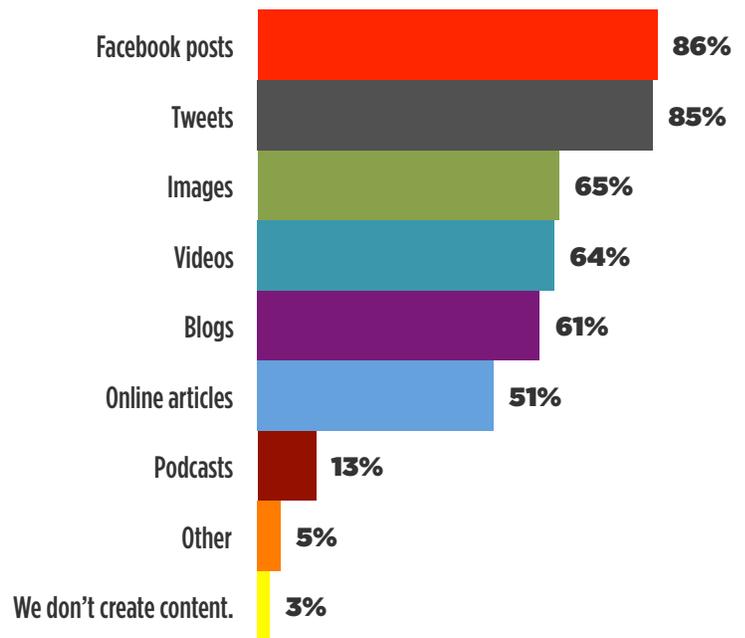
Social media is well and good, but what are you posting, and what are you linking to?

Facebook posts lead, with 86 percent of respondents using the medium. Tweets lag by only a single percentage point. Some 64 percent create videos, and one honest survey participant fessed up to producing “really bad videos.”

Sixty-one percent write blogs, and another 51 percent draft online articles. Only a sliver—3 percent—don’t create any content at all.

“We maintain a historical timeline with photos on Facebook, post videos, and ensure that our customers and employees can connect with us through social media.”

Which types of online content does your organization create?



Who Owns Social Media?

Who's Involved?

Who gets to participate in firing off those tweets or uploading photos onto Pinterest? The [Ragan/NASDAQ OMX Corporate Solutions](#) survey reveals a multidepartmental approach to social media within most corporations, nonprofits and government agencies.

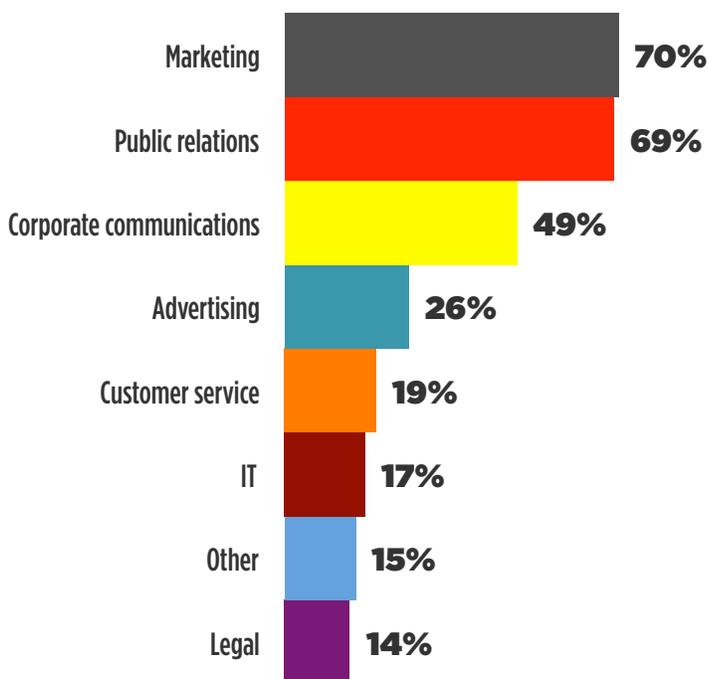
Slightly more than 70 percent of respondents say marketing is involved, with 69 percent reporting that public relations plays a role. Corporate communications trailed, with 49 percent. Twenty-six percent of respondents said the advertising department plays a role, and 14 percent make room at the table for the lawyers.

More than a quarter—26 percent—of organizations involve advertising. IT owns a piece of social media at 17 percent of organizations, while customer service is involved in 19 percent of the cases.

Some experts say social media will keep spreading across departments, to the point that asking who owns it will be like asking, “Who owns the telephone?”

“There must be collaboration. Whereas marketing only wants to sell product, corporate communications—my department—must be aware of the impact of all social efforts on Wall Street, shareholders and regulators.”

Which departments are involved in your company's social media efforts?



