

Unit 1. Introduction to Web & Social Analytics

What this unit is about

This unit Introduction to Web & Social Analytics is about getting introduced to Social media and having an Understanding of Web & Social media. It explains what are analytics and the need of using Social Media Analytics and Web Analytics.

It also focuses on the impact of social media on business and how to leverage the power of social media for better services. The various current analytics platforms are highlighted and also guides in choosing the right specifications & optimal solution

What you should be able to do

After completing this unit, you should be able to:

- To have an understanding and overview of Web & Social media.
- The need of using Social Media Analytics and Web analytics
- The impact of social media on business
- Leveraging social media for better services and
- Learning the various analytics platforms and choosing right specifications & optimal solution

How you will check your progress

- Checkpoint

Unit Objectives

Unit Objectives



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After completing this unit, you should be able to:

- To have an understanding and overview of Web & Social media.
- The need of using Social Media Analytics and Web analytics
- The impact of social media on business
- Leveraging social media for better services and
- Learning the various analytics platforms and choosing right specifications & optimal solution

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Figure 1-2. Unit Objectives

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Notes:

Objectives as stated above

Social Media

Social Media



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- Social media sites and social networks like YouTube, Wikipedia, LinkedIn, Twitter, Facebook, Blogs, Instagram and many more.
- Web portals like Amazon, PayPal, Ebay, Flipkart and more.
- Enterprise company sites like IBM, Cisco, Microsoft, Oracle and many.

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Figure 1-4. Social Media

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Notes:

Social Media is involved in building a conversation with the clients and consumers, supported by

- Social media sites and social networks like YouTube, Wikipedia, LinkedIn, Twitter, Facebook, Blogs, Instagram and many more.
- Web portals like Amazon, PayPal, Ebay, Flipkart and more.
- Enterprise company sites like IBM, Cisco, Microsoft, Oracle and many.

Social Media



Figure 1-5. Social Media

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Notes:

Social media is controlled by the users, which means that the social media components play a large role in any company's social media business strategy. The limits of social media are only limited by the technology of the various social media tools like analytics and monitoring.

Social Media

Social Media

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- It is about the content, communication and about the relationships



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Figure 1-6. Social Media

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Notes:

Social media is about all of the following: Participation, Connections, Conversation, Community, Listen to your market place.

Social Media Popularity

Social Media Popularity



- Two third of the visitors access the Social networks and Social sites
- The individuals and the companies deploy social media sites for the end users
- Social media is highly scalable and accessible to the public users.

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Figure 1-7. Social Media Popularity

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Notes:

Social Media has become popular because it allows people to connect online for personal and business use. In the global internet, two third of the visitors access the social networks and social sites more than their personal emails.

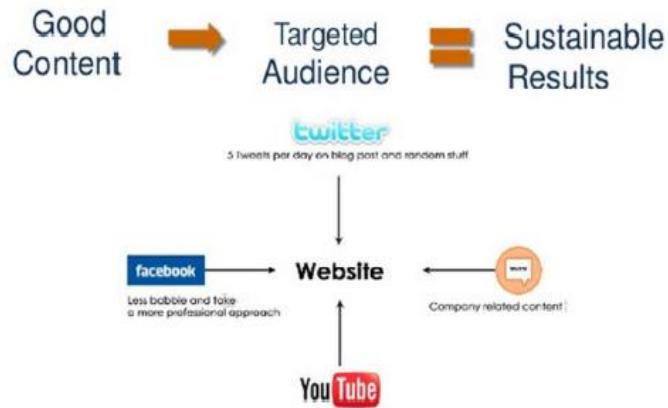
Moreover, the time spent on accessing the social networks and the social sites is rapidly increasing and it is 3 times more than the time spent on overall internet. Both individuals and companies deploy social media sites for the end users, as social media is highly scalable and accessible to the public users.

Social Media Impact

Social Media Impact

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Figure 1-8. Social Media Impact

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Notes:

Social media sites like Facebook and LinkedIn maintain information on the people, conversations, products and the relationships along with privacy settings.

Importance of Social Media

Importance of Social Media

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- The communication that happens in social media is a valuable business strategy of a company



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Figure 1-9. Importance of Social Media

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Notes:

The communication that happens in social media is location independent, which is a valuable business strategy of a company. For the companies, social media is about creating a personal relationship with end users to build a network around a service or product.

Social media helps individuals and companies use web sites whose primary source of content is the end user. Social media can be used to increase the leads and sales, brand recognition and awareness and also developing relationships and trust. It helps in customer interaction, enables exchanging of information or services among individuals, groups or companies and improves the relationships for business.

Importance of Social Media

Importance of Social Media



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Social Media Influence

78%

of consumers trust peer
recommendations

Source: August 25, 2009, "The Broad Reach Of Social Technologies" Forrester report

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Figure 1-10. Importance of Social Media

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Notes:

Social media describes the online technologies and practices that people use to share opinions, insights, experiences and perspectives with each other. In a survey by Enquiero in 2009, they have concluded that more than 80% of businesses use the internet web to research and find potential vendors. Another survey by Nielsen in 2009 have found that more than 35% of people post their opinions on products and brands in blogs and almost 75% of consumers select a particular product or brand based on these reviews and recommendations in social sites. The same is also proven by a Forrester report in 2009.

So Social media is a very powerful tool as it promotes new products or services in the business perspective. Businesses focus more on the understanding of their customers for a greater business value with the amount of marketing spend.

An IBM survey in 2010 has revealed the fact that almost 85% of CEOs will focus more on approaching customers more closely, over the next 5 years by better understanding the customer's needs. Social media also creates community relations and empowers employment. Another analysis by Forrester Research has predicted that

the number of impressions that consumers share online about the products and brands is about 500 Billion, 60% of which is shared in Facebook.

The Economic times states India has the fourth largest number of web users in the world with 81 million users and 46 million active users. Since the cost of storing data has gone down and broadband connections are almost becoming a *must have* thing, social media gains more participation.

So it is becoming highly important that a company should have its presence in the social media and they should use these services to be connected to their customers. Social media can help in greatly improving customer service, retaining customers, reaching out to an enormously huge number of users and helping in increasing the transparency.

Benefits of Social Media

Benefits of Social Media



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- Improving the relationships and communication internally
- Some companies would use social media to recruit new employees into the company and
- Most importantly the companies use the social media to improve the bottom line of the business.

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Figure 1-11. Benefits of Social Media

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Notes:

Social media enables the organizations to connect to the customers and engage with them.

They also personalize the customer relationships to improve the profitability of a company or a product. It enables richer customer analysis, using technologies capable of consolidating customer insights. Organizations can use these insights to dynamically calibrate, anticipate and offer products and services that meet perpetually shifting consumer demands in a hyper-competitive marketplace.

Social media highly facilitates relationships in customer relationship management (CRM). Social media channels and social sites help marketers to reach more customers faster.

Traditional advertising like creative development and media purchases to launch a print ad campaign, will take more time than posting ads on Twitter and Facebook campaigns. Social media also significantly lowers costs when targeting and engaging audiences across multiple channels, segments and locations.

Need of Using Analytics

Need of Using Analytics



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- Social Media Analytics -

"the use of insight, derived through social listening and predictive analytic techniques, and embedded within business as usual processes, that enable an organization to more effectively interact with consumers by leveraging the collective feedback and intelligence of the global consumer community."

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Notes:

IBM defines Social Media Analytics as "the use of insight, derived through social listening and predictive analytic techniques, and embedded within business as usual

processes, that enable an organization to more effectively interact with consumers by leveraging the collective feedback and intelligence of the global consumer community."

Need of Using Analytics

Need of Using Analytics



IBM ICE (Innovation Centre for Education)

- It helps measure the pulse of the users and engaging the customers to promote the brand advocacy and more sales
- It aggregates and analyzes online conversations in industry and customer and social activity generated by brands across social channels.
- Social analytics enable organizations to improving brand awareness and reputation, marketing and sales effectiveness, and customer satisfaction and advocacy

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Figure 1-13. Need of Using Analytics

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Notes:

Over the past decade the volume of social data has and is increasing exponentially. For example, in 2009, Twitters daily posts on its platform had a hit of 10 million. The Wall Street Journal had reported that at the end of December 2011, Facebook had 845 million active users and more than 425 million of them accessed Facebook daily.

So when the user generated content or data available in real time grows phenomenally, it poses a challenge to the brands and marketers on how to reliably measure the pulse of the users and engage the customers to promote the brand to increase sales. So Social Media Analytics becomes an important aspect.

Awareness Inc defines Social Media Analytics as "An evolving business discipline that aggregates and analyzes Online conversations (industry, competitive, prospect, consumer, and customer) and social activity generated by brands across social

channels. Social analytics enable organizations to act on the derived intelligence for business results, improving brand awareness and reputation, marketing and sales effectiveness, customer satisfaction and advocacy."

Need of Using Analytics

Need of Using Analytics



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- Social Analytics enables gathering information from social networking sites
- It helps businesses to better understand customer sentiment, users' attitudes, build rich consumer profiles and effective business strategies.
- They impact both the business and marketing strategies as a whole.

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Figure 1-14. Need of Using Analytics

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Notes:

Social Analytics is not just merely listening in on social media or analyzing social data on whether a Facebook update receives a "Like" or if a Twitter post enjoys a retweet. It is about the discovery of how the content and conversation impacts customers and business.

Social analytics enables gathering information from social networking sites thereby helping businesses to better understand customer sentiment and users' attitudes, build rich consumer profiles and effective business strategies. They impact both the business and marketing strategies as a whole.

Social Analytics is concerned about collecting and analyzing the statistical and digital data on how the users would interface with an organization. It is a primary form of business intelligence and is used to identify, predict and respond to consumer

behavior. For example, browsing a shopping cart like Ebay, purchasing clothes at a store using a member card, or sharing special offers from a site such as Snap deal on the social networks. On each click, the data about the online activity is being collected, monitored and analyzed to be used in some way.

Need of Using Analytics

Need of Using Analytics



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- The starting step to be done is setting up the social monitoring dashboards
- The final goal achieved is to use the insight derived from these dashboards for higher engagement, sales and brand advocacy
- To establish the audience in social analytics, start by defining the product, brand and service domains.

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Figure 1-15. Need of Using Analytics

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Notes:

The dashboards informs how social marketing campaigns are developed and optimized for higher engagement, sales and brand advocacy.

Need of Using Analytics



- The social monitoring solutions like Sysomos, and Radian6, will help see what conversations define the product domains, and how and where they are distributed
- Influencer relations and setting up alerts for key influencers when they mention specific trends, keywords or brands

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Figure 1-16. Need of Using Analytics

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Notes:

The social monitoring solutions like Sysomos, and Radian6, will help see what conversations define the product domains, and how and where they are distributed.

Influencer relations and setting up alerts for key influencer when they mention specific trends, keywords or brands.

Need of Using Analytics



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- Social Analytics can be run on different levels
 - based on social campaigns across all platforms
 - drill-downs into specific platform performance per campaign
 - analysis of the success of specific posts within a campaign, and
 - review of all contributors to a campaign to compare their effectiveness in driving the end results

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Figure 1-17. Need of Using Analytics

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Notes:

Social Media Analytics is used to drive the key processes from market strategy and segmentation, to the content development to campaign and engagement strategy to product and service delivery. The Social media data acts as an input to the Customer Analytics integrating with predictive and survey tools to support customer acquisition, retain and grow strategies.

Social Analytics vs Web Analytics

Social Analytics vs Web Analytics



- Social analytics consist of web analytics, engagement, and revenue generated from social media
- Web Analytics enables measuring, collecting and analyzing web traffic data to understand the user behavior on websites only

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Figure 1-18. Social Analytics vs Web Analytics

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Notes:

"Social analytics consist of web analytics, engagement and revenue generated from social." The web analytics and engagement metrics is used to direct the marketing decisions and directions, while new customer acquisition rates, shorter customer acquisition time and higher lead conversion rates are among the top sales effectiveness metrics.

Web Analytics is also a promising term which enables measuring, collecting and analyzing website traffic data to understand the user behavior on websites only. It improves the user experience and conversion rate whereas social analytics helps gather information from social networking sites and helps businesses better understand customer sentiment, users' attitudes, build rich consumer profiles and build effective business strategies.

Web Analytics

Web Analytics



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- The websites uses social analytics tools like Web Logs, Google Analytics, Yahoo Analytics, IBM Social Media Analytics, WebTrends and many more



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Figure 1-19. Web Analytics

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Notes:

The Web Analytics Association defines web analytics as the measurement, collection, analysis, and reporting of Web data for the purposes of understanding and optimizing web usage. Web analytics tells about traffic levels, referral sources and user behavior on a web site.

There are also many challenges involved such as the accelerating growth of data volume, making it difficult to capture and analyze web data. Unstructured social media data has to be integrated with enterprise structured data, where multiple web interaction platforms like PC or smartphone adds to data capture and integration challenges.

The websites uses social analytics tools like Web Logs, Google Analytics, Yahoo Analytics, IBM Social Media Analytics, Web Trends and many more.

Web analytics is not just a tool for measuring web traffic. It can also be used as a tool for business and market research, and to assess and improve the effectiveness of a website. It becomes easy to find how users interact with the website and to improve

the design and functionality. It helps to estimate and compare how the traffic to a website changes after the launch of a new advertising campaign. Web analytics is useful to provide information about the number of visitors to a website and the number of page views. It helps measure traffic and popularity trends which is a key factor for market research.

Two Types of Web Analytics

Two Types of Web Analytics



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- Off-site web analytics refers to the web measurement and analysis of a website. It measures a website's audience, visibility, and buzz (comments) that is happening on the web as a whole.
- On-site web analytics is used to measure a visitor's behavior and conversions once on a website. The data is compared against the KPI's (Key Performance Indicators) for performance, and is used to improve a website or marketing campaign's audience response

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Figure 1-20. Two Types of Web Analytics

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Notes:

There are two types of web analytics - **off-site** and **on-site** web analytics.

- Off-site web analytics refers to the web measurement and analysis of a website. It measures a website's audience, visibility and buzz (comments) happening on the web as a whole.
- On-site web analytics is used to measure a visitor's behavior and conversions once on a website. It measures the performance of the website in a commercial context. The data is compared against the KPI's (Key Performance Indicators) for performance, and is used to improve a website or marketing campaign's

audience response. Google Analytics is a good example of a widely used on-site web analytics service.

There are some most common terms that describe visitors' behavior on a Web site. After-click tracking (ACT) also known as clickstream is a study of the paths that visitors take through the site. Click-through rate (CTR) is a metric used to calculate how often a banner advertisement is clicked, and compared with how many times it is viewed.

Conversion occurs when closing the deal i.e., when a visitor becomes a buyer, subscriber, or member.

Terms used by Web Analytics Tools

Terms used by Web Analytics Tools



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- **Entry page** is the page at which the visitor entered your site. The count is listed by Web analytics tools.
- **Exit page** is the point at which the navigational path within the site ends or where the customer exits the site.
- **Page** is a definable unit of content.
- **Page view** is a request for a specific file, or an event such as a mouse click

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Figure 1-21. Terms used by Web Analytics Tools

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Notes:

Entry page is the page at which the visitor entered your site. The count is listed by Web analytics tools. Exit page is the point at which the navigational path within the site ends or where the customer exits the site.

Navigation means clicking from one page to another within a web site, or sometimes from one web site to another.

Terms used by Web Analytics Tools



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Terms used by Web Analytics Tools

- **Visitor** is the uniquely identified client that is generating the page views or hits within a defined time period
- **Session** is also called as a visit, and is the time from when a visitor logs on to the site to when he leaves
- A **Hit** is a request for a file from the web server and it is available only in log analysis
- **Bounce Rate** is the percentage of visits that are single page visits

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Figure 1-22. Terms used by Web Analytics Tools

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Notes:

Session is also called as a visit, and is the time from when a visitor logs on to the site to when he leaves. The sessions can be more than the number of unique visitors which means that some users visited the site more than once. A Hit is a request for a file from the web server and it is available only in log analysis. The total number of visits or page views provides a more realistic and accurate assessment of popularity. Bounce Rate is the percentage of visits that are single page visits.

There are a few more terms involved in statistical measures in the web analytics software that needs to be known. Aggregate data is a summary of the information that the web analytics program collects. It is presented in groups rather than individual level statistics. Segment is a subset of the site traffic for a defined period of time, filtered in some way to gain greater analytical insight: e.g., by campaign (e-mail, banner, PPC, affiliate), by visitor type (new vs returning, repeat buyers, high value), by referrer.

Average lifetime value (ALV) defines an individual visitor's lifetime value in monetary terms by tracking all the past orders. This could be helpful in determining to whom to send private sales or special discount offers. A Benchmark is a clearly defined point of reference from which measurements can be made. It acts as a standard when judging the effectiveness of the advertising and marketing initiatives.

Terms used by Web Analytics Tools

Terms used by Web Analytics Tools



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- Conversion is the number of times a desired outcome was accomplished. It may show specific conversions and how many events, page views, visits, or unique visitors were associated with the conversion
- Conversion Rate is the ratio of conversions over a relevant denominator

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Figure 1-23. Terms used by Web Analytics Tools

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Notes:

Conversion occurs when closing the deal i.e., when a visitor becomes a buyer, subscriber, or member.

Conversion is the number of times a desired outcome was accomplished. It may show specific conversions and how many events, page views, visits, or unique visitors were associated with the conversion.

Conversion Rate is the ratio of conversions over a relevant denominator.

Types of Web Analytics

Types of Web Analytics



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- Server-side analytics tools that help us store lots of data on the Web server. No need to worry about a competitor seeing the hidden data because the data is stored in-house.
- Client-side analytics is used to capture the data only for pages that need to be tracked. It reduces the amount of data to be processed and easier to identify the key performance indicators (KPIs)
- Hosted Analytics provide solutions that are hosted by a service provider on its server.

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Figure 1-24. Types of Web Analytics

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Notes:

There are different types of Web analytics. There are Server-side analytic tools that help us store lots of data on the Web server. It is advantageous as there is no need to worry about a competitor seeing the hidden data because the data is stored in-house. Client-side analytics is used to capture the data only for pages that need to be tracked. It reduces the amount of data to be stored or processed and can make it easier for you to identify the key performance indicators (KPIs) when looking at the data.

On the other hand, Hosted Analytics provide solutions that are hosted by a service provider on its server.

Analytics Needs - The output of social media users from a Twitter and Facebook post contains valuable customer thoughts, recommendations, trends and preferences. These are highly required by the organizations to gain powerful new insights that can help increase the revenues of business and improve satisfaction and loyalty.

Social media analytics helps the organizations to identify which social media tools and strategies are measurably benefiting their objectives. This data helps the

organizations to measure the return on investment (ROI) on their social media strategies, and also to continually plan how best they can use social media to their advantage.

Social sites, e-commerce sites, interactive real-time chat apps, e-mails, and social media streams are the various means of web interactions between businesses and their customers. These are important for the business's growth. Web data and surveys give a better picture of the customer-business relationship and also help in identifying customer trends. It is also useful in assessing the effectiveness of marketing campaigns and optimizing marketing spend. Customer experience is improved through faster service, thereby driving business growth and enhancing reputation.

Each individual visitor brings in his own set of data that has to be collected, measured, analyzed and reported. And there are plenty of tools that can turn all of that collected information into an easy-to-understand report that gives the much-needed insight into the unique Web visitors. With this knowledge, it can be better seen how effective the website is and what changes need to be done in order to make it even better.

When a web site generates income or leads, then it should use Web analytics. Major e-commerce brands use Web analytics data to make real-time changes to their sites. Marketers use analytics to understand which programs are paying off and which ones simply take up space. Online lead generators use web analytics to measure how the keywords are working, and the web portals depend on these metrics to analyze traffic to their advertisers.

The analytics can help business leaders to identify and understand what is important to different customers, follow up with the next action and obtain the appropriate response that matches with the customers. But for this, the business organizations need to consider the public users' views about them to their advantage. Bringing together the online conversations and posts spread on Facebook or Twitter or a blog and structuring around them can significantly improve insights for a variety of organizations. For example, building better customer segmentations and profiles, understanding a customer's interests and role in influencing others, predicting why a customer or client might leave the company, and many other benefits.

For business organizations to obtain the complete benefits of social analytics, organizations must learn what factors have to be measured, how to analyze the data, apply the insights gained which help to predict future customer behaviors, measure the outcomes of marketing initiatives and follow the changing or developing trends in the marketplace. The key performance indicators (KPIs) have to be drawn from the social media and linked to the organizational objectives. The KPI's may vary with each organization, but measuring the volume of conversations over time and

performing sentiment analysis (classifying the nature of a comment whether positive, negative or neutral?) should be standard and followed globally.

There are also some more reasons to be added in a web or social site view on why web analytics should be used. It enables to identify which site referrers generate the most traffic and revenue. The site referrer is the URL of the previous Web page from which a link was actually followed. It helps in identifying which web site owners' relationships have to be maintained. Regarding the business perspective, web analytics also helps in determining what products have the highest browse-to-buy ratios. So the lowest revenue-generating products can be stripped off. In the marketing perspective, it enables which advertising campaigns work and which ones do not work so that they can cut off promotional campaigns that do not work.

Web analytics is also important as they showcase the visitor's actions on a site, giving you real insights into what the visitors do, enabling the measurement of the website metrics to optimize the website, giving a proof of the website's ROI and projects on what needs to improve to reduce barriers to sales and optimize the website for conversions.

Social and Web Analytics Technical Requirements

Social and Web Analytics Technical Requirements



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- An Analytics solution should be capable of listening, measuring and analyzing social media performance
- The three main tasks to consider when doing Web Analytics are:
 - Measuring quantitative and qualitative data
 - Continuously improving the website
 - Aligning the measurement strategy with the business strategy

Notes:

Social Media Analytics helps the organization analyze content in social media. It helps to gain insight into social media discussions related to key focus for analysis. The Organization can understand the facts about what consumers are saying about a brand, the most talked about product attributes, the feedback about the product, the competition for the product in the market and many more.

Businesses need to have social analytics that can help in understanding and anticipating customer behavior and needs, based on customer insights across all social media channels, optimize supplier interactions, market and sell the right product and service at the right price to the right market, service customers flawlessly and predict and drive customer loyalty.

The three main tasks that each and every business has to consider when doing Web Analytics are:

- Measuring quantitative and qualitative data
- Continuously improving the website
- Aligning the measurement strategy with the business strategy

Social and Web Analytics Technical Requirements

Social and Web Analytics Technical Requirements



IBM ICE (Innovation Centre for Education)

- An Analytics solution should be capable of listening, measuring and analyzing social media performance



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Figure 1-26. Social and Web Analytics Technical Requirements

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Notes:

An Analytics solution should be capable of listening, measuring and analyzing social media performance to more effectively give the following outcomes:

The Social Analytics should enable understanding the customer needs to target new offers and products in a cost effective manner through different social media channels.

Enhance the reputation by making evidence based messaging decisions that target the right stakeholders at the right time in the market.

Respond more quickly with accurate, timely and relevant insight into customer requests to ensure a consistent brand experience across all channels. It should also be highly scalable and should be able to perform a robust search that can pull information from multiple social media channels, such as blogs, Twitter, Facebook and LinkedIn and many others.

Social and Web Analytics Technical Requirements

Social and Web Analytics Technical Requirements



IBM ICE (Innovation Centre for Education)

- A Web analytics tool meets the requirements to capture and analyze the data such as
 - site visits and unique site visits (independent visitors as opposed to one visitor visiting a site multiple times) ,
 - the most and the least viewed pages,
 - the search keywords,
 - the physical location of site visitors such as city or country and the peak access time of visitors,
 - the last page visitors access before leaving, the web browsers that visitors use

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Figure 1-27. Social and Web Analytics Technical Requirements

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Notes:

A web analytics tool such as Google Analytics meets the requirements to capture and analyze the data such as site visits and unique site visits (independent visitors as opposed to one visitor visiting a site multiple times) , the most and the least viewed pages, the search keywords, the physical location of site visitors such as city or country, the peak access time of visitors, the last page visitors access before leaving, the web browsers that visitors use (the analytics tool also informs if the visitors have browsed on a Windows machine, and if the users have accessed either Firefox or a Chrome browser).

Social Analytics Main Basic Activities

Social Analytics Main Basic Activities



- Listening: Social media listening is the process of aggregating and assessing information about a company, individual, product or brand on the social site.
- Monitoring and analysis: Social media monitoring and analysis involves looking for trends over time such as real-time consumer choices, intentions and sentiments.
- Understanding the consumers: Businesses insights into their user base, including age, gender, relationship status, educational, background, work history and socio-economics.
- Behavior analysis: Businesses can tailor campaigns and content to encourage sharing and commenting by users

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Figure 1-28. Social Analytics Main Basic Activities

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Notes:

Social and web analytics tools gather information from social networking sites such as Facebook and Twitter, blogs and news feeds. There is a range of tools available to track and analyze social analytics but the main basic activities are:

- *Listening*: Social media listening is the process of aggregating and assessing information about a company, individual, product or brand on the social site.
- *Monitoring and analysis*: Social media monitoring and analysis involves looking for trends over time such as real-time consumer choices, intentions and sentiments.
- *Understanding your consumers*: Access to rich social data via analytics tools gives businesses insights into their user base, including age, gender, relationship status, educational, background, work history and socio-economics.
- *Behavior analysis*: This type of information allows businesses to tailor campaigns and content to encourage sharing and commenting by users.

Social Media Environment

Social Media Environment



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- The Social media environment comprises of 3 components
 - Content, made interesting and available that attract users.
 - Technology, users access through multiple devices and
 - Service at the back end which supports users

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Figure 1-29. Social Media Environment

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Notes:

Social media impacts people's lives as its usage is increasing daily and its behavior is also being analyzed by researchers or by Social Analytic tools. They have gained new insight into the user behavior and the social interaction through social networks, which includes Business related web sites, social or business networking sites, video sharing sites and blogs and many more.

In the recent years, social media has grown both in terms of design and in terms of users and it has become a platform for rich expression and exchange of social media content. The defining elements are the social environment and the interactions within it.

In addition to the changing social media platforms, the data is always evolving and a great example of this is data on the social networks and sites and even mobile data. Social Data, Customer Data and Mobile Data all go hand in hand. Basically, social analytics is not just about what consumers interact with on their computers, but more and more what they do on social networks as well.

For example, a leading sport shoe producer during the soccer World Cup analyzed real-time messages on the social media. It followed how comments evolved through the time period and tried to understand the sentiment behind each story of the consumer. The marketing team was

then able to improve its sponsorship activities and dynamically reprioritize TV advertisement themes and product launch strategies accordingly.

The Social media environment comprises of 3 components

- Content, which is made interesting and available that attracts users
- Technology that users access through multiple devices
- Service at the back end, which supports users

Social media environment is essential because it allows users for content sharing instantly and also facilitates access to the social sites from multiple devices. The content comprises a shared media experience or shared participatory experience. Each user accessing the environment utilizes a device alone or in conjunction with other devices to complete a sharing experience.

A persistent customized social media environment definition establishes a user environment which provides social networking services as well as content sharing and allows users who are connected to the persistent customized social media environment definition to experience instant messages, while those users who connect to the persistent customized social media environment at a later time will receive messages once they enter the environment.

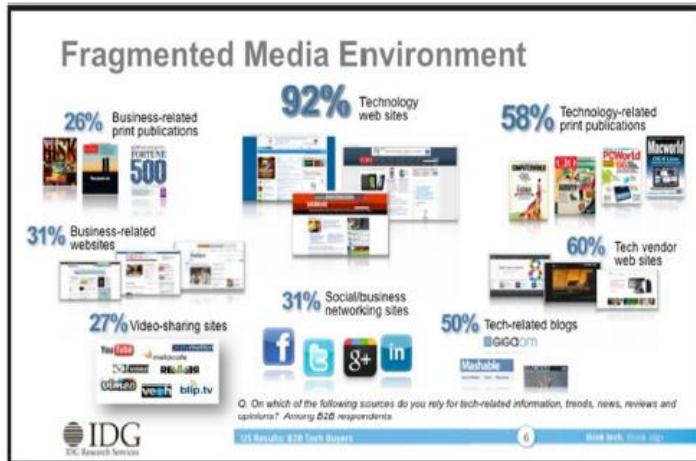
Social media should be both a marketing and a valuable strategy component and be more relevant and effective at driving business results across all online channels like email, websites, mobile devices, and display ads.

Social Media Environment

Social Media Environment



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Figure 1-30. Social Media Environment

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Notes:

The survey done by IDG Research services have predicted that 92% go to technology web sites, 60% tech vendor web sites, and 58% tech-related print publications and 31% go to social networking sites.

Impact of Social Media on Business

Impact of Social Media on Business



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- Social media offers an opportunity to connect and interact with the customers, promote brands, and drive traffic to the site.
- Social analytics measure the impact of social media on business.
- Key business performance measures (KPIs) can be used that measures and ultimately makes the business stronger.

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Figure 1-31. Impact of Social Media on Business

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Notes:

Social networks and blogs allow people to form connections with other users and brands, and to share messages, videos, photos, music, and many more. The use of social media is growing exponentially. It is evident that the power of social media and the impact it has on the business of marketing also grows.

Social media offers an opportunity to connect and interact with the customers, promote brands, and drive traffic to the site. Social analytics measure the impact of social media on business. To help marketers address the question of social media's impact on business, key business performance measures (KPIs) can be used that measures and ultimately makes the business stronger.

Social media websites such as Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn and Pinterest offer a great opportunity for businesses to gain the attention of customers, while simultaneously building a brand image. There are many techniques that the businesses can employ whenever they start a new venture like starting a new product or brand.

A Software Training Company when starting a new training course or Calendar course can improvise or market themselves by the creation of brand profiles on social networks such as Facebook fan pages or Twitter, and creative advertising via branded podcasts and applications, also known as apps.

A 2013 'Digital Influence' survey found that social media greatly influences online sales, where 30.8% said Facebook and 31.1% of respondents said blogs influence a purchase. Some of the social sites influencing the business are:

- **Facebook.** Social network available in 70 languages with over 1 billion users worldwide
- **Twitter.** A Micro blogging site where users post messages limited to 140 characters. More than half a billion tweets are sent every day
- **YouTube.** Video sharing site owned by Google, with 800 million unique users and a million unique visitors
- **LinkedIn.** Business focused networking site with over 8 million members in the UK, and 2 million companies' profiles worldwide.
- **Google+.** Social network launched in 2011 that attracted 25 million members in its first month, and has grown fast since.
- **Pinterest.** Pinterest has just over 25 million active users
- **Instagram.** This is a photo sharing social network used by more than 100 million users every month, with 40 million photos shared every day.

Social media platforms provide the perfect opportunity to improvise the business since it is growing at the fastest rate across the globe. People are connected on a global scale and participate in live conversations through online observation.

A simple "Liking" a brand on Facebook can reach quickly throughout the various social media channels. The individuals trust the opinions of their peers far more than an attractive magazine advertisement.

Millions of people review a product or a brand or a service through social media sites in text, graphical or using video through YouTube, which is shared with other social media websites. As a consequence, the public end users increasingly search in social media sites to find reviews on various products or brands and services to help them make buying decisions.

As a result, companies promote marketing their products on popular sites like Facebook, twitter or YouTube for users to review.

Impact of Social Media on Business

Impact of Social Media on Business



IBM ICE (Innovation Centre for Education)

- Communicating with Customers - Social media helps to connect and engage with the customers to impact change and form closer relationships with the customers.
 - By engaging in social media, the company can interact directly with customers
 - Creating interesting and useful content, sharing the content and participating in online conversations can be done
 - Responding to customer service issues in a timely manner involving the brand can be done with a quick and courteous reply

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Figure 1-32. Impact of Social Media on Business

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Notes:

Audience can use and participating in online conversations can be done. Responding to customer service issues in a timely manner of a problem involving the brand can usually be diffused with a quick and courteous reply.

Companies can consider even the negative reviews about their products to their advantage. By utilizing social media effectively, companies can easily reach out to the dissatisfied customers by their own social media environment, to find innovative ways of improving the product. There are billions of status updates, tweets, uploads and shares daily from hundreds of millions of social media users. Information is gained on:

- What are the competitors doing?
- What are the Employees comments on the new product?
- What do people think of the company's new products?
- What are the big news stories of the day in the market?

Impact of Social Media on Business

Impact of Social Media on Business



IBM ICE (Innovation Centre for Education)

- **Create Collaboration** - Social entrepreneurs who promote their products or brands tend to focus on collaboration
- **Become an Expert** - Serving as a primary source for information and insight from reporters, bloggers and other media outlets should be the target
- **Stay Relevant** - needs knowing how people feel about the topic allowing to effectively engaging in online discussions

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Figure 1-33. Impact of Social Media on Business

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Notes:

Create Collaboration

While many companies are focused on competition, social entrepreneurs who promote their products or brands tend to focus on collaboration. Social media networks allow finding and connecting with like-minded businesses and creating deep relationships with those who are committed to a cause.

Become an Expert

Using the social networks to simply promote the business requires focus on building knowledge about the social problem to be solved. The more knowledgeable the audience becomes, the more inspired they will be to take action.

Becoming an expert and serving as a primary source for information and insight from reporters, bloggers and other media outlets should be the target. Ultimately, this will drive people to the company's website turning the user's interest towards the product or the brand.

Stay Relevant

To keep up with the trends and grow the business, set up Google Alerts for news and information that is impacting the social change and concentrate on what is generating conversations by searching Twitter or Facebook hashtags or joining LinkedIn groups. Just knowing about a topic is not enough; it also needs to know how people feel about the topic allowing to effectively engage in online discussions.

To know whether the social media efforts are working, it is important that the networks grow in followers and connections and in engagement. This will ensure the content shared and the overall online presence is relevant to the users and it helps in creating change and growing the business.

Identify those people in the network, connect with them to attract shares, and likes which help the brand name. Social media has a huge influence on business and how businesses engage with their target market.

The use of social media to share and engage with others continues to grow at an astounding rate. So businesses need to develop and implement a sustainable social media strategy in order to successfully take advantage of this rapidly changing environment.

Impact of Social Media on Business

Impact of Social Media on Business



IBM ICE (Innovation Centre for Education)

- Insights - Setting specific goals for each social media campaign and developing metrics based on those goals to generate brand awareness.
 - Social media engagement can be measured by the number of page views, page clicks, comments, shares, and likes, and is an indicator of sales outcomes.
 - Identifying and tracking such leading indicators is valuable

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Figure 1-34. Impact of Social Media on Business

SWA011.0

Notes:

Insights

Social media experts have proposed some insights to improve the impact of social media on business such as setting specific goals for each social media campaign and developing metrics based on those goals to generate brand awareness. Metrics have to be ensured that they are valid. Social media engagement can be measured by the number of page views, page clicks, comments, shares, and likes, and is an indicator of sales outcomes. Identifying and tracking such leading indicators is valuable as companies can gain an early sense of how well their strategies will pay off.

A social media dashboard shows a comprehensive view of the company's or brand's performance. The dashboard saves monitoring time and also ensures that marketers have real-time access to how important metrics are trending. To truly understand the impact of social media, companies must be willing to conduct experiments. Measuring the consumer activity before and after a social media campaign is a useful way of assessing performance. Measuring the impact of social media requires investing in metrics,

including tools and technology, models or customer databases.

Measures should ideally be designed to offer developmental feedback. Vendors are constantly developing new tools to measure the impact of social media. Marketers should focus on utilizing a handful of tracking tools that fit their goals.

Leverage Social Media for Better Services

Leverage Social Media for Better Services



IBM ICE (Innovation Centre for Education)

- Forming a relationship with the customers.
- Communication and gathering valuable feedback on what customers feel about the products, brands or services ensures better business.
- Building a community for the products enable people to more likely to share the products.
- Sharing the content via social media enables continual growth.

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Figure 1-35. Leverage Social Media for Better Services

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Notes:

The power of social media can be leveraged for better services by revolving around forming a relationship with the customers. Communication can be quite frequent and gathering valuable feedback is also possible.

Getting real time feedback on what customers feel about the products, brands or services ensures better business.

Building a community for the products enable people to more likely share the products. Sharing the content via social media enables continual growth.

Going through the likes and comment on social sites like Facebook and Twitter and analyzing what worked well would also improve the business approach.

If an order is to be placed for a new product, then it is advisable to look to gather information on the existing similar products and understand the product market for a new product by referring social sites like YouTube.

It allows to view videos based on count of how many users have viewed already, to see what's new and what's popular. The videos may also have a Statistics link on who viewed them, and which sites brought most of their views. Monitoring the competitors on Facebook or Twitter and analyzing the comments and feedback and followers would also help enhance better services.

It is essential to assess the social media on the customer objectives to increase the value of existing customer relationships, understand the customer's interest, where and when they use social media and influencers on the brands.

Measuring the share of voice, sentiments also helps improve services.

Leverage Social Media for Better Services

Leverage Social Media for Better Services



IBM ICE (Innovation Centre for Education)

- Listen - Understanding what is being said about the organization, brand, product, or service
- Interact - Join in the conversation. Customers expect organizations to attend to their concerns and suggestions.
- React - Respond to customer feedback and insights.
- Predict - Predicting where future resources should be allocated to properly deliver the best business results.

Notes:

On the whole there are simple four steps that could be adopted to help organizations analyze and leverage social media to deliver increased insights and value to the business.

- **Listen** - Understanding what is being said about the organization, brand, product, or service
- **Interact** - Join in the conversation. Customers expect organizations to attend to their concerns and suggestions.
- **React** - Respond to customer feedback and insights. If an organization listens and interacts, but doesn't make appropriate business adjustments, then they fail with their customers, supporters and clients.
- **Predict** - Predicting where future resources should be allocated to properly deliver the best business results.

Listen

Social networks help organizations to connect on a deeper level with their audience and with what they share via apps, likes and comments. Social media has invaded consumers' space globally. Some statistical data reveal that there are about a billion users on Facebook; 45% consumers ask friends for advice before purchasing; 500 billion impressions about products and services are annually shared online by consumers of which 60% are shared on Facebook and 90% of consumers trust peer recommendations.

The goal is that the organizations need to listen to what the public is saying. The companies realize that it can help them make better business decisions based on consumer wants, likes and needs. Listening properly can be as simple as monitoring Facebook likes and tweets on Twitter. "Listening" also means understanding the organization's reach, consumer sentiment and understanding how these indicators are trending over time.

Determining where the conversations are happening, whether on Facebook, YouTube, LinkedIn, forums, blog posts, Twitter, or another network and be present and engage actively in all the sites where the audience are talking about the brand. Also knowing when the audience is talking about the brand is important.

Knowing when the content is put out on any events or holidays or promotional time would be advantageous. The key is to determine the specific customers' habits and interacting with them and clients during the time when they are most

receptive to an interaction.

Interact

Customers maintain relationships with companies. Focusing on what the people are saying about a product and whether the comments are negative, Positive or Neutral is called sentiment analysis. It is important to respond and comment in a conversation and also to track the sentiment over time and determine where it is improving.

Social media help companies gain influence and intimacy with customers, to increase scale and speed to reach them, and lower costs to convert them. The key is deeper levels of interaction with the brandsâ€™ audience, which will provide invaluable input to improve business predictions.

Customer Interaction is one of the essential components which help in leveraging the power of social media for better business.

React

Identifying the influencers, such as bloggers who receive thousands of views and comments per post, is essential in order to get review about the product or service and brand. What the advocates of the brand share about its integrity and quality, how many people are speaking about a particular product or brand, the volume of posts and comments on the brand is important. If a consumer "likes" a Facebook page of a notepad, he has an affinity with a certain type of brand or brand types.

Analysis helps to understand what the consumers really want and social listening is the key. Social media behavior can indicate if a person likes to purchase and if they will attempt to influence others.

For Example, a company specializing in kids' items did a good job of reacting when it came to their number-one selling product, an activity table, which was also highly rated. In spite the positive feedback they started to see the negative comments on Facebook, Amazon reviews, Twitter and other sites.

A pattern could be identified that the majority of the negative sentiment revolved around a defect like a side stand to keep some stationaries on the table being missing. Upon reviewing the data and discussing, if they could identify the defect it would invite more customers.

This reacting can be accomplished through the proper use of social analytics. Without these actionable insights, the company would have missed its chance to increase the product demand.

Predict

Why a customer behaves in a particular way, is critically important, and also the hardest to understand. This requires more social analytics, like more focus into specific events, times and reactions than just observational listening.

Determining why the audience behaves differently and how the brand can strengthen its bond with that audience and the influencers gives significant ROI.

Marketing analysts should be aware of how social analytics help connect the customer wants and needs with business objectives. The predictive phase of social analytics begins with the ability of organizations to take their insights from the proper collection and analysis of data and use these to place "strategic bets" to move the company forward.

Leverage Social Media for Better Services

Leverage Social Media for Better Services



IBM ICE (Innovation Centre for Education)

- The keys to success in leveraging the power of social analytics are:
 - Start with the problem and not the data
 - Listen before interacting, reacting and predicting in the four phase approach
 - Share data to get the data from consumers
 - Let social analytics analyze the impact

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Figure 1-37. Leverage Social Media for BetterServices

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Notes:

The keys to success in leveraging the power of social analytics are:

1. Start with the problem and not the data
2. Listen before interacting, reacting and predicting in the four phase approach
3. Share data to get the data from consumers
4. Let social analytics analyze the impact

As part of the business objectives of a company, executives must determine how to make the social media actionable. Organizations need to move beyond simply capturing the buzz around their brand. Organizations need to advance their social analytic listening skills and properly interact, react, and predict. Going beyond basic buzz monitoring will definitely help drive the real business results and assist in the future strategy of the organization.

Social media is an integrated part of the revenue chain and business decision pyramid. 75% of executives believe that the customer and client data generated by social media

marketing can dramatically improve their commercial success. Social analytics have to be properly utilized to stay ahead of the competition.

Social media can encourage urging visitors to share the products on social media through simple prominent share buttons to the product pages, emails and any blog posts about products. If there are prominent bloggers in the product area, involving them in the products can open up to the audience. Many sites use blogger giveaways to promote their product through trial products.

Promotional events like competitions, draws and contests are another good way to encourage sales via social media. A twitter competition for followers to tweet their favorite product on the site and offering a prize for the best tweet can be done. Introducing products on the social media can be done in a simple way like running a product of the week campaign.

Social media can help to introduce limited time offer and they are a great way to provide customers with a reason to buy at that time. Limiting the offers to the social media followers and fans on Face book or twitter is another great way to reward them for paying attention to that product on the social media. It also helps being a part of the community, and to encourage them to keep an eye on the updates on the product.

It is also useful to encourage the followers and fans to sign up for email newsletters that may inform about the promotional offers on the products. Asking the happy customers to recommend the products or brands on social media is another better way to encourage sales on the website.

Current Analytics Platforms

Current Analytics Platforms



IBM ICE (Innovation Centre for Education)

- There is a vital need to build a community around the company, brand, and products or services.
- Social media analytics and monitoring is a primary form of business intelligence, and it is used to identify, predict, and respond to the consumer behavior
- The right tools and resources will use the customer insights to help personalized sales, marketing, and support experiences leading to improved customer satisfaction and stronger business returns

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Figure 1-38. Current Analytics Platforms

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Notes:

There are plenty of social and web analytics tools available in the market with different features and benefits. The right tools and resources will be able to use the sources of customer insights to help personalized sales, marketing, and support experiences that can lead to improved customer satisfaction and stronger business returns.

Current Analytics Platforms

Current Analytics Platforms



IBM ICE (Innovation Centre for Education)

- Traditional Web Analytics Tools

Google Analytics, Yahoo Web Analytics, Web Trends, Omniture Site Catalyst, Core Metrics, and many more.

- Social Media Analytics Tools

There are tools like IBM Social Media Analytics, Klout, Twitalyzer, and Radian6 that analyzes the social media presence

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Figure 1-39. Current Analytics Platforms

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Notes:

The currently available analytics platforms can be broadly grouped into the following categories:

- Traditional Web Analytics Tools

Google Analytics, Yahoo Web Analytics, Web Trends, Omniture Site Catalyst, Core Metrics, and many more.

- Social Media Analytics Tools

The traditional web analytics tools are specialized in collecting information about the website properties. There are tools like IBM Social Media Analytics, Klout, Twitalyzer, and Radian6 that analyzes how influential and effective is the social media presence.

- Voice of Customer Tools

Tools like OpinionLab, SurveyMonkey, or ForeSee Results project valuable information such as what is wrong and what can be improved upon. The customer base are expressing what they want on a product. It is essential to listen to them to improvise the business.

Current Analytics Platforms

Current Analytics Platforms



IBM ICE (Innovation Centre for Education)

- The specific tools can have many variations, but the essential requirements are:
 - Easy to use dashboard - The social analytics dashboard and monitoring system should suit the specific organization's needs.
 - Real-time support from vendors - Some tools may require more support from the vendors, depending upon the team size and needs, but these are the priority items to be considered when evaluating listening and monitoring tools and
 - Alert and analysis reports.

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Figure 1-40. Current Analytics Platforms

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Notes:

The increased consumer demand for relationships enables organizations to focus on social analytics and its tools. The specific tools can have many variations, but the essential requirements are

- Easy to use dashboard - The social analytics dashboard and monitoring system should suit the specific organization's needs.
- Real-time support from vendors - Some tools may require more support from the vendors, depending upon the team size and needs, but these are the priority items to be considered when evaluating listening and monitoring tools. For Example, a customer online at the point of their buying decision, if a 10% discount coupon can be sent via Flip kart, it will be an incentive for the customer to select the product over a competitor's product.
- Alert and analysis reports.

The right tools are utilized to help collect and convert all unstructured data into actionable data. The proper tool can address the volume, variety and veracity of the data. It is important to determine who are speaking on a product and whether that

individual is a member of the target audience or an extension of that audience or any individual influencers are there. Even with the proper personnel and tools, after collecting and analyzing the data, companies should also take the important step of reacting to the social data.

Social Analytics tools allow marketers to identify sentiments and trends in order to better meet their customer's needs.

Some companies like Whirlpool have used such analytics tools to engage customers in response to their feedback. Many social media monitoring and engagement platforms help them offer sentiment analysis which is to classify social conversations based on positive, negative, and neutral language.

Current Analytics Platforms

Current Analytics Platforms



IBM ICE (Innovation Centre for Education)

- IBM social media analytics can be used to monitor the web for customer sentiment about itself and its competitors.
- It can run through massive amounts of data posted on social channels daily and needs to focus only on the most relevant comments or news posts about its brands that were made in a positive, negative, or neutral sense

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Figure 1-41. Current Analytics Platforms

SWA011.0

Notes:

Tools like IBM social media analytics can be used to monitor the web for customer sentiment about itself and its competitors. Social media analytics tools can be used to monitor and measure the impact of brand perception online, like customer comments on the social media sites Twitter, Facebook, forums or blogs.

This tool can run through massive amounts of data that were posted on social channels each and every day and needs to focus only on the most relevant comments or news posts about its brands, whether they were made in a positive, negative, or neutral sense.

Social Analytics are also required to support functional decisions, such as Share of Voice and Sentiment Analysis. Marketers who are focused on improving the brand reputation need to measure the overall Share of Voice first. To manage and impact reputation, marketers need a more advanced Share of Voice metric such as industry influencers and vocal customers.

This can help the company to identify reputational risks and act on them. This could result in increasing the positive feedback about the company and reducing the negative feedback. The customers and stakeholders can enjoy a more satisfying experience. The global monitoring can be improved, thereby providing greater reliability when comparing results between various sources.

Open Source vs Licensed Platforms

Open Source vs Licensed Platforms



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- Web logs file based

These tools need access to the log files generated by the web server.

Examples - Web Log Expert, AWstats , Webalizer, W3Perl, Splunk and many more

- JavaScript driven tools

The data is gathered via a component in the page, written in JavaScript

Examples - Google Analytics, Piwik, Yahoo analytics, WebTrends, Open Web Analytics and many more

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Figure 1-42. Open Source vs Licensed Platforms

SWA011.0

Notes:

There are various types of social and web analytics tools available in the market. The different types of tools can be classified as

- Web logs file based

Examples - Web Log Expert, AWstats , Webalizer, W3Perl, Splunk and many more

- JavaScript driven tools

Examples - Google Analytics, Piwik, Yahoo analytics, WebTrends, Open Web Analytics and many more.

Open Source vs Licensed Platforms

Open Source vs Licensed Platforms

IBM

IBM ICE (Innovation Centre for Education)

Paid:



webtrends™



Free:

Google Analytics

Webalizer

AWStats

YAHOO! WEB ANALYTICS

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Figure 1-43. Open Source vs Licensed Platforms

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Notes:

Some of the social and web analytics tools are free and some are paid or licensed.

Google Analytics

Google Analytics



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- Track and analyze the social data about the Web traffic caused.
- Determine the keywords that are bringing most of the visitors to visit the web pages.
- Generate an analytics report for the website that includes information about the site visitors, traffic sources to the web, goals and content.

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Figure 1-44. Google Analytics

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Notes:

Google Analytics

Google Analytics is one of the best free tools that is used by any website owner. It can be used to track and analyze the data about Web traffic. It helps to determine what keywords are bringing the most visitors to the web pages and what aspects of the designs are turning them off. This tool will generate a report for the website that includes information about visitors, traffic sources, goals and content.

Google Analytics - Dashboard

Google Analytics - Dashboard



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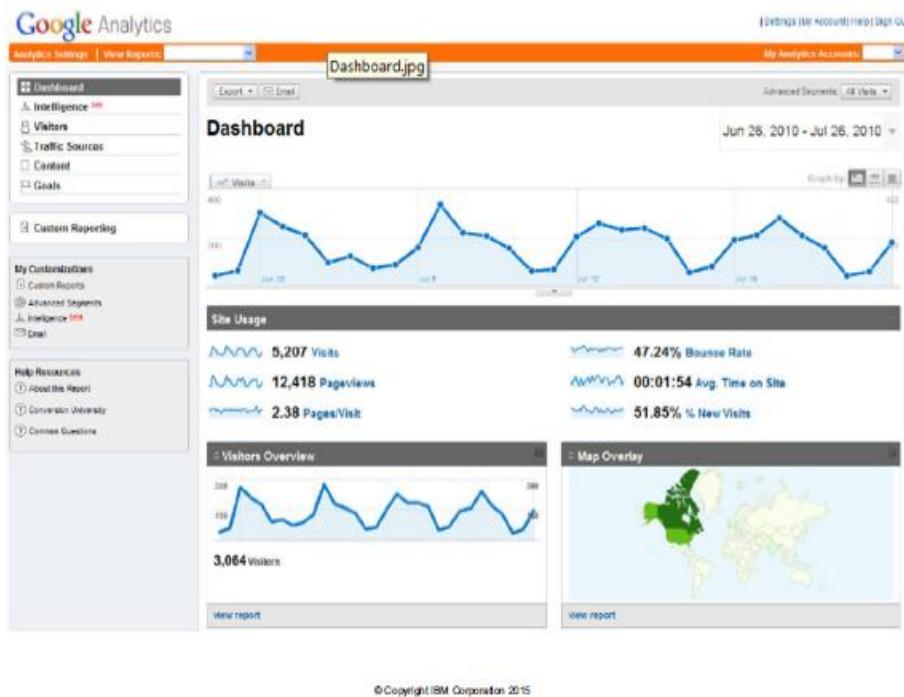


Figure 1-45. Google Analytics - Dashboard

SWA011.0

Notes:

Google Analytics is a service offered by Google that generates detailed statistics about a website's traffic and traffic sources and measures conversions and sales. It is the most widely used website statistics service. The basic service is free of charge and a premium version is available for a fee.

Google Analytics can track visitors from all referrers, including search engines and social networks, direct visits and referring sites. It also tracks display advertising, pay-per-click networks, email marketing, and digital collaterals such as links within PDF documents.

Basic Elements of Google Analytics

Basic Elements of Google Analytics



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- Visitors is the count on number of visitors, the number of page views and unique versus returning visitors
- Traffic Sources which can be direct, referral and the search engine
- Content (Site Interactions) which may include the top content, entry pages, exit pages and the navigation paths
- Goals or Outcomes are the conversion rates, conversion values and the conversion paths

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Figure 1-46. Basic Elements of Google Analytics

SWA011.0

Notes:

The 4 Basic Element of Google Analytics are:

- Visitors-number of visitors, number of page views, unique versus returning visitors
- Traffic Sources -direct, referral, search engine
- Content (Site Interactions) -top content, entry pages, exit pages, navigation paths
- Goals (Outcomes) -conversion rates, conversion values, conversion paths, funnel analysis

The other terms to be focused on Google analytics are:

- Page views-The amount of views your website pages are getting
- Visits -When someone arrives at your website and starts looking at your webpages
- Unique Visitors -The number of distinct people that are visiting (making visits) to your website in a particular period
- Time Spent -Indicates the amount of time a visitor spends on your website and webpages
- Bounce Rate -Indicates the number of people that upon arriving at your website immediately leave

IBM Social Media Analytics

IBM Social Media Analytics



IBM ICE (Innovation Centre for Education)

- Enables rich analysis that provides insight into the critical business functions such as marketing, customer service, product development and supply chain.
- It is built on IBM's analytics platform, and it has been designed to analyze billions of social media comments and gives results through its interactive dashboards and customized reports.

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Figure 1-47. IBM Social Media Analytics

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Notes:

IBM Social Media Analytics

IBM Social Media Analytics helps to enable rich analysis that provides insight into critical business functions such as marketing, customer service, product development and supply chain. It is built on IBM's analytics platform, and it is designed to analyze billions of social media comments and can provide tailored results through interactive dashboards and customized reports.

It helps marketing professionals transform their customer relationships by actively incorporating consumer sentiment and sophisticated analytics into the business and marketing strategy of their organization, so they can be more precise, agile and responsive to market demands.

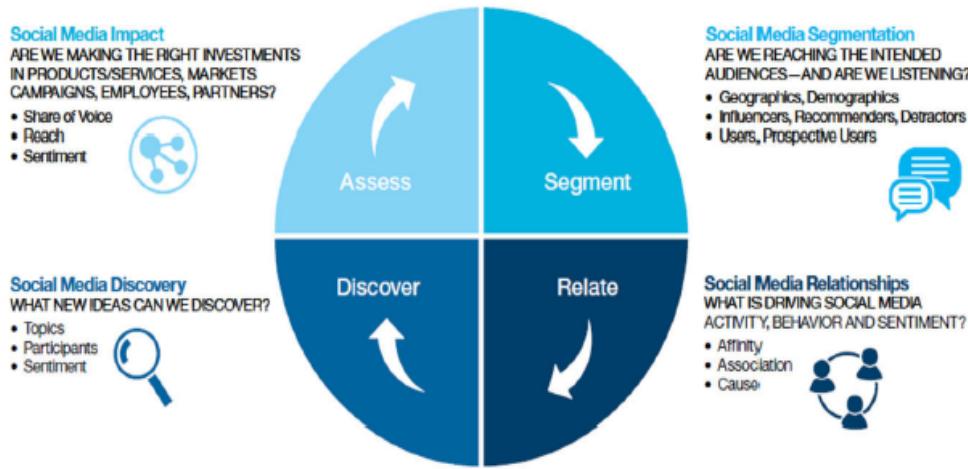
IBM Social Media Analytics

IBM Social Media Analytics



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IBM Social Media Analytics Framework



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Figure 1-48. IBM Social Media Analytics

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Notes:

IBM Social Media Analytics helps organizations to go beyond mere social media "listening" so they can act upon insights and solve business problems. It helps by providing capabilities to measure social media impact, segment audiences, understand relationships and discovers new opportunities. It also helps the organizations to continually improve and refine their business tactics and strategies. Each of these capabilities can be seen as a phase in developing an effective social media approach.

IBM Social Media Analytics

IBM Social Media Analytics



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- It helps in also expanding the analysis by offering related topics beyond the initial search and
- It also enables to communicate the insights throughout the business with collaborative tools.

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Figure 1-49. IBM Social Media Analytics

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Notes:

IBM Social Media Analytics works by analyzing the content drawn from publicly available websites in the form of fragments or "snippets" of text that contain the user's search terms. The snippets are stored in a database that can be further searched and analyzed using dimensions such as date, region or keyword, the tone of the feedback, and other factors to provide insight into consumer attitudes toward your brand, products and services.

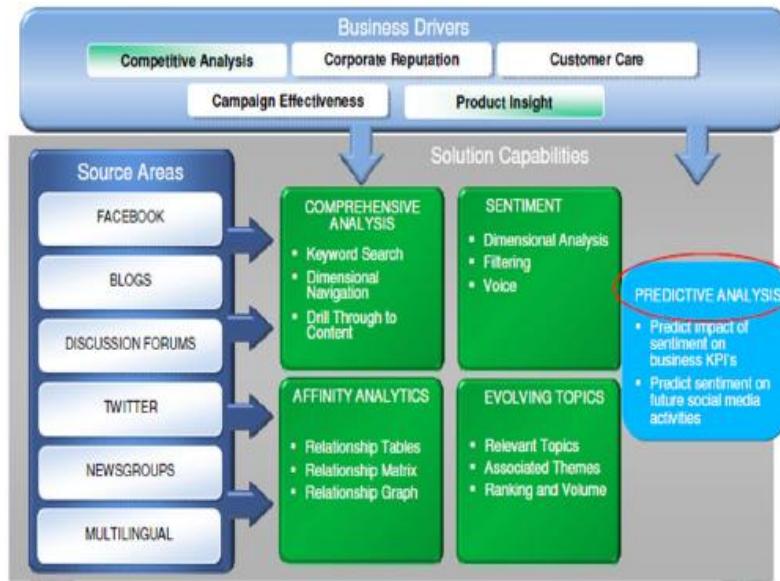
IBM Social Media Analytics then automatically identifies and tags relevant content and processes your analysis results, based on relevance to products or business issues. It helps you expand your analysis by offering related topics beyond your initial search and also enables you to communicate your insights throughout the business with collaborative tools.

IBM Social Media Analytics

IBM Social Media Analytics



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Figure 1-50. IBM Social Media Analytics

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Notes:

IBM Social Media Analytics can help organizations to discover the hidden trends and topics that the common social media searches usually miss.

Other Social And Web Analytics Tools

Other Social And Web Analytics Tools



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- **Open Web Analytics (OWA)** - can be used to track and analyze how people use the websites and applications
- **Crazy Egg** - gives a visual picture of what the site visitors are doing on the Web pages

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Figure 1-51. Other Social And Web Analytics Tools

SWA011.0

Notes:

There are also many other social and web analytics tools.

Open Web Analytics (OWA) is an open source web analytics software that you can use to track and analyze how people use your websites and applications. OWA is licensed under GPL and provides website owners and developers with easy ways to add web analytics to their sites using simple Javascript, PHP, or REST based APIs.

OWA also comes with built-in support for tracking websites made with popular content management frameworks such as WordPress and MediaWiki.

Crazy Egg uses the power of Heat map technology to give a visual picture of what the site visitors are doing on the Web pages. It shows us where the people are moving their mouse on the page and where they click.

This kind of tracking helps to see what areas are catching the most attention and interaction from users. There is a free one-month trial with this service, and prices start at \$9 per month.

Choosing Right Specifications and Optimal Solution

Choosing Right Specifications and Optimal Solution



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- To leverage the synergies that could never be achieved by a single analytics tool alone.
- Client-side software allows tracking all the domains with a single program.
- Server-side solutions are very convenient and often free.
- Hosted solutions mean does not have to keep log files.

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Figure 1-52. Choosing Right Specifications and Optimal Solution

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Notes:

Web analytics experts would have to choose some combination of the three available analytics tool types Server side, Client side and Hosted solutions in order to leverage the synergies that could never be achieved by a single tool alone. Hosted solutions mean it does not have to keep log files. Client-side software allows tracking all the domains with a single program. And server-side solutions are very convenient and often free.

If checking the server-side tools for overall traffic patterns are limited by poor visitor segmentation, then it can be replaced with a client-side tool. Leveraging the benefits of multiple tools gives the insights that are otherwise only available in much more expensive solutions. It can save the money and help to cover all the analytics bases.

Choosing Right Specifications and Optimal Solution

Choosing Right Specifications and Optimal Solution



IBM ICE (Innovation Centre for Education)

- Depends on the factors such as
 - the amount of technical expertise within the company,
 - the solution providing vendor being chosen,
 - the amount of activity which are seen on the websites,
 - the depth and type of information that is sought in analytics, and
 - the number of distinct websites requiring statistics.

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Figure 1-53. Choosing Right Specifications and Optimal Solution

SWA011.0

Notes:

Choosing the right specifications and optimal solution also depends on the factors such as

- the amount of technical expertise within the company,
- the solution providing vendor being chosen,
- the amount of activity which are seen on the websites,
- the depth and type of information that is sought in analytics, and
- the number of distinct websites requiring statistics.

Choosing Right Specifications and Optimal Solution

Choosing Right Specifications and Optimal Solution



IBM ICE (Innovation Centre for Education)

- Choosing the right specifications of analytics tools depend on the specific needs. There are various factors like
 - The size of the company,
 - The amount of traffic the site gets, and
 - How much needs to be spent

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Figure 1-54. Choosing Right Specifications and Optimal Solution

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Notes:

Choosing the right specifications of analytics tools depend on the specific needs. There are various factors like

- The size of the company
- The amount of traffic the site gets
- How much needs to be spent

The tools are required to monitor conversion rates and to learn how user groups interact with the web site, discover where the visitors are coming from and what they are looking for, and many other metrics that could help you improve the success online.

Choosing Right Specifications and Optimal Solution

Choosing Right Specifications and Optimal Solution



IBM ICE (Innovation Centre for Education)

- Freebies Analytics tools - To choose free or low-cost solutions, then decide which software meets the business requirements and gets along with the technical specifications of the site.
- It can imply reviewing the vendor Web sites or communicating with the vendor.

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Figure 1-55. Choosing Right Specifications and Optimal Solution

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Notes:

Freebies

If the option is to choose free or low-cost solutions, then ferret out which software meets the business requirements and gets along with the technical specifications of the site. It can imply reviewing the vendor Web sites or communicating with the vendor. For an enterprise solution, the vendor might work up a proposal to win the business.

At times it requires putting the investigator's cap and to check out the vendor's history, stability, track record for innovation, implementation and support offerings, contract terms and (of course) pricing. Considering the client referrals is a better choice than relying on the low price to save money, because inaccurate results could cost much more than money in the long runs.

The advantage of free tools is obviously that they are absolutely free of cost. There are many social and web analytics tools that are available free of cost for the installing. But the disadvantages are:

- Not fully featured: Free tools do not pack the same informational punch as paid tools.
- Not as much support: Free tools do not usually offer any support. There is not much of source
- to explain a metric, or help interpret the findings.

Free tools have very simple user interfaces that any beginner can learn quickly. For example, Google Analytics essentially presents a more friendly and simplified version of Urchin for mass consumption. Google defines "Web analytics should be simple and sophisticated at the same time."

Free Google Analytics is a massive temptation for marketers who see the possibility of putting budgets currently assigned to tool sets into the advertising market. A wide spectrum of functions and feature sets are provided by Google Analytics among the free tools; at the baseline, though, they all show metrics, such as hits, page views, unique visitors, time on site, and the like.

Free tools are great solutions for low-to-moderate traffic sites. But when a site grows to higher volumes, the solutions might no longer prove effective for anything other than a quick scan of basic metrics. And basic metrics are about all that is obtained with most of the free analytics tools. To engage in complex visitor profiling or ad campaign tracking, freebie tools should not be preferred. Moreover most of these tools do not provide any type of customer support.

Also do not expect to find cutting-edge innovation, either. Some of the programs are open source, meaning that developers from all over the world can contribute to the programming to make improvements to the program. Without large development budgets, it is unlikely that free Web analytics programs will match costly enterprise-level analytics features and functionality any time soon.

Although every Web analytics vendor has its own terminology, proprietary tools, and benefits, they all generally help to measure the visitors' behavior:

- How visitors find the particular site to be
- What visitors do when they get there
- How long visitors stay
- Other insightful actions, such as the keywords they typed into search engines to find the site and other sites that referred visitors the way

Choosing Right Specifications and Optimal Solution

Choosing Right Specifications and Optimal Solution



IBM ICE (Innovation Centre for Education)

- Enterprise Analytics - if more focus is given for Web metrics and a real need for deep insights
- Enterprise-level products might be the only software that will make content
- Enterprise-level tools are heavily focused on metrics that demonstrate Return on Investments (ROI)

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Figure 1-56. Choosing Right Specifications and Optimal Solution

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Notes:

Enterprise Analytics

They are the choice if more focus is given for web metrics and a real need for deep insights. Enterprise-level products might be the only software that will make content. Enterprise-level tools do everything the freebies and mid-level applications do and also do much more. Because they target larger companies, enterprise-level tools are heavily focused on metrics that demonstrate ROI.

Often, these sophisticated vendors offer specialized packages for marketing, commerce, or some other special need. Enterprise-level products are critical in developing custom reports that lighter versions of this software typically can't accommodate. These programs allow to get details on unique users at a deeper level, which is particularly important in higher price-point sales or higher lifetime value situations in which they might have fewer shoppers and need to make the most of every visit.

The more sophisticated your business, the more sophisticated the software needs are. Enterprise solutions are not for companies with shallow pockets. With a hefty investment in analytics, many businesses that operate at this level have one person dedicated to analyzing and parsing all this data. Such analysis can get pretty complex, and training someone who is uninitiated can be a costly proposition. The future will likely see Chief Analytics Officers and Directors of Web Analytics who have a prominent position and considerable salaries.

The Web analytics vendors such as WebTrends, Omniture, WebSideStory, and Coremetrics provide these enterprise solutions. These solutions all have their proprietary bells and whistles, but they also tell more about the visitors than entry-level and midrange solutions ever could. They also have some interesting features.

The enterprise level tools offer customizable reports, which combat information overload and offer quick insights into enhancing online revenue opportunities. It can tailor these reports to the specific online business objectives that are most relevant to the bottom line. It can throw light on what the marketing ROI of the marketing initiatives is, what visitor segments are likely to convert into customers; where the bottlenecks are in the purchase path; what content, products and services that the visitors prefer; and much more.

To implement an optimal web analytics solution the following considerations can be done

- If wanting to use web logging data, obtain ClickTracks Appetizer (www.clicktracks.com/products/appetizer).
- If wanting to use page tagging data, get Google Analytics
- Else, get StatCounter
(www.statcounter.com).

StatCounter will give only bare-bones data for free.

For an optimal solution to be implemented try selecting differentiated vendors. Most of the Web analytic tools offer the same kind of features and benefits. If a real comparison is required, then bring in a vendor that is radically different. So consider web analytic tools like Coremetrics, IndexTools, Unica, or ClickTracks, each of which has something significantly different to put on the table.

Implement the final set of vendors' tools on the live site and compare them to the free tool that were being used to see whether there is real differentiation. Any vendor that wants the business will allow for getting a free 30-day trial.

When switching from one analytics tool to another, there is a lot of data soul-searching because the numbers before and after the switch will be vastly different, sometimes by huge numbers. The general recommendation is, rather than reconcile, run the two in parallel for four to eight weeks and simply benchmark the differences in key metrics between the two. Then create a multiplier and use that if you want to compare historical trends.

For example, if going to replace Omniture with WebTrends or WebTrends with CoreMetrics or Google Analytics with Omniture run the two in parallel, note that visitors from the old platform are always, for example, 15 percent greater than the new one. Use that multiplier for old data trend comparisons. Do this for the top three or four metrics (page views, unique visitors, time on site) and then there is no need to worry about reconciliation.

Checkpoint (1 of 5)

Checkpoint (1 of 5)



IBM ICE (Innovation Centre for Education)

1. _____ is defined as the applications that build on the technological foundations of Web 2.0.
 - a) Social Media
 - b) Web
 - c) Analytics
 - d) Social Monitoring
2. Social media can be used to increase the leads and sales, _____.
 - a) Customer dissatisfaction
 - b) Brand recognition and awareness
 - c) Negative sentiments
 - d) Competitor Loyalty
3. _____ as "the use of insight, derived through social listening and predictive analytic techniques, and embedded within business as usual processes, that enable an organization to more effectively interact with consumers by leveraging the collective feedback and intelligence of the global consumer community."
 - a) Statistical Analytics
 - b) Predictive Analytics
 - c) Social Media Analytics
 - d) Business Analytics

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Figure 1-57. Checkpoint (1 of 5)

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Checkpoint Solutions (1 of 5)

Checkpoint Solutions (1 of 5)



IBM ICE (Innovation Centre for Education)

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 - b) Predictive Analytics
 - c) Social Media Analytics
 - d) Business Analytics

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Checkpoint (2 of 5)

Checkpoint (2 of 5)



IBM ICE (Innovation Centre for Education)

4. _____ enables measuring, collecting and analyzing website traffic data to understand the user behavior on websites only
 - a) Web Analytics
 - b) Social Analytics
 - c) Social Monitoring
 - d) Web sites
5. _____ web analytics refers to the web measurement and analysis of a website
 - a) Off-site
 - b) On-site
 - c) In-site
 - d) Out-site
6. _____ is the page at which the visitor entered your site. The count is listed by Web analytics tools
 - a) Exit page
 - b) Entry page
 - c) Page view
 - d) Visitor

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Figure 1-58. Checkpoint (2 of 5)

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Checkpoint Solutions (2 of 5)



IBM ICE (Innovation Centre for Education)

4. _____ enables measuring, collecting and analyzing website traffic data to understand the user behavior on websites only
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 - b) Entry page
 - c) Page view
 - d) Visitor

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Checkpoint (3 of 5)

Checkpoint (3 of 5)



IBM ICE (Innovation Centre for Education)

7. _____ is the uniquely identified client that is generating the page views or hits within a defined time period
 - a) Visitor
 - b) Page
 - c) Page view
 - d) Navigation
8. _____ is the sequence of page views viewed within a visit or session
 - a) Session
 - b) Click path
 - c) Visit
 - d) Page views
9. Measuring quantitative and qualitative data is an advantage of _____
 - a) Conversion
 - b) Statistical Analytics
 - c) Web Analytics
 - d) Business Analytics

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Figure 1-59. Checkpoint (3 of 5)

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Checkpoint (3 of 5)

Checkpoint (3 of 5)



IBM ICE (Innovation Centre for Education)

7. _____ is the uniquely identified client that is generating the page views or hits within a defined time period
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 - c) Visit
 - d) Page views
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 - a) Conversion
 - b) Statistical Analytics
 - c) Web Analytics
 - d) Business Analytics

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Figure 1-59. Checkpoint (3 of 5)

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Checkpoint (4 of 5)

Checkpoint (4 of 5)



IBM ICE (Innovation Centre for Education)

10. Social media _____ is the process of aggregating and assessing information about a company, individual, product or brand on the social site
 - a) Monitoring
 - b) Understanding customers
 - c) Behavior Analysis
 - d) Listening
11. A social media _____ shows a comprehensive view of the company's or brand's performance
 - a) Dashboard
 - b) Chart
 - c) Graphs
 - d) Plot
12. _____ tools need access to the log files generated by the web server
 - a) Weblogs file based
 - b) Java driven
 - c) Javascript driven
 - d) Hosted Analytics

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Figure 1-60. Checkpoint (4 of 5)

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Checkpoint Solutions (4 of 5)



IBM ICE (Innovation Centre for Education)

10. Social media _____ is the process of aggregating and assessing information about a company, individual, product or brand on the social site
 - a) Monitoring
 - b) Understanding customers
 - c) Behavior Analysis
 - d) Listening
11. A social media _____ shows a comprehensive view of the company's or brand's performance
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 - b) Java driven
 - c) Javascript driven
 - d) Hosted Analytics

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Checkpoint (5 of 5)

Checkpoint (5 of 5)



IBM ICE (Innovation Centre for Education)

13. _____ is the count of the number of distinct people who are visiting to the website in a particular time period
- a) Bounce rate
 - b) Unique Visitors
 - c) Conversion rate
 - d) Page views
14. Omniture Site Catalyst is a web analytics tool from _____
- a) Google
 - b) Hootsuite
 - c) Adobe
 - d) IBM
15. _____ helps to enable rich analysis and capabilities to measure the social media impact, segment audiences and also provides insight into the critical business functions such as marketing, customer service, product development and supply chain
- a) IBM Social Media Analytics
 - b) Omniture
 - c) Webtrends
 - d) Coremetrics

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Figure 1-61. Checkpoint (5 of 5)

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Checkpoint Solutions (5 of 5))

Checkpoint Solutions (5 of 5)



IBM ICE (Innovation Centre for Education)

13. _____ is the count of the number of distinct people who are visiting to the website in a particular time period
- a) Bounce rate
 - b) Unique Visitors
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 - c) Adobe
 - d) IBM
15. _____ helps to enable rich analysis and capabilities to measure the social media impact, segment audiences and also provides insight into the critical business functions such as marketing, customer service, product development and supply chain
- a) IBM Social Media Analytics
 - b) Omniture
 - c) Webtrends
 - d) Coremetrics

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Summary

Summary



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Having completed this unit, you should be able to:

- To have an understanding and overview of Web & Social media.
- The need of using Social Media Analytics and Web analytics
- The impact of social media on business
- Leveraging social media for better services and
- Learning the various analytics platforms and choosing right specifications & optimal solution

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Figure 1-62. Summary

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Unit 2. Relevant Data and its Collection

What this unit is about

This unit Relevant Data & its collection help in understanding the Social media data collection and its importance. Understanding the people centric approach, how to choose focused Data sources & Social networks are focused.

The techniques behind collecting and understanding social media data and how to leverage qualitative data are explained. The types of Usability alternatives and performing web enabled emerging user research and online surveys are also highlighted.

What you should be able to do

After completing this unit, you should be able to:

- Understanding the people centric approach,
- Choosing focused Data sources & Social networks,
- Collecting and understanding social media data,
- Leveraging qualitative data
- The types of Usability alternatives,
- Web enabled emerging user research and online surveys

How you will check your progress

- Checkpoint

Unit Objectives



Welcome to:

Unit 2 - Relevant Data & its Collection



Figure 2-1. Welcome to Unit 2 - Relevant Data & its Collection

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Unit Objectives



IBM ICE (Innovation Centre for Education)

After completing this unit, you should be able to:

- Understanding the people centric approach,
 - Choosing focused Data sources & Social networks,
 - Collecting and understanding social media data,
 - Leveraging qualitative data
 - The types of Usability alternatives,
 - Web enabled emerging user research and online surveys

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Figure 2-2. Unit Objectives

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Data Collection Strategy

Data Collection Strategy



IBM ICE (Innovation Centre for Education)

- Data analytics begin with data collection, which is the pillar in helping a business to expand its Social media marketing insights
- To acquire the data effectively and efficiently, both the data collection strategies and the social media marketing insights help optimize the social marketing solutions
- Identifying a better data collection strategy that can enhance the Social media marketing and Return on Investments is essential

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Figure 2-3. Data Collection Strategy

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Notes:

In the Social media environment, the prevalent use of social analytics tools is due to the massive growth of the social media and social web data available. To enhance the social media marketing process, the marketers need to optimize and fine-tune their marketing strategies in order to attain a competitive advantage over their business competitors.

Hence, data analytics begin with data collection, which forms the foundation in helping a business to expand its social media marketing insights.

The challenge lies in how a social media marketer acquires the data effectively and efficiently. Both the data collection strategies and the social media marketing insights should go together to optimize the social marketing solutions. So identifying a better data collection strategy that can enhance the social media marketing and return on investments is essential.

Content Sharing

Content Sharing



IBM ICE (Innovation Centre for Education)

- Social media is focused on content sharing and even content discovery thereby offering a great user experience
- Social media also shares the metadata about the content like location and the links.
- Social media has power upon the consumers. It has to be approached with a people centric Focus.

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Figure 2-4. Content Sharing

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Notes:

The importance of social media is equal to the importance of social data. Social media information can be gained in large quantities, which are shared through online social networks thus becoming data sources. The social networks also contain large quantities of personal information, which is shared everyday by their users.

For example, Facebook stores huge content every month through blogs, posts, notes, and albums, which is in turn shared by millions of users. These data not only provide information on the users, but also on their social interactions like how, when and to whom they share information.

Social media is focused on content sharing and even content discovery thereby offering a great user experience. Social data offers the social media content in a machine-readable format. It also shares the metadata about the content like location and the links.

For a socially connected business to sustain in the industry, it needs to be active. Many organizations launch into social media with a well-defined strategy and metrics

to quantify the desired outcomes. The importance of activating the social organization will affect consumer-facing businesses and other business environments. Some organizations fail to recognize the power that social media has upon the consumers. Therefore, it is critical that social media has to be approached with a people centric focus.

In this new mode of communication between people, care should be taken to ensure that there is a voice in the conversation but not the traditional interrupt method of marketing to customers.

As a socially connected business, it needs to have the resources, technologies, and metrics tuned into the entire business. The business can gain the benefits of social media when it creates a people first perspective. It can then organize for performing analytics and also demonstrate the value of social media across the entire organization using metrics.

Social networking and social media plays a dominant role in the business, which is well achieved by participating in a people centric approach. The social media is rich in information. If all the people data maintained across the company with external information sources is made use of and turned into an actionable tool, it would greatly help the customers to make better-informed decisions.

For example, a marketer would be able to locate a colleague who has a personal relationship with a potential client. This is because people data already plays a vital role.

The social media metrics are important in ensuring the business growth, but the interactions with the people constituting to the essence of social media also plays an essential role. To connect to the people requires interacting to them in a real and meaningful way. More than the tools aggregating data into charts and graphs, businesses need to consider the individual voice of people.

Facebook comments and tweets in Twitter are good social media measurers. More than consumers liking a particular brand or a product, businesses should know whether the customers trust their products.

Challenges in the Social Media Data Collection

Challenges in the Social Media Data Collection



IBM iCE (IBM Institute for Education)

- ♦ Establishing connection to different types of social media
- ♦ Collection of huge volumes of unstructured data
- ♦ Extraction of relevant data
- ♦ Converting data to a unified structured format
- ♦ Secured storage and maintenance
- ♦ Quick accessibility
- ♦ Scalable architecture



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Figure 2-5. Challenges in the Social Media Data Collection

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Notes:

There are various types of social media such as user profile based, content based, mobile based, and open social networking sites and micro blogs.

Some of the challenges in the Social media data collection are projected as above – establishing connection to different types pf social media, collection of huge volumes of unstructured data, extraction of relevant data, converting data to a unified structured format, secured storage and maintenance, quick accessibility and scalable architecture.

Participating with People Centric Approach

Participating with People Centric Approach



IBM ICE (Innovation Centre for Education)

- The Social media is rich in information
- All the people data maintained across the company can be turned into actionable tool
- It helps the customers to make better informed decisions
- Getting connected to the people requires interacting to them

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Figure 2-6. Participating with People Centric Approach

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Notes:

Social networking and social media plays a dominant role in the business, which is well achieved by participating in a people centric approach. The social media is rich in information. If all the people data maintained across the company with external information sources is made use of and turned into an actionable tool, it would greatly help the customers to make better-informed decisions.

For example, a marketer would be able to locate a colleague who has a personal relationship with a potential client. This is because people data already plays a vital role.

The social media metrics are important in ensuring the business growth, but the interactions with the people constituting to the essence of social media also plays an essential role. To connect to the people requires interacting to them in a real and meaningful way.

Participating with People Centric Approach

Participating with People Centric Approach



IBM ICE (Innovation Centre for Education)

- Respond to customer inquiries with a faster response and relevant answers
- Service issues have to be addressed in a short time
- The time to reach to the people if not satisfied on a brand have a loud impact among the social consumers

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Figure 2-7. Participating with People Centric Approach

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Notes:

More than the tools aggregating data into charts and graphs, businesses need to consider the individual voice of people.

Facebook comments and tweets in Twitter are good social media measurers. More than consumers liking a particular brand or a product, businesses should know whether the customers trust their products.

Social media should be able to maintain a presence and cater to individuals or the customers. Merely reaching the social response messages to the customers who are not aware of the brand is not enough. Companies should respond to customer inquiries over social media channels with a faster response and relevant answers. Service issues have to be addressed in a short time.

The time to reach to the people if they are not satisfied on a brand will have a loud impact on the overall perception of their brand among the social consumers. It would help in satisfying the customer needs and elevating the customer experience.

The good part about some misadventures that happen in any company owning a popular brand or product has forced the marketers and their senior executives to become more responsible about social media and to sit up and take notice. Because any event that is triggered by social media or

exposed as a result of it, has given a realization that social media would profoundly affect their business. Therefore, the companies owning the brands have developed themselves to be strong.

Social media requires a people-centric approach for both delivering and managing it within the business. The social relationships can be enhanced to determine who can help and who are better at helping each other. Metrics can help decide the relationships that work and those that don't. They give clarity on how to accomplish the social objectives.

Participating with People Centric Approach

Participating with People Centric Approach



IBM ICE (Innovation Centre for Education)

- Required for delivering and managing within the business
- The social graph identifies the individuals and how important they are to any given initiative
- People rely on context and information before making decisions or purchases
- They also depend on peer interactions rather than centralized sources

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Figure 2-8. Participating with People Centric Approach

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Notes:

The social graph will play a profound role in identifying the individuals and how important they are to any given initiative. The individual relationships will provide immense insights into how consumers relate to one another and how their behaviors can be influenced by their social graph.

Communication has become bi-directional and many-to-many. Networks are now self-organized and information travels along every dimension.

This has influenced nearly every person. More than ever, people rely on context and information before making decisions or purchases. They also depend more and more on peer effects and interactions rather than centralized sources.

In today's connected world, many are members of at least one, if not more, social networking service. Facebook has a billion of monthly active users. As communication tools, they offer a global reach to huge multinational audiences, delivering messages almost instantaneously.

Connectedness, relationships and social media have altered the way to organize the communications. Repeated social interactions also happen in the social networks. When there is a need to make a decision, social media's people centric approach helps to seek out for opinions of others. Virtual social networks provide many of those opinions.

Even when there is any mishap with the products or brands, or if the employees are projected Online, businesses not only develop a plan to get out a message and participate in the fallout, but also enforce the plan by proactively measuring the company's own employees' social media activity.

The social media participants are the customers themselves and the users, who expect the companies to respond when they engage in social media. Every marketer is also a consumer, so he must take the time to think like a consumer before launching the next campaign.

This is achieved by thinking empathetically from the customer's perspective. When a product or a brand has any issue, the problem must be solved immediately. The social media managers of that business need to respond to their customers.

Characteristics of People Centric Approach

Characteristics of People Centric Approach



IBM ICE (Innovation Centre for Education)

- Social media can be applied to any technology that could involve interactions among the people like the web or social sites
- Social technologies enable social behaviors to take place online, a powerful way of efficiently organizing knowledge and culture
- Social technologies enable content creation, distribution, and consumption

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Figure 2-9. Characteristics of People Centric Approach

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Notes:

Distinctive Characteristics of People Centric Approach

The people centric approaches in social media have several distinctive properties that make them uniquely powerful. They are as follows:

- "Social media" is a feature and they can be applied to almost any technology that could involve interactions among the people like the web or social sites. A component like a button to "like" or comment can be added to any interaction.
- Social technologies enable social behaviors to take place online, and these social interactions are a powerful way of efficiently organizing knowledge and culture. People are able to use social technologies to connect across geographies and different time zones.

This would enable communication and to multiply their influence beyond the numbers of people they could otherwise reach.

- Social technologies provide the platforms for content creation, distribution, and consumption. They enable new forms of content creation, including transformation of personal and group communications into the actual content. For example, a blog posting can not only serve as a means to communicate immediate information or any messages, but it can also be accessed later as a piece of content. Any social technology user can create, distribute, comment on or add to content.

Characteristics of People Centric Approach

Characteristics of People Centric Approach



IBM ICE (Innovation Centre for Education)

- Social technologies can capture the structure and nature of interactions among individuals
- A "social graph" provides a map of the personal connections of a person or a group
- Social technologies allow the people to connect to create consumer groups or communities or societies.

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Figure 2-10. Characteristics of People Centric Approach

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Notes:

Social technologies can capture the structure and nature of interactions among individuals. A "social graph" provides a map of the personal connections of a person or a group, which when, combined with other data, such as topics that the individuals discuss, can be the basis for inferences about groups and individuals.

Social graphs capture important information about which group members contribute the most and have the greatest influence on the products or brands. Finding the connections between different nodes and the strengths of those social connections on any individual's social graph is essential.

It would leverage the power of the social graph to strengthen the connections between people and the brand by keying into their interests and behaviors.

- Social technologies can be disruptive to existing power structures like corporate and governmental. Social technologies allow the people to connect at a different scale and they can create a unified, powerful voice such as consumer groups or communities or societies. They can have significant impact on the ways in which dialogues are shaped and policy is made. Posts or messages as a review on a brand have the most impact.
- Social technologies enable unique insights, by allowing marketers and the companies owning the product to engage directly with their consumers and to monitor all the unfiltered conversations. This can generate more genuine and timely insights into consumer preferences and trends.

Social technologies also increase transparency thereby exposing more information about the products and markets, and spreading information about organizations and the business.

Social Graph

Social Graph



IBM ICE (Innovation Centre for Education)

- Representation of relationships, which define the personal, family, or business communities on social websites
- Maintains an efficient relationship management
- Enhances the proficiency with social media marketing, and to foresee the emerging trends

Notes:

Social Graph

The social graph is the representation of relationships, which define the personal, family, or business communities on social websites. The social graph represents technologies that allow consumers to connect with one another using social media. It does not represent only Twitter or Facebook or Google.

Duplicating the same social graph on multiple websites will result in inaccurate data and time spent managing it. The social graphs should be managed from a single trusted source to maintain an efficient relationship management.

Understanding the concept of social graphs will enhance the proficiency with social media marketing, and foresee the emerging trends. For example, the objective of Facebook Open Graph is to integrate all of a user's social graphs on Facebook. This is accomplished through the Facebook API, which is a digital handshake that connects the Facebook identity, connections and content with Facebook pages.

Social Graph

Social Graph



IBM ICE (Innovation Centre for Education)

- Social graphs represent the following:
 - **Context** - Social networks tell about whom the user associates with
 - **Nodes** - When social connections are mapped, it is essentially connecting the dots. The more nodes there are on the social graph, the more readily the user is defined and located
 - **Sharing** - Sharing on the social web creates nodes, can share content with their community, and friends, which creates even more nodes

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Figure 2-12. Social Graph

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Notes:

Social graphs represent the following:

- **Context** - Social networks tell about whom the user associates with.
- **Nodes** - When social connections are mapped, it is essentially connecting the dots. The more nodes there are on the social graph, the more readily the user is defined and located. Nodes are landmarks or junction points on a map that helps users navigate the Unknown and find exactly what they need or want, which is exactly what the business wants.
- **Sharing** - Sharing on the social web creates nodes. If content is shared that someone finds useful, they're likely to share it with their community, thereby connecting the content owner with their friends, which creates even more nodes. How connected are the users and how fast the information moves along the social graph is vital. Many clothing stores are making it possible for a much wider audience to see their collections online and, in the next few months, they interpret the social graph and adapt their offering based on how their followers respond.

This contextual relevance of social graph will have a profound impact on marketing and business as people inevitably become more interconnected through social media. Multiple social graphs may exist, but the value of the social graph for a business lies in the ability to recognize a connection between individuals and their social graph.

For example, a group of people are included in a common social graph, as each individual liked a brand's new social media campaign. However, these people don't know each other, but they have just shared an interest that links them to each other.

The marketer or data scientist can explore this information to identify the segments of the social graph that are most likely to purchase or those whose behaviors indicate less profitable customers.

This information empowers the knowledge about how to market to these different segments of individuals and which social networks they are most likely to spend time on.

The relevance of the social graph becomes immediately apparent when the organization is able to identify the context of the graph and the information contained within it.

This contextual relevance will have a profound impact on the marketing and the business as people inevitably become more interconnected through social media. It plays a role in apparently increasing the desirability of a brand and hence the business.

Social Graph

Social Graph



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Figure 2-13. Social Graph

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Notes:

Social graphs have the ability to relay information about individual users and the networks of people that they associate with. As the messaging or content on the social web is shared, it gathers context and builds nodal relationships. Enhancing the social graph can also be done by creating useful content that represents who the user is and their expertise.

Influencers

Influencers



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- The influencers in the social media relationships critical to the success of business are:
 - **Brand advocates** - They have no direct connection to the brand but for the fact that they are product users
 - **Social media influencers** – They are individuals sought because of their ability to control a specific audience toward a given preference

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Figure 2-14. Influencers

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Notes:

Influencers

The influencers in the social media relationships critical to the success of business are:

- **Brand advocates** - They have no direct connection to the brand but for the fact that they are product users. A brand advocate is a customer who champions a brand and enthusiastically promotes and defends the brand, in ordinary conversations or e-mails, through tweets, and through YouTube testimonials etc. When they unite into a community that is aligned to the brand, the community as a whole can wield a powerful influence.
- **Social media influencers** - They are individuals who have been sought because of their ability to control a specific audience toward a given preference. Influencers can be bloggers with hundreds of followers on their social media channels. They can be industry practitioners or analysts and even ordinary people whose passion and knowledge in a particular area of interest have established them as central figures in their online communities and social networks.

- **Community Managers**

Community Managers



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- Acts as the binding agent between the business and consumer and knows both
- Plays a vital role in determining how each internal team within the business benefit from social media

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Figure 2-15. Community Managers

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- **Notes:**
- **Community Managers**
- The business needs to understand social media and the ways to connect with consumers. The internal communications can occur before interacting with the actual consumers. For this, the community manager acts as the binding agent between the business and consumer and knows both. They make the introductions.
- In a software training organization, the marketing and sales team may set up many meetings and convert only a small fraction of those meetings into business.
- When interacting across social channels through their product training ads and campaigns, sales people can tune in to the conversation and approach prospects at the right time during their buying cycle, which can be entirely more productive.
- Community managers can help to identify these prospects and once an organization begins to see the effectiveness of this type of sales approach, they begin to fully embrace social media as a feeder channel for their business.
- Measuring these activities is largely dependent upon the team like for example, for sales, it may be more qualified leads, or for product marketing, it might be new ideas.

- The community manager plays a vital role in determining how each internal team within the business might benefit from social media. The community manager would know everything about every product to identify marketplace cues and conversational chatter that might be relevant to a specific part of the organization.
- Empowering the staff about the capabilities of social media and training them in what to look for is a realistic and infinitely more scalable approach.
- Most community managers and social strategists will find that they need to interface not only with the consumers and their internal peers, but with their agencies as well.

Organizing for Social Media

Organizing for Social Media



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- Educating the organization on the big picture of social media and how it impacts the business.
- Requiring a game plan in order to determine how the organization would contend with these changes.
- Needing to continually reiterate the values and demonstrate the outcomes of the efforts.

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Figure 2-16. Organizing for Social Media

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Notes:

Activating the social media within the organization is a good start with an assessment of the challenges that lie ahead. Conducting a social media program is something that meets with widespread acceptance. Many Companies do opt for it. However, understanding the organizational associations and their diversions would help know whom to influence and who is likely to understand.

Someone needs to champion the cause for social media and, also more specifically, for social media measurement to ensure that the programs will have the greatest chance of making it to the corporate front doors.

The organizing for the social media involves in the following steps:

- Educating the organization on the big picture of social media and how it impacts the business.
- Requiring a game plan in order to determine how the organization would contend with these changes.
- Needing to continually reiterate the values and demonstrate the outcomes of the efforts.

Social media metrics help accomplish this more easily because metrics become the proof points that indicate how the business was in the past and in the present. They can also be used to indicate the direction where it is headed.

Organizing for Social Media -Models

Organizing for Social Media - Models



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- **Distributed:** This approach is where each business unit or group within the company may create its own social media programs



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Figure 2-17. Organizing for Social Media - Models

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Notes:

Companies can try organizing the social media in the following five models:

- **Distributed:** This approach is where each business unit or group within the company may create its own social media programs without a centralized approach.

Here the dots representing those using the social tools are inconsistent in size and one set of employees are not directly connected to others.

Organizing for Social Media -Models

Organizing for Social Media - Models



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- **Centralized:** This is a standalone group within a company that is responsible for the social media programs



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Figure 2-18. Organizing for Social Media - Models

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Notes:

Centralized: This is a standalone group within a company that is responsible for the social media programs, and it often happens within the corporate marketing team or the corporate communications.

Here a central group initiates and represents business units, funneling up the social strategy to one group.

Organizing for Social Media -Models

Organizing for Social Media - Models



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- Hub and Spoke - Cross Functional: This way of grouping represents multiple stakeholders across the company to be assembled in the middle of the organization



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Figure 2-19. Organizing for Social Media - Models

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Notes:

Hub and Spoke - Cross Functional: This way of grouping is that which represents multiple stakeholders across the company to be assembled in the middle of the organization. It facilitates resource sharing and cross-functional communication to happen to those at the edge of the organization.

A central group will help to provide an equal experience to other business units.

The other models are:

Multiple Hub and Spoke - Dandelion: This is same as Hub and Spoke but each business unit may have semi-autonomy with an overarching tie back to a central group.

Holistic - Here each individual in the organization is socially enabled, yet in a consistent, organized pattern.

Where the social media should live within the organization, requires a strong understanding that no single department or team can or should own social media.

It is bigger than any individual group because social media will encompass all aspects of the business. Social media can become a shared service across the entire business.

Building this shared service requires that the social media managers work closely with many groups across the organization. Social media efforts are the activities that the consumers see and interact with, and it needs to ensure that they reflect the goals of the organization and match the agendas of disparate groups across the company.

Operating in this way mandates that programs launch with consistent frameworks and measures of success in place, so that companies can quantify their efforts and track the results of social media.

Factors that help in applying the Model to an Organization

Factors that help in applying the Model to an Organization



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- Identifying which organizational model the company fits in
- Discussing which model is the need of the company's desired state
- Recognizing that this is not an organization chart but it is a cultural change

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Notes:

The factors that would help in applying the model to an organization are:

- **First, it needs identifying which organizational model the company fits in.** Companies need to interact with the internal teams to have a discussion on which model they fit in. The company can ask the internal teams to vote on the model they feel appropriate.
- **Next, it requires discussing which model is the need of the company's desired state.** Companies must evolve to respond to the social customer, but their current state may be different from their desired needs. This decision involves the various business units, geographical locations, product teams and support and service groups. It requires both marketing and the customer's experience.
- **Finally, it needs recognizing that this is not an organization chart but a cultural change.** The company marketers and the employees must realize that the social web enables companies to undergo a cultural change as customers connect directly to each other.

The most popular model is the *hub and spoke* model with the companies' usage up to 41%. This construct employs a centralized team of cross-functional social media resources that manages technologies and processes while supporting the lines of business as spokes. The hub effectively acts as a Center of Excellence and distributes knowledge, information, and best practices to the supported business units within the spokes.

Companies use the centralized model accounting to 29 percent, followed by multiple hub and spoke at a rate of 18 percent, decentralized being 11 percent, and holistic 1 percent. These models help to manage their social media efforts.

The success of an organization is not dependent on technology but rather on understanding the customers, defining an objective, and assembling the right strategy that encompasses all plans, roles, processes, budgets, measurements and training. Brands need to realize that approaching social media marketing and their collaboration is not about technology, but about the process and change management.

The success of many social media programs is determined by teams of centralized resources that understand how technologies work, and more importantly, how consumers interact with the outbound efforts. The success is also quantified by the metrics that are inherent in well-designed programs. Launching programs without indicators of success and questioning whether any given effort had an impact on the organization can also work well.

Since social media encompasses all aspects of your business, no single department or team should own it. Instead, implement social media as a shared service.

Organizations that do leverage a centralized team of resources effectively manage social media efforts across the entire company.

This team typically works with different lines of business to shape their ideas for reaching customers in new and innovative ways using social media. By managing social operations through a centralized resource, organizations will have the ability to see the big picture of social efforts to ensure the most effective opportunities.

Measures to organize the Social Media for Success

Measures to organize the Social Media for Success



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- Reassessing the social media goals - build the brand, increasing the audience or driving the sales
- Evaluating whether the social media audience has changed - social networks attract different participants
- Examining what the competitors are doing on social media venues - analysis like which social media platforms are the competitors using or are they testing new sites.

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Figure 2-21. Measures to organize the Social Media for Success

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Notes:

Measures to organize the Social Media for Success

A few measures or guidelines in organizing the social media for success are:

- **Reassessing the social media goals.** Consider the overall objectives for the social media efforts like looking to build the brand, increasing the audience or driving the sales.
- **Evaluating whether the social media audience has changed.** As social media continues to evolve, social networks attract different participants.

- **Examining what the competitors are doing on social media venues.** Use a broad definition of competitors when performing this analysis like which social media platforms are being used by the competitors and checking out if they are testing new sites.

Measures to organize the Social Media for Success

Measures to organize the Social Media for Success



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- Determining where to focus the social media effort - Based on the analysis of the goals, audience and competitors, decide where to engage on social media
- Planning the content creation for social media - ensure creating sufficient content in appropriate formats
- Integrate social media with the other elements of the marketing - incorporate social media elements
- Measure the social media results - necessary to show how their efforts yield proven results.

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Figure 2-22. Measures to organize the Social Media for Success

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Notes:

- **Determining where to focus the social media effort.** Based on the analysis of the goals, audience and competitors, decide where to engage on social media.
- **Planning the content creation for social media.** Since content marketing fuels social media, ensure creating sufficient content in appropriate formats.
- **Integrate social media with the other elements of the marketing.** To make marketing of both Online and off line more responsive, incorporate social media elements. Research shows that this is particularly effective for social media advertising.
- **Measure the social media results.** As marketers gain experience with social media and allocate greater budget to it, it's necessary to show how their efforts yield proven results.

Choosing focused Data Sources and Social Networks

Choosing focused Data Sources and Social Networks



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- Two sources of observational, that is, non-experimental data
 - the use of large, slow-moving datasets collated by governments and organizations
 - use data sources that are large but slow to change and has become a necessity for informing business, marketing, and other entrepreneurial decisions

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Figure 2-23. Choosing focused Data Sources and Social Networks

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Notes:

Social media data can be compared with traditional social science data in an effort to provide context for analysis. Prior to the blooming of high-velocity data, social scientists relied on two sources of observational, that is, non-experimental data.

- First is the use of large, slow-moving datasets collated by governments and organizations. Collecting one's own data is slow and costly. It involves interviewing experts and checking for reference sources.

This type of data collection is prone to errors due to differences between coders or within coders over time if the collection is ever done again.
- The second alternative is to use data sources that are large but slow to change. The ability to use the data and information from social media sources has become a necessity for informing business, marketing and other entrepreneurial decisions.

There are many tools and resources available to access and analyze such data sources, but many of these solutions have either broader or limited view in achieving specific goals.

The ability to utilize the data and information from social media sources has become an increasingly valuable commodity for informing business, marketing, and other entrepreneurial decisions. The tools and resources available to access and analyze such data sources have begun to grow at a rapid rate, but many of these solutions have either too broad or limited view in achieving specific goals.

The intersection of the increasing data growth and economics has produced new ways to structure and store incredibly large volumes of data with Apache Hadoop.

For most companies however, Hadoop is not a complete, single solution for analytics, but part of a hybrid data pyramid with a tier of raw data stored inexpensively in Hadoop; a secondary tier of key data aggregated out of Hadoop and placed in traditional data marts, and a third tier of data required for speed-of-thought response times residing in memory.

As part of this data pyramid, Hadoop, together with front and back end applications and tools that assist in data loading, transformations and analytics can dramatically lower big data analytics costs without any compromise in business performance.

Choosing focused Data Sources and Social Networks



- The content data sources are derived from various social media channels like blogs, twitter, Facebook and YouTube.
- To achieve the most relevant, optimal, comprehensive data the data collection can be done using social media aggregators.
- The qualified content can be subjected to the checks like Tonality (Positive, Neutral, Negative) and Virality, identifying the sources with highest number of comments/posts/views/tweets.

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Figure 2-24. Choosing focused Data Sources and Social Networks

SWA011.0

Notes:

The content data sources are derived from various social media channels like blogs, twitter, Facebook and YouTube. The content can be sourced from a wide variety of content aggregators. To achieve the most relevant, optimal, comprehensive data the data collection can be done using social media aggregators. The content is further filtered on the basis of regions and the social media channels. The qualified content can be subjected to the following checks like Tonality (Positive, Neutral, Negative) in social media channels and Virality which is identifying the sources that have the highest number of comments/posts/views/tweets.

If there is a large quantity of data then it can be reduced into a more concise representation which has the following advantages like making it much easier to understand what is going on in user-driven data. Once the network is discovered, we can find out:

- How do people interact with each other?
- Who are the most/least active members of a group?
- Who is influential in a group?
- Who is susceptible to being influenced, etc?

Choosing focused Data Sources and Social Networks

Choosing focused Data Sources and Social Networks



IBM ICE (Innovation Centre for Education)

- What the raw data can tell about choosing a social network
 - the overall number of users and the active users is likely to be a more meaningful metric when making decisions on choosing a social network.
- What demographic data can tell about choosing a social network?
 - The demographic data like where are the customers can also influence choosing a social network.

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Figure 2-25. Choosing focused Data Sources and Social Networks

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Notes:

What can raw data reveal about choosing a social network?

According to data gathered by Digital Insights, the overall number of users and the active users is likely to be a more meaningful metric when making decisions on choosing a social network. The social networks ranked by monthly active users are Facebook accounting to 1.28 billion users, Google+ with 540 million users followed by Twitter with 255 million users, Instagram with 200 million and LinkedIn representing 87 million users.

Choosing a social network depends on other factors that could be valuable or more valuable like "Will more users mean more competition for attention?", "Are the business customers on the network?", "Does the network fit the demographic?" etc.

What demographic data can reveal about choosing a social network?

The demographic data like where the customers are can also influence choosing a social network. A Research firm, The Pew Research Internet Project in their latest demographic survey on representative sample of 1,801 adults, in August and September 2013 has showed who makes up the user bases for five major social networks. The numbers account the percentage of online users who use each network. In this survey, Google+ was not included.

Choosing the Right Social Media Networks for the Business

There are many benefits that can be obtained from the social media marketing such as brand awareness, connecting with people, and driving traffic to the website. To run a successful social media campaign the most important factor is choosing the right social network.

To determine what social media network should be used is done by analyzing data. Depending on where the business is in the social media lifecycle, different sources of information can be used to determine what social media network to focus on. There are some key factors that can be observed to determine how engaged the users are on the social media network:

- Current Profiles: Examining which current profile is getting the most traction by looking at growth factors using any social media monitoring tools like Hoot suite.
- Followers and how engaged they are: They can give an idea of where the brand interacts within the context of social media based on aspects like shares and likes.
- Generating Traffic: Based on analytics to determine what social network is sending the most traffic. Facebook and LinkedIn are some of the best social media platforms for driving traffic to the website.
- Conversions and Determining Customer Value: Customer value and conversions from social media is vital. Data regarding the users leaving the page as soon as they visit or signing up to any newsletter can help determining customer value.
- Current Content Strategy: Certain platforms work better when one has a greater connection and focus on developing it.
- Customer Preference: The customer's preference can be determined based on their conversations like how they spend their time on Facebook or Twitter or LinkedIn to get some industry specific information.
- Synergies in the Industry: Any specific biasing on LinkedIn and Instagram kind of sites.

Analyzing the relationship between the content type and the social media platform helps in the social networks improving their functions. This would attract more businesses to the services. There are many types of content marketing and it needs to find the right one that will work well with the desired social network. This is one of the main aspects for developing a relationship between the content marketing and social media marketing. There are three major types of content:

- Written: It takes up the form of status updates, blog posts, and many others. It is one of the icons for every business' content marketing strategy.
- Video: It is a medium that can be great for many businesses and is ideal for people who are not great at producing written content.
- Visual: Infographics, images, and various other branded content. Visual content is a great way to add an extra dynamic to the content marketing.

Leveraging Social Media Networks

When determining which social networks to use, decisions need to be based on data and real audience insights. Analyzing the data and audience insights helps to understand where the trends are occurring.

Using Pinterest and Other Image-Based Networks

It is used to create infographics based on data and case studies related to the business. It enables telling about the brand or product and services, and doing so in a visual way.

Using YouTube

Video is best to connect with the users. Experimenting with different video lengths and analyzing which ones would resonate the most with the users. Promoting featured videos on LinkedIn profiles and using both scripted and unscripted videos can also be done.

Using LinkedIn

This is the most popular social network for many businesses and working professionals. It enables targeting the right people and getting access to important people making the decisions in an organization.

Using Twitter and Facebook

Twitter and Facebook enable publishing of content and is a great way to connect with the users and build a relationship with them. Using these two networks effectively gives an incredible amount of leverage in the context of social media marketing.

Using Google+

Google Authorship is one of the big advantages Google Plus has over other networks. Hangouts and chats enable users to connect actively. It can get people involved in the conversations and build relationships with them.

Choosing the right social network for the business is one of the most important factors for promoting online business. It is essential to make clear choices regarding the social media marketing campaigns that are based around social data, as insights into the users would give the best Returns on Investment.

Choosing focused Data Sources and Social Networks

Choosing focused Data Sources and Social Networks



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Social Network Demographics

Among online adults, the % who use ...

Usage	All users	Facebook	Twitter	Instagram	Pinterest	LinkedIn
Gender						
Male	66	71	18	15	8	22
Female	76	78	18	20	33	19
Age						
18-29	84	31	37	27	15	
30-49	79	19	18	24	27	
50-64	60	9	6	14	24	
65 and up	45	5	1	9	13	
Education						
HS grad or less	71	17	16	17	12	
Some college	75	18	21	20	16	
College +	68	18	15	25	38	
Income						
Less than 30k/yr	76	17	18	15	12	
30k to 49k	76	18	20	21	13	
50k to 74k	68	16	15	21	22	
75k and up	69	19	16	27	36	
Location						
Urban	75	18	22	19	23	
Suburban	69	19	18	23	26	
Rural	71	11	6	17	8	

via Pew, September 2013

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Figure 2-26. Choosing focused Data Sources and Social Networks

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Notes:

Knowing the general information about their age, gender, income level, can line up these insights with the demographic data of a social network and see which networks fit. Choosing a social network is also based on how well it fits the content and strategy. If the content is liked by the audience then it is likely to find the audience on social networks sharing that particular style of content—video, images, long-form, etc.

The other important factors that help when choosing a social network are whether it makes sense for the content and do the users spend time on those social networks.

Collecting and Understanding Social Media Data

Collecting and Understanding Social Media Data



IBM ICE (Innovation Centre for Education)

- Social media data is expressing social media in a computer-readable format and shares metadata about the content and context.
- Metadata often includes information about location, engagement and links shared.
- Social data is focused strictly on publicly shared experiences

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Figure 2-27. Collecting and Understanding Social Media Data

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Notes:

Collecting and Understanding Social Media Data

Social media data as the definition states expresses social media in a computer-readable format and shares metadata about the content to help provide not only content, but context. Metadata often includes information about location, engagement and links shared. Unlike social media, social data is focused strictly on publicly shared experiences.””

Social data enables companies to learn more detailed information about the users who visit their website. Having access to this data and analytics is a breakthrough for companies, making it possible for them to create more specific and personalized marketing campaigns, content and messaging based on the data collected.

Collecting and Understanding Social Media Data

Collecting and Understanding Social Media Data



IBM ICE (Innovation Centre for Education)

- Social data can be generalized in the following way:
 - Profile data is standard social media user profile data such as their user name, and email.
 - User generated data provides companies with insight into the content that users create including status updates, links shared, and photos added.
 - Behavioral data is information about what a user likes, who they interact with

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Figure 2-28. Collecting and Understanding Social Media Data

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Notes:

Simply put, social data is users' data that is taken from social media platforms, such as Twitter, Facebook, Google+. While there are hundreds of data points that you can access, social data can broadly be generalized in the following way:

- Profile data is standard social media user profile data such as their user name and email. There are over 200 data points available, which vary on a case by case basis depending on the social network being used by an individual to login.
- User generated data provides companies with insight into the content that users create using their social media accounts, including status updates, links shared, and photos added.
- Behavioral data is information about what a user likes, who they interact with, and provides insights into the actions taken by users on your website and their social media accounts.

Tools like Google Analytics collect the data using social plug-ins or blogs and customer interactions on social media. But the reliability of the data collected by third

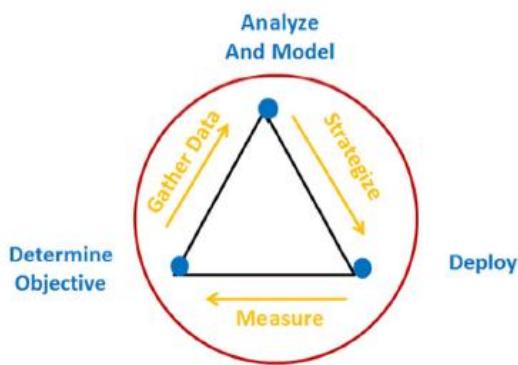
party data does raise some cause for concern. While the third party companies can collect and analyze public data the user consent is required for social login. When the customers login into the website using their social media account like Facebook, LinkedIn or Google+, they are knowingly granting access to their social data. The public profile can be viewed by all the users. These social sites offer permission-based access to consumer data, a transparent method to collect data about the customers.

Collecting and Understanding Social Media Data

Collecting and Understanding Social Media Data



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Figure 2-29. Collecting and Understanding Social Media Data

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Notes:

The Social data is collected from the users accessing the website, which provides insight into the actual customers interested in the brand. This social data is reliable for the marketing efforts. There are a number of ways to collect the social media data when a customer interacts with the websites like web log files and JavaScript tags. It can pull the power of built-in data collection mechanisms such as event logging to collect business contextual data.

At times, there is a need for more than one method of data collection. For example, using JavaScript tagging to collect the website behavior or using the web logs to analyze the behavior do not execute JavaScript.

Collecting and Understanding Social Media Data

Collecting and Understanding Social Media Data



- The data capture, data storage, and data processing mechanisms should be validated to comply with the stated standards.
- It is highly recommended to conduct periodic security audits of the data capture and storage in the company.

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Figure 2-30. Collecting and Understanding Social Media Data

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Notes:

Privacy is an important factor when collecting data. It has to be ensured that explicit implications are given when capturing data on the web. Declaring in clear legal language to the customers is essential when capturing the data. It is of utmost importance to consider avoiding collecting personal identifiable information. If so then it must be even clearer to the customers.

The data capture, data storage and data processing mechanisms should be validated to comply with the stated standards. It is highly recommended to conduct periodic security audits of the data capture and storage in the company. As customers are highly concerned about their privacy, the company has to honor their trust when collecting social data.

Analyzing the complexities of the data collection types, options and methodologies can decide the choice of vendor platform. With the right data collection method, the business can highly enhance the reach of products to the customers.

Various Data Collection Mechanism

Web Logs

Web logs have been the original source of data collection. They were actually developed to capture the errors generated by the web servers and over time have been enhanced to capture more data as analytical needs shifted from technical to marketing based.

Web logs capture data as follows:

- A customer types the URL in a browser.
- The request for the page goes to one of the web servers.
- The web server then sends the web page to the customer.

The Web logs are the most easily accessible source of data. They are the only data capture mechanism that will capture and store the visits on the website. To analyze visits by the Google or Yahoo search engine web logs have to be used.

Web logs are primarily geared toward capturing technical information such as errors, server usage and browser types. But they are not optimally suited to capture business or marketing information.

JavaScript Tags

JavaScript tagging is used by most vendors and web analytics solutions are relying on JavaScript tagging to collect data. JavaScript tagging allows for more data to be collected more accurately and used in new business models in the industry.

Data serving was separated from data capture and moved to third-party web analytics vendors in most cases. Therefore, web pages could go out from the company servers, with no need to capture data, and be presented to website visitors.

JavaScript tagging should be considered as a possible option for the data collection strategy. Most web analytics innovation is coming from vendors enhancing their tools to better leverage JavaScript tagging.

JavaScript tagging may be optimal for the amount of control that it gives, to capture what it wants and whenever it wants. The web logs can be leveraged to measure search engine optimization (SEO) on the website.

Social Data Collection Strategy

Social Data Collection Strategy



- A data collection strategy is to use the social media API in order to capture the targeted data and information
- The use of social media API provides the business with smart marketing insights
- An API is a program interface to capture social data which is relevant in improving their marketing strategies to the company
- The API helps in creating their own web applications that would allow flow of data collection on the sites

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Figure 2-31. Social Data Collection Strategy

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Notes:

Social Data Collection Strategy

The social media marketers need to fine tune and optimize their marketing strategies in order to attain advantage over their competitors. Data analytics begin with data collection. Therefore, data analytics is essential in helping a business to expand its digital marketing insights. There is a prevalent use of social analytics tools, which is due to the huge growth of data available to enhance the digital marketing process. The real issue is acquiring the data effectively and efficiently. Both the data collection strategies and the social media marketing insights should go together to optimize the social media marketing solutions. Every digital marketer uses the social media networks to reach out to the potential customers for their business.

There are huge social data to be captured and the challenge is how to collect those relevant to the business. One such data collection strategy is to use the social media API in order to capture the targeted data and information to make the business more competitive. Both the data collection and the use of social media API provides the

business with smart marketing insights. An API is a program interface to evaluate and capture vital social data which is relevant in improving their marketing strategies to the company. The API helps in creating their own web applications that would allow for the seamless flow of data collection on the sites.

Social Data Collection Strategy

Social Data Collection Strategy



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- A social media API allows the business to easily collect social data across the social media sites.
- It helps to collect and store information that is relevant in understanding customer behavior and preferences.

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Figure 2-32. Social Data Collection Strategy

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Notes:

A social media API allows the business to easily collect social data across the social media sites. It helps to collect and store information that is relevant in understanding customer behavior and preferences.

Social Media APIs and data provide information in order to improve the ability of the business. Social media platforms use these APIs in order to allow the development of web applications and are used to collect and integrate its service features to their own websites. Through the APIs, websites can share information.

Facebook Social APIs

Facebook Social APIs



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- One of the social network sites which have the largest number of active users.
- The social community members give their APIs a high value among the social media marketers.
- Their API can enable to collect numerous data from all the millions of active Facebook users

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Figure 2-33. Facebook Social APIs

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Notes:

There are various applications used in the data collection strategy as follows:

- Facebook social APIs

Facebook is one of the social network sites, which has the largest number of active users. The social community members give their APIs a high value among the social media marketers.

Facebook Social APIs

Facebook Social APIs

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Figure 2-34. Facebook Social APIs

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Notes:

By clicking on the Facebook Like button for comments or posts, it can integrate the web page and also at the same time help to see the most popular products or brands. With the like button pressed proportionally to the number of Facebook social media fans, it has huge data to work on with.

Facebook with its huge number of active social media users and their API can enable to collect numerous data from all the millions of active Facebook users. It can then be easily integrated with its like button and monitored for the brands and competitors of the business. It can then enable collecting and utilizing loads of data daily.

Best Practices for Collecting Data from Social Networks

Best Practices for Collecting Data from Social Networks



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- Respect the social networkers' privacy
- Using the aggregated data to create the profiles
- Appending the social media data
- Knowing the quality of followers, friends and connections
- Befriend influencers

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Figure 2-35. Best Practices for Collecting Data from Social Networks

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Notes:

Best Practices for Collecting Data from Social Networks

Some of the best practices for collecting data from social networks are as follows:

- **Respect the social networkers' privacy.** It needs to be done even when their profiles are publicly visible. For example, to access the Facebook or LinkedIn or Twitter profiles to gain customer insights there should be a provision that wants to have some sort of disclaimer regarding how it is going to be using the data.

The Social networkers are expected to be honest in their profiles because they have an expectation of a certain level of privacy. While the information disclosure benefits marketers, it is also suggested that the marketers mainly interact with people they know or use information without names and identifying features to create pictures of their ideal customers.

- **Using the data to create the profiles.** The marketers can collect the aggregated and anonymized data to understand what the consumers like or dislike about a particular product, brand or service.

Then an offline campaign can be organized, employing a list from a data solutions firm with good penetration at the individual level. This feature can help the marketers to leverage what they learn about online strategies. The most obvious source of this social media graph data may be Facebook or YouTube where the viewers and video uploaders can find plenty of data by simply clicking on the "views" button and expanding it.

- **Appending the social media data.** The marketers can take Facebook's advice and invite their friend by uploading their e-mail lists but with a limit on the number of addressees. But this may not work for big brands with millions of e-mail addresses.

The Marketers can also take their in-house customer relations management data and reverse append it, for example, for a change of address.

- **Knowing the quality of followers, friends and connections.** There are tools like Twitalyzer that marketers can use to determine whether their fans are on social media and whether they are engaged brand fans or just subscribers.
- **Befriend influencers.** Once the marketers are able to figure out which fans of their brand are influencers, that is, those with the highest number of Twitter followers, YouTube subscribers or LinkedIn connections and Facebook friends then the marketers should get to know these influencers.

The fans can also be the influencers. They participate in the polls and vote on the patterns and colors. They share their comment on the pages. They share the messages or information with their friends. The Facebook visitors are more likely to convert than an average site visitor. Thus, they represent a highly activated subset of their customer base. These people are contributing to the product ideas to enhance and increase the business.

- **Adding social media icons in other channels.** By adding the Facebook "like" button on the company homepage, the website itself can invite the users to review the brand or product. That simple click would turn an anonymous visitor into a known entity.

Some companies are making "liking" their brands a requirement to, for instance, view a popular video (e.g., Nike) or access some other valuable content which may not be a preferable way to market the business. The Social data is highly effective for inbound

marketing campaigns and online ads. It gives the ability to segment the users and also in creating unique and specific campaigns, that target specific groups of users. Highly targeted campaigns can result in higher conversions.

With access to much higher quality data about the customers, the organization can be better able to make informed decisions about the online properties, marketing strategies, and future developments.

The Social data is extremely beneficial to online business because there is a lot that can be done with the data collected. It can be used for inbound marketing, sales process development, ecommerce, customer services, and so much more.

Data Collection Management Strategies

Managing the performance of your digital marketing is quite a challenge. With a huge data and information available for you to explore, you probably don't know how and where to start collecting them.

- Your data collection performance strategy should consist of using data analytic tools to measure the data available that are presented in measurable metrics.
- Use the tool in automating the process of data collection using targeted data that you need for your digital marketing campaigns.
- Leverage on the modern analytic tool's ability to deliver real time data analysis based on the filtered data metrics that you select that are relevant to your business.
- Hire a data specialist in order to sift through relevant data for digital marketing and to interpret the data collection report and analytic results within the perspective of your target digital marketing goals.
- Work with a team of analysts to brainstorm on the most appropriate digital marketing campaigns to launch, according to the data collected and the analytics report generated.
- Choose an analytics tool that is capable of filtering and organizing the data collection by categories for easy retrieval and clearer marketing insights.

Understanding Social data can help refine the quality of current products and services and enable better quality offerings in the future. If the products and services are aligned with what the customers actually want, it can increase online sales and give the customers a solution to any issues.

Leverage Qualitative Data -What, Why and How much

Leverage Qualitative Data - What, Why and How much



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User research is defined as “the science of observing and monitoring how we interact with everyday things, such as websites, software, or hardware, and then drawing conclusions about how to improve those things”.

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Figure 2-36. Leverage Qualitative Data - What, Why and How much

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Notes:

Leverage Qualitative Data by understanding What, Why and How much

The sources of data that is needed for making effective decisions are the data that are related to the outcomes on the website to measure true success. It can also be the various types of qualitative data such as surveys or usability studies that need to be collected to understand the customer behavior.

User research is defined as "the science of observing and monitoring how we interact with everyday things, such as websites, software, or hardware, and then drawing conclusions about how to improve those things".

Leverage Qualitative Data -What, Why and How much

Leverage Qualitative Data - What, Why and How much



IBM ICE (Innovation Centre for Education)

- Lab Usability Testing
 - In a lab environment, usability tests are typically held in a specially designed room called a usability lab.

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Figure 2-37. Leverage Qualitative Data - What, Why and How much

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Notes:

Lab Usability Testing

Studies for the user research can take place in a lab, using one-way mirrors and cameras, within the user's native environment which can be home or organization. In a lab environment, usability tests are typically held in a specially designed room called a usability lab.

The lab is split into two rooms that are divided by a one way mirrored window that allows observers to watch the test. A user is asked to complete a task or set of tasks for a given website. Each of these tasks will have a specified goal for being efficient, effectiveness and satisfaction.

But it is also possible to conduct a usability study without a lab. All it needs is a computer in it and a promise from all test observers that they will remain silent throughout the test. As the test subjects would work on their tasks, a test moderator observes, takes notes on user actions, and records the outcomes. While the task is being performed, the moderator

limits his own interactions to providing initial task instructions and also prompting the participant to further explain their comments.

Leverage Qualitative Data -What, Why and How much

Leverage Qualitative Data - What, Why and How much



IBM ICE (Innovation Centre for Education)

- Usability tests are best for optimizing the following features:
 - User interface (UI) designs
 - Optimizing workflows
 - Understanding the Voice of Customer, and
 - Understanding the customers

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Figure 2-38. Leverage Qualitative Data - What, Why and How much

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Notes:

Usability tests are best for optimizing the following features:

- User interface (UI) designs
- Optimizing workflows
- Understanding the Voice of Customer
- Understanding the customers

It enables organizations to see how the users really interact with the content and navigation systems built, hence providing plenty of qualitative data to back up the quantitative information collected through the social media analytics.

Rapid usability tests have grown well in the recent times and it helps utilizing companies that offer quick, low cost or free usability testing of websites.

Leverage Qualitative Data -What, Why and How much

Leverage Qualitative Data - What, Why and How much



IBM ICE (Innovation Centre for Education)

- Voice of the Customer
 - collected in the form of surveys, such as exit surveys, surveys whilst on site, post-purchase surveys, product reviews or polls in social sites
 - one of the most important pieces of information for any web analyst as it provides the customer's opinion

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Figure 2-39. Leverage Qualitative Data - What, Why and How much

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Notes:

Voice of the Customer:

Web analytics is better at answering "what" but not that good at the "why". The "why" can well occur from the customer. It allows organizations to analyze the other web analytics solutions and then make changes to improve performance and customer satisfaction.

VOC can be collected in the form of surveys, such as exit surveys, surveys whilst on site, post-purchase surveys, product reviews or polls in social sites. VOC is one of the most important pieces of information for any web analyst as it provides the customer's opinion.

Qualitative research approaches allow to dig below the surface to explore how, why or

what, and to explore relationships and connections. Lab usability tests help to measure a user's ability to complete the tasks. In a typical usability test, a user attempts to complete a task or set of tasks using a website or software or a product.

Each of these tasks has a specified goal for effectiveness, efficiency and satisfaction in a specified context of use. Tests with as few as five users would highlight which parts of the customer experience or process work well and which cause problems.

Lab tests are conducted by a user-centric design or human factors expert, who is generally supported by someone taking notes. Key stakeholders such as business organizers, developers, analysts and product managers participate as observers.

Tests can be conducted with a live version of the website, beta versions, onscreen HTML or PowerPoint prototypes or even with paper printouts.

How to Conduct a Lab Usability Testing

How to Conduct a Lab Usability Testing



IBM ICE (Innovation Centre for Education)

- A successful lab usability test involves four stages as follows:
 - Preparing the test
 - Conducting the test
 - Analyzing the results, and
 - Following up

Notes:

How to Conduct a Test

To conduct a lab usability test it is very important to understand the end-to-end process to ensure obtaining valid observations and results from the studies. Conducting a successful lab usability test involves four stages as follows:

- Preparing the test
- Conducting the test
- Analyzing the results
- Following up

Preparing

The preparation stage is the most important stage in determining success for usability studies, because it defines the scope and identifying participants.

The steps involved are as follows:

- Identify the critical tasks under testing. For example, In the case of an online shopping cart how easily can customers return a product or request a replacement?
- Create scenarios for the test participant of each task. A customer ordering a Sony digital camera, on delivery finds that a lens cap is missing. So what does the customer do next for help?

Identify what is the success factor for each scenario. The customer is able to find the correct page on the support site and access the web page and fills a request form, and hits the Submit button.

- Identify who are the test participants, whether they are new users, existing users or people who shop at competitors' sites.
- Before actually conducting the test with live participants, do dry runs with someone internal to ensure the scripts and other elements work? The issues will be found in the pilots that can be sorted out before running the real test.

Conducting the Test

The main steps in the test phase are as follows:

- Listening to what the participants are thinking and the main goal is to really understand and uncover the problems they have.

- Making sure the participants read all instructions and hence understand the task or scenario.
- Observing the participants for verbal and nonverbal clues about where they fail in their tasks and understand the web pages.
- The moderator can ask the participants follow-up questions to get more clarity by not giving any answers and focusing on verbal and nonverbal clues.

Analyzing the Data

At the end of the test stage, analyze all the collected valuable observations in a methodical manner.

The main steps in the analysis phase are as follows:

- Holding a brief session with all observers so that everyone can share their thoughts and observations
- Taking time to note trends and patterns
- The moderator tallies up success and failures by each participant for each task
- Identifying the root causes for the failures based on actual observations. For example, any link not apparent and hidden below the fold
- Making recommendations to fix the problems that were identified
- For each critical task identify the points of failures and make suggestions for improving the customer experience. Prioritize the suggestion as Urgent, Important, and Nice to Have, to help business decision makers.

Following Up, Retesting, and Measuring Success

Experts and researchers can help fix the problems identified by the test, offering their services to partner with website developers and designers to improve the site experience. Measuring success post-implementation is desirable. Ensuring whether the customers are satisfied will lead to a consistent track record of success that improves customer satisfaction.

Some best practices will help magnify the results from usability tests. Collecting qualitative data requires good planning. For conducting a successful test:

- Make sure the participants are aware of the website, product, or software being tested
- It is good trying not to answer participant questions when they ask on how to do something

Benefits of Lab Usability Studies

Lab tests are great at getting close to a customer and observing them, and even interacting with them. For complex experiences, lab tests can be a great way to get customer feedback early in the process in order to identify big problems.

When this information is intimated early, it can save time, money, energy, and sanity. For existing experiences, these tests would help identify what works and what does not. Usability tests are a great mechanism to generate ideas to solve customer problems.

Relying on lab usability tests for a full spectrum of answers can help leverage data in a much more effective way. The points to be considered when leveraging usability tests are as follows:

- Ensure that the people in the test are a representative sample of the customers. People in artificial circumstances (like a lab with one-way mirrors and cameras) behave artificially because they know they're being watched.
- Avoid doing complex redesigns of websites or customer experiences based purely on a lab test.

The company can pair up the lab usability testing experts with the web analysts. The latter will bring real work data from their tools and explain what that data means, and the former will take that data to construct real tasks and create good scenarios for each task.

Both usability researchers and web analysts can benefit tremendously from the combination of qualitative and quantitative. The results of lab tests should be one of the strategies available to collect the Voice of the Customer.

One of the most powerful uses of lab usability tests is to take 10 ideas and eliminate the complete losers. The remaining few ideas can be incorporated as live on the site as an online test.

Usability Alternatives

Usability Alternatives



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- There are two Usability Alternatives:
 - Remote and
 - Online Outsourced

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Figure 2-41. Usability Alternatives

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Notes:

Usability Alternatives

There are two Usability Alternatives:

- Remote
- Online Outsourced

Live Recruiting and Remote User Research

Live Recruiting and Remote User Research



- There are two important challenges that come along with doing usability studies:
 - Finding optimal participants and
 - Getting them to come do the study.

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Figure 2-42. Live Recruiting and Remote User Research

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Notes:

Live Recruiting and Remote User Research

There are two important challenges that come along with doing usability studies:

Finding optimal participants and

- Getting them to come participate in the study

Often the way to solve these two problems is by calling around and getting the best people in the location into the study. Asking the participants to think from the business perspective and giving feedback is a good aspect. It can also use a recruiting agency whose dedicated job is to find people. Then it can be scheduled for the studies around availability.

Recruiting User Research Participants with Social Media

Recruiting User Research Participants with Social Media



IBM ICE (Innovation Centre for Education)

- Recruiting with social media can be as simple such as posting a message on Twitter or Facebook and having people to contact the user
- It assigns a lot of people to handle, contact, screen, and schedule.

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Figure 2-43. Recruiting User Research Participants with Social Media

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Notes:

Recruiting User Research Participants with Social Media

Recruiting user research participants can be difficult and time consuming unless the lists of potential participants such as customers, employees, or members are available. It can be hard to find and recruit the right people, and using a recruiting company can be expensive but social media provides new options for reaching the right audience.

To understand how recruiting with social media can work requires the potential participant's perspective. A post on a social network about a study that is looking for participants requires clicking on the link, and access to a web page with a more detailed description of the study.

It qualifies the user as a participant and takes him to an online, unmoderated usability test. An alternative is that the survey information is saved and presented with a confirmation page that tells that someone will call to schedule time to do an in-person study.

How to recruit using Social Media

Recruiting with social media can be as simple as posting a message on Twitter or Facebook and having people to contact you. But it assigns a lot of people to handle, contact, screen, and schedule. Instead, try to save a lot of work by using a more organized method.

Write the Post

The post requires careful thought and an effective post needs to be:

- Brief to be read quickly
- Attention grabbing from people to notice and read it
- Explanatory to enable people to quickly understand the basics of the study
- Pre-screen the type of people looking for it
 - Legitimate for people to trust it
- Persuasive to click on the link to find out more.

Creating the Study Description Page

The link in the post should lead to a web page with a description of the study. This could be the first page of the survey, with a link to start the survey. The description can provide additional detail. An effective description needs to have the same set of features as writing a post like being brief, well-written, explanatory, pre-screening, legitimate and persuasive.

Creating the Survey

The description page should lead to a screening survey, to screen out the unqualified participants. An online screener has to be brief, because people will quit if the survey is too long. So only include the most necessary questions ignoring anything that is less important, such as information gathering questions.

Use a survey tool with logic rules to send unqualified participants to a page that informs them that they're not qualified. Those who do qualify can proceed to the next step.

Send Participants to the Online Study

An online study, such as unmoderated usability testing or online card sorting can include sending qualified participants from the screening survey to the online study.

Recruiting and Remote Studies

Recruiting actual people who visit the site to complete a task, and conducting the study can also be done. Creating a simple screener of a few questions to ask the visitors and qualifying the candidates can be done and hence get the right person.

The visitor can either close the invite or hit Continue. If they hit Continue, they will see a short questionnaire. Specific questions can be asked and they are ideally the ones that help on the right person. For example, "Are you an existing user of our software?" and "What is the reason for your visit to our site today?" could be asked.

As soon as the visitors hit Submit, the data show up in a live database. It can help identify visitors who meet the criteria and depending on the need can contact them. The screen-sharing applications like GoToMeeting or WebEx can help to contact the chosen participants.

Solutions like Ethnio are most cost-effective if there is least one user researcher in the company who can moderate and conduct the studies. There is no need to make a massive investment in usability labs and researchers or to use less-than-optimal participants.

Outsourced Online Usability

Outsourced Online Usability



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- Outsourced online usability is for people who do not have numerous resources or researchers in the company
- Each participant goes through the test, and get a video with the participant's experience and a short summary of the participant's thoughts

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Figure 2-44. Outsourced Online Usability

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Notes:

Outsourced Online Usability

Outsourced online usability is for people who do not have numerous resources or researchers in the company. It just wants to know what people think of the web experience.

A number of companies completely outsource usability. UserTesting.com is one such company. It has a large panel of people who have expressed an interest in participating in usability tests.

So conducting usability studies is possible where each participant goes through the test, and gets a video with the participant's experience as well as a short written summary of the participant's thoughts.

How outsourced online usability works

It requires signing up for the study and identifying the tasks for the test participants to perform like "finding product x and completing the checkout process", the preferred number of test participants and the type of test participants specifying gender, age or income.

The company takes the data, converts it into a task list, and sends it to relevant participants in their database who meet the criteria identified.

It contains answers to questions, such as what would have caused them to leave the site, and how the site can be improved.

This same type of analysis is performed for usability studies. This process helps in obtaining real people telling what problems they may have experienced with the site or what areas of the site are good.

But when wanting quick, direct feedback on the site it requires people find problems that might not be visible. In those cases, outsourced usability provides a cost-effective way to get user feedback.

Web-Enabled Emerging User Research Options

Web-Enabled Emerging User Research Options



- Competitive Benchmarking Studies
 - It requires just telling the task or process that is to be compared and who the competitor sites are
 - A number of users to execute the tasks and then they collect the data and provide an analysis.
- Rapid Usability Tests
 - The image of the web page that wants to be tested is uploaded
 - These kinds of tests can be fast, and it is free and simple to execute.

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Figure 2-45. Web-Enabled Emerging User Research Options

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Notes:

Web-Enabled Emerging User Research Options

A massive amount of innovation and disruption is brought about by the Web daily. In the field of web user research, so many new options are available making things possible what was once very difficult.

Competitive Benchmarking Studies

There is an expectation to learn about the checkout experience being compared to the competitors or how easily a visitor could answer a question or find details on a product between the websites. A number of companies on the Web now provide an easy and scalable way to make these comparisons.

It requires just telling them the task or process that is to be compared and who the competitor sites are. They get a number of users to execute the tasks and then they collect the data and provide an analysis.

UserZoom is one such company that consents to doing these comparisons on a high scale and at a low cost. This type of data is powerful for working with senior management and getting them to do the right thing like improving customer experience based on customer feedback.

Rapid Usability Tests

The image of the web page that wants to be tested is uploaded. Picking the type of test that has to be done or sending a url to a list of people who are the current or potential customers is performed.

When a user lands on the site an image is shown for a small duration and the image goes away and the participant is asked to list the things they remember from the image they saw. These kinds of tests can be fast, and it is free and simple to execute.

The deliverables from the test are the open text summaries of what people recalled after the elapsed time duration. This is great for testing if all are clear on the page. If people can read text in the image, a response can be given like even uploading a screen of a competitor's site to see what people like about it.

Five second test is popular amongst the new breed of companies that are taking elements of traditional lab usability and massively democratizing access to them.

Online Card-Sorting Studies

One of the finest ways to improve the Information Architectures of a website is to do a card-sorting exercise. This exercise will help the users give the input on how the site should be organized. As usual, user input is always better than creating an Information Architecture based on where things should go.

The traditional approach to card-sorting studies was to write the names of the main items on index cards, recruit a bunch of representative test participants, give them the shuffled set of index cards, and ask them to sort the cards into piles of related items. This reorganization helps to understand how to logically organize the website.

But it has some of the same recruitment challenges faced when doing lab usability studies. In the Web, there are two companies that currently permit to quickly and efficiently create card-sorting studies online:

- Optimal Sort
- Web Sort

It logs into the card-sorting vendor site, uploads the items by creating cards, identifying representative users using live recruiting methods like Ethnio or emailing people in the mailing list, and sends an invitation email. The users go through the sorting exercises quickly and efficiently online and then try answering a few questions.

Then the data is analyzed through either open or closed card sorts. The primary difference is whether users are allowed to create their own categories or whether they must fit things into the predefined categories. When beginning to do card sorts, it is recommended using open sorts as it is more intriguing to see where users would categorize items.

Online Surveys

Online Surveys



IBM ICE (Innovation Centre for Education)

- Surveys are an optimal tool for gaining more data about the visitors.
- Surveys are usually very affordable and can be used as a continuous listening methodology.
- They provide a mix of data that lends itself to quantitative and qualitative analysis.

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Figure 2-46. Online Surveys

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Notes:

Online Surveys

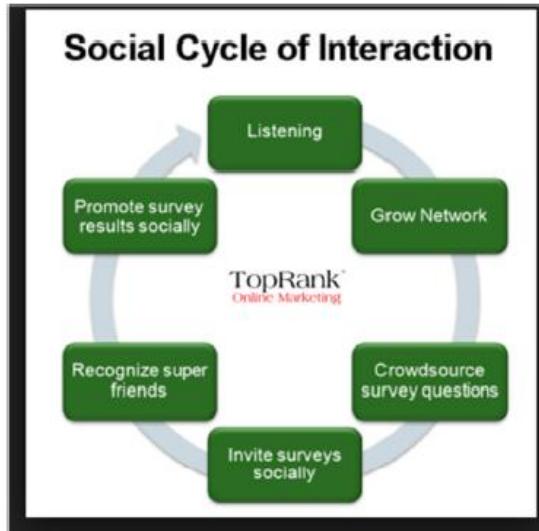
Listening to the customers directly is as efficient as surveys. Surveys are an optimal tool for gaining more data about the visitors. Surveys are usually very affordable and can be used as a continuous listening methodology. They provide a mix of data that lends itself to quantitative and qualitative analysis.

Online Surveys

Online Surveys



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Figure 2-47. Online Surveys

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Notes:

Surveys are timely where it can even detect problems and opportunities. There can be huge pop-up surveys. Surveys can use cookies integrated with web analytics data. For understanding the "why" question of user research it should contain more than just surveys to truly understand the customers.

Types of Surveys

Types of Surveys



IBM ICE (Innovation Centre for Education)

- Page-Level Surveys
 - use a passive invitation model and collect micro-level data for a focused purpose or task.
 - They are initiated by the users of the web page when they visit the page, For Example, rate this page.
 - They help in measuring the feedback or the experience about the page.

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Figure 2-48. Types of Surveys

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Notes:

Types of Surveys

There are two main types of surveys as follows:

Page-Level Surveys

Page-level surveys use a passive invitation model and collect micro-level data for a focused purpose or task. They are initiated by the users of the web page when they visit the page, For example, rate this page. They help in measuring the feedback or the experience about the page.

They can be good for measuring the effectiveness of a page.

Page-Level Surveys

Page-Level Surveys

IBM

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Figure 2-49. Page-Level Surveys

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Notes:

The survey invitation can take different shapes and typically sits close to the end of the browser. If the user is interested in giving feedback, then he or she will initiate the survey by clicking the invite.

Benefits of Page Level Surveys

Benefits of Page Level Surveys



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- They perform the task of getting the user ratings on the various features, reporting the errors in the site, or popping questions about the site, or learning whether the page was helpful.
- Creating the own page-level survey is an easy option

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Figure 2-50. Benefits of Page Level Surveys

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Notes:

Benefits of Page Level Surveys

Page-level surveys are usually always available on the web page like a pop up. They perform the task of getting the user ratings on the various features, reporting the errors in the site, or popping questions about the site, or learning whether the page was helpful. Creating the own page-level survey is an easy option.

Page-level surveys are good at measuring the effectiveness of individual pages. Like for example, an IBM product documentation site would post an article on a technical topic and at the end of the content page in the technical support website it would prompt "Rate if you like this Article?".

Issues of Page-Level Surveys

Page-level surveys prompt if the user is interested in the survey and hence is passive. Only the people who are interested in the survey will respond with a "yes". A page-

level survey also collects the feedback about the specific page where the user clicks the invite.

Types of Surveys



IBM ICE (Innovation Centre for Education)

- **Site-Level Surveys** are an active invitation model collecting macro level data about the customer intent, behavior, and customer experience.
- There are two types of invitation modes for site-level surveys.
 - pop-ups and
 - pop-under

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Figure 2-51. Types of Surveys

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Notes:

Site-Level Surveys

The site-level surveys are an active invitation model collecting macro level data about the customer intent, behavior, and customer experience.

There are two types of invitation modes for site-level surveys:

- pop-ups
- pop-under

As soon as the visitor enters the site, or in between during their visit, a window pops open with the survey. The window typically includes all the questions for the visitor to answer.

Pop-up or Pop-under Site-level Survey

The survey that pops up in the middle of a visitor's session has negative customer perceptions and so better technologies, such as Ajax is used to deliver the survey invite experience. The second method is to use a permission-based model for the survey invitation. So when the visitor enters the website, they are prompted for permission to participate in a survey at the end of their visit. There is a prompt for a Yes or No choice. On clicking Yes, then at the end of the visit a survey is obtained.

Benefits of Site-Level Surveys

Benefits of Site-Level Surveys



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- Site-level surveys are good at capturing the macro experience, intent, and Outcome-level information about the visit
- These surveys provide a great deal of control over the viewers who sees the survey
- They are good for measuring the effectiveness of the website, the macro experience of the customers, and the impact on the company, brand, and offline existence

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Figure 2-52. Benefits of Site-Level Surveys

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Notes:

Benefits of Site-Level Surveys

Site-level surveys are good at capturing the macro experience, intent, and outcome-level information about the visit for example, "Who referred you to this site?" or "How do you like the site?" These surveys provide a great deal of control over the viewers who see the survey. It can be set like only a small percent of the site traffic gets the invitation or setting it so that a person will see the survey only once every alternate months.

The invitation model is proactive and the feedback is much more representative. Site-level surveys are good for measuring the effectiveness of the website, the macro experience of the

customers, and the impact on the company, brand, and offline existence. Many companies that provide site-level surveys will tell you that they can function as page-level surveys.

Issues of Site-Level Surveys

Some resource at the company or a consultant from the survey provider is required to help sift through the considerable amount of rich data.

Time Factor

Asking too many questions, would also be a hindrance to the customer. Each and every touch point with the customers is an opportunity to reinforce the brand experience. So asking the customers a lot of questions is like wasting the time of the customers.

So respecting the customers and their time is essential. After collecting all this data, time should be allocated to analyze it.

Launching the Customer Centric Strategy

Some questions that can be asked in the survey are:

- "**What is the purpose of your visit to our website today?"** - Politely asking the website visitors why they visit the site is one of the best possible ways to find out that critical information.
- "**Were you able to complete your task?**" - The single most important web analytics metric is. Task Completion Rate. It is more important than Conversion or Revenue or any other metric. With Task Completion Rate, it could be known why people came to the web site and which tasks they could not complete so that what to fix can be found.
- "**If you were not able to complete your task today, why not?**" - The Voice of Customer (VOC) gives customers a chance to tell the reasons why they could not do what they wanted to do. It allows them the opportunity to freely share ideas and suggestions to fix things on your on the website

These simple questions will provide a wealth of insights to help deliver on the customer-centric strategy. When people exit the website, the survey will ask them these three and another question to compute the Customer Satisfaction: "Based on today's visit, how would you rate your site experience overall?"

Eight Tips for Choosing an Online Survey Provider

Retaining an external survey provider to help with the surveying needs can be done by the companies that provide surveying capabilities. It has to be determined whether there is a need for a page-level or site-level survey provider.

The factors to be considered before choosing a survey vendor are:

Mathematical Rigor

Measuring survey results is not simply taking the average of the answers but it is measuring distributions and doing regressions. When using a survey, do not focus on the statistics and statistical significance. It can focus on analysis and not reporting.

Segmentation Capabilities

Analysis is not static. It needs to be able to segment the data quickly and efficiently. So choose a vendor that can do on-the-fly segmentation of the data.

Benchmarks and Indices

By comparing the performance to the industry and competition, depersonalizing the data is done. It is no longer an opinion of whether you are doing well or not, but an indication of the industry benchmark, which shows your standing. That kind of information works well with senior decision makers. Looking for a vendor that can provide a robust set of benchmarks and indices is desirable.

Open Text Categorization

Most valuable insights will come from Qualitative analysis of open-text customer responses. This is the hardest kind of analysis even for

are a medium-sized company. But Open-text categorization is an area where vendors are still working on improvements.

Type of Survey Invitation

The various kinds of survey invites that are available: on-exit, pop-ups, pop-unders, active, and passive. Each type of invitation comes with its own advantages and disadvantages. Stress testing the vendor can be done to see what methodology is used and whether it meets the business needs. On-exit surveys work best for site-level surveys. Many page-level survey vendors now provide customization options as well.

Cookie Sophistication

The search for a survey vendor requires a company that can set cookies, which ensure that once a visitor is served a survey, they won't see another one for 3 months, regardless of whether they complete it.

It can also be partnered with the companies that allow surveying only certain types of customers, such as those who have seen a specific number of pages. Nearly every vendor now permits setting the sampling rate to the number of people on the site who see the survey.

Integration with Clickstream Data

It needs to be ensured whether the survey vendor allows integrating with the web analytics tool. Integration is important even if not immediately, but after a few months of doing survey because it is essential to know what the most satisfied visitors saw on the site and what campaigns or keywords drove the most unhappy traffic. Integrating the survey tool with the web analytics data is complex, but can yield solid rewards.

Pilot Friendly

The best way to judge the real world effectiveness of the survey is to do a pilot. If the vendor is good, they can do a pilot with a small duration. These simple traits can be seen in a survey provider and they will help ensure that it can establish a long, productive, and mutually beneficial relationship.

Checkpoint Solution (1 of 5)

Checkpoint Solution (1 of 5)



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1. Data Analytics begin with _____, which is helping a business to expand its Social media marketing insights.
 - a. Data Collection
 - b. Data Analysis
 - c. Data Monitoring
 - d. Data Usage
2. Social networking and social media plays a dominant role in the business and it is well achieved by participating in a _____.
 - a. people centric approach
 - b. data centric approach
 - c. media centric approach
 - d. web centric approach
3. A _____ provides a map of the personal connections of a person or a group, which when combined with other data, such as topics that the individuals discuss, can be the basis for inferences about groups and individuals.
 - a. Social graph
 - b. Social site
 - c. Social networks
 - d. Social media

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4. _____ in social networks tells about whom the user associates with.
 - a. Nodes
 - b. Context
 - c. Edges
 - d. Graphs
5. Sharing on the social web creates _____.
 - a. Graph
 - b. Context
 - c. Nodes
 - d. Relation
6. _____ is bloggers with hundreds of followers on their social media channels.
 - a. Brand Managers
 - b. Brand users
 - c. Customers
 - d. Influencers
7. The _____ acts as the binding agent between the business and consumer and knows both.
 - a. User
 - b. Community Manager
 - c. Brand Advocates
 - d. Business Analyst

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8. The _____ model facilitates a resource sharing and cross-functional communications to happen to those at the edge of the organization.
 - a. Hub and Spoke
 - b. Centralized
 - c. Distributed
 - d. De Centralized
9. _____ is identifying the sources that have the highest number of comments/posts/views/tweets.
 - a. Tonality
 - b. Virality
 - c. Modality
 - d. Sentiments
10. _____ is standard social media user profile data such as their user name, and email.
 - a. User generated data
 - b. Behavioral data
 - c. Social data
 - d. Profile data

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Checkpoint Solution (4 of 5)



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11. Web logs and Java script tags are ways of _____ mechanism.
 - a. Data collection
 - b. Data analysis
 - c. Data monitoring
 - d. Data usage
12. A/an _____ is a program interface to evaluate and capture vital social data which is relevant in improving their marketing strategies to the company.
 - a. API
 - b. Method
 - c. Function
 - d. Application
13. _____ is observing and monitoring websites, software, or hardware, and then drawing conclusions about how to improve those things.
 - a. Website research
 - b. User research
 - c. Data research
 - d. Social media research

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14. _____ can be collected in the form of surveys, such as exit surveys, surveys whilst on site, post-purchase surveys, product reviews or polls in social sites.
- User research
 - Behavioral data
 - Voice of Customer
 - Profile data
15. Remote and online outsourced are the two types of _____.
- Recruiting
 - Usability Alternatives
 - Remote studies
 - User research

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Summary

Summary



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Having completed this unit, you should be able to:

- Understanding the people centric approach,
- Choosing focused Data sources & Social networks,
- Collecting and understanding social media data,
- Leveraging qualitative data
- The types of Usability alternatives,
- Web enabled emerging user research and online surveys

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