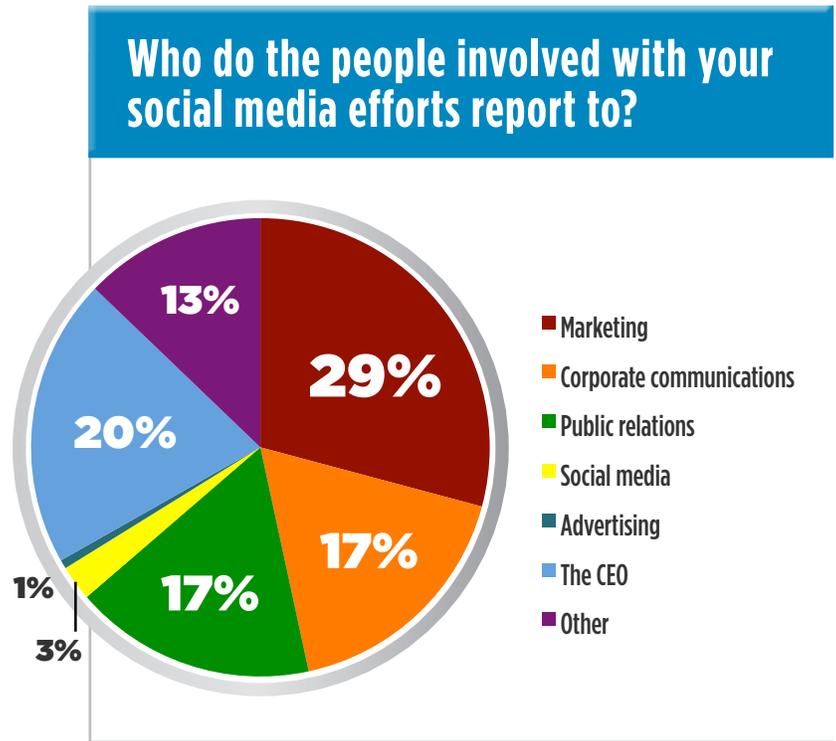
So Who's in Charge?

With so many departments involved, which one is the boss of all bosses?

Marketing leads among those to whom social media reports, with 29 percent. The CEO ranks next, with 20 percent of respondents saying they report to that position. Corporate communications (nearly 18 percent) and public relations (17 percent) follow close behind.

One respondent stated: "The social media manager is the organizations communications coordinator. The communications coordinator makes up the entire PR and marketing department excluding interns."

Many respondents named specific individuals, such as the vice president of development and external affairs, newsroom editors, and even "each other—it's a shared job."

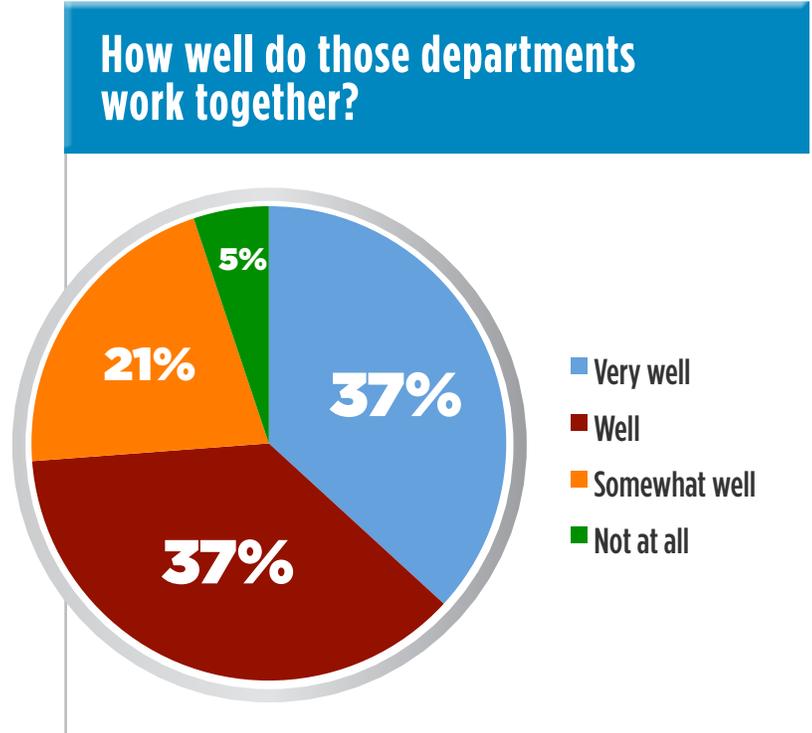


Plays Well With Others?

Despite the potential for competition, the "many cooks" model seems to work fine. Almost 74 percent say the departments work together well or very well, with only 26 percent less than satisfied with the way things are going.

Some participants reported ups and downs in interdepartmental relations. "Variable," one wrote. "Some departments work together very well, others not so well."

"Our biggest challenge is getting the different units to collaborate. Some teams have an 'ownership' which they are reluctant to let go of."



Are the Bigwigs on Board?

The survey offers some cheer from most organizations: Large or small, most say their leaders understand social media. More than 81 percent say their executives are “very” or “somewhat” supportive, with only 19 percent saying they are unsupportive or indifferent.

But there is frustration when top leaders don’t see the return on building engagement with customers or tracking those 140-character reputation bombs.

“Our social media team is thinking on the cutting edge, but our executives and PR team have chosen not to take social media seriously.”

Does your C-suite support social media?

