

Topic 10: Online Reputation Management, and Web and Social Listening and Monitoring

MKT 485

Chapter Objectives

Identify actions a company can take to address negative criticism online.

Determine worthwhile actions to increase a company's positive online content.

What is this Topic about?

- How a company can monitor the web for negative content about its brand online
- How a company can respond to negative content online
- How a company can ensure that positive content about its brand is discovered first online

Online reputation management (ORM) is not a method for avoiding responsibility for bad business practices. A company should be using all online feedback to improve its products and services and its employee training. Rather, ORM recognizes that negative online content can have unnecessarily damaging repercussions long after the underlying issues have been addressed. ORM is also about equipping businesses with the tools needed to handle new negative issues and turn customer complaints into satisfaction and loyalty.

Online Reputation Management (ORM) Defined

“The practice of promoting a positive brand image online by increasing the visibility of positive information and managing negative information.”

Companies monitor their brands so that they can manage their reputations online. Online reputation management (ORM) is the act of reviewing what is being said about a company or individual online, so that the company or individual can engage in activities to improve that company's or individual's overall public perception. ORM is traditional public relations, but for the internet.

Is that ethical?

Ethical ORM

“ORM is not a method for avoiding responsibility for bad business practices.”

“ORM recognizes that negative online content can have unnecessarily damaging repercussions long after the underlying issues have been addressed.”

Ethical Reasons for ORM

- People like to do business with reputable companies
- Savvy, potential customers do their research
- News outlets will look for information about your company
- Positive press reflects well on the brand
- Employees and potential new hires want to work with a brand with a clean reputation
- Shareholders and investors invest in, trust in, and work with reputable companies

Monitoring the Web

For good or ill, consumers are talking online about companies' brands. Online review sites, directories, social media sites, Wikipedia, blogs, and forums all allow users to express their opinions about a brand, including opinions about its products, services, leaders, employment practices, and anything else related to it. This content can appear in so many places online that it is impossible to monitor this conversation by visiting each site and sifting through the billions of comments left by web users. Instead, a company can choose from a number of software tools that have been created to enable it to monitor what is being said about it in real time, no matter where these opinions are published (publicly) online. These tools crawl the web looking for mentions of a brand to alert a company of any new content that has been posted. A quick search for "social media monitoring tools" will turn up hundreds of these available tools. Some tools monitor social media sites only, whereas others crawl the entire internet.

Monitoring the Web – Google Alerts



Alerts

Monitor the web for interesting new content

byu



How often

As-it-happens



Sources

Automatic



Language

English



Region

Any Region



How many

Only the best results



Deliver to

RSS feed



Create Alert

Hide options ▲

Watch the SERPs

A screenshot of a Google search results page for the query "richard branson virgin". The search bar at the top shows the query and a magnifying glass icon. Below the search bar, navigation tabs include "Web", "Videos", "Images", "News", "Shopping", "More", and "Search tools". The "Web" tab is selected. The results section shows "About 4,680,000 results (0.35 seconds)". Under the heading "In the news", there are three news snippets: 1) "Richard Branson, Science Community React to Virgin Galactic Crash" from NBCNews.com, 2 hours ago; 2) "Richard Branson's SpaceShip Two Crashes, One Dead" from People Magazine, 3 hours ago; and 3) "Richard Branson on Twitter: 'Thoughts with all @virgingalactic & Scaled, thanks for all your messages of support. I'm ...'" from twitter.com, 2 hours ago. Below the news section is a link "More news for richard branson virgin". The main search results list includes: 1) "Richard - Virgin.com" with a link to www.virgin.com/richard-branson; 2) "Richard Branson - Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia" with a link to en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Richard_Branson; and 3) "Richard Branson (@richardbranson) | Twitter" with a link to https://twitter.com/richardbranson.

richard branson virgin

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Richard Branson's SpaceShip Two Crashes, One Dead
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Eight Types of Sites To Monitor

1. Online review sites ([Yelp](#), [Zagat](#))
2. Scam reporting sites ([Scam.com](#), [RipOffReport.com](#))
3. Online forums ([connectedmoms.com](#))
4. Press articles (
<http://www.huffingtonpost.com/news/bp-oil-spill/>)
5. Websites of activist organizations ([PETA.org](#), [world.org](#))
6. Social media sites ([facebook.com](#), [twitter.com](#))
7. Blogs ([peopleofwalmart.com](#))
8. Informational sites ([Wikipedia](#))

Responding to Negative Comments



Adrian [redacted]



2 months ago

Totally unprofessional. No support on complaining and no solution. I have been lied by sales guy.
Advice, triple check the car and documents regardless of what they say because after you buy it is your problem. ...



Response from the owner - 2 months ago

Hi Adrian, We're really sorry to read that you had a bad experience. Could you send us a private message with your details (including your name, contact information) and your Vehicle registration number and your complaint. We will forward it to our Customer Services Department and someone will get in touch with you soon.

Responding to Negative Comments



Rissa Oneill

in the last week

★★★★★ I have been coming to the Khandoker Restuarant for a number of years as a child with my father,,, recently i took my boyfriend... we was seen to right away and seated at a table next to a fish tank... although my boyfriends seat was very close to where everyone was walking past knocking his coat onto the floor numerous times... upon eating my meal i noticed a dead cat fish in the tank which had clearly been dead for some time.. which was rather off putting whilst eating... when mentioned to a member of staff he made a joke about it!! the food overall was very sweet and very over priced... we left a few things off the menu we would normally order and the bill came to another 10 pound extra than we originally budgeted for....i wont be coming here again

Response from the owner in the last week

Hi Rissa We are really sorry to hear your visit was not up to our usual standard. If you could Kindly send an email to info@khandokerrestaurant.co.uk We will send you a complimentary voucher for your disappointment. Please accept our sincere apologies and we will address all your concerns immediately. Kindest regards Khandoker

Three T's of ORM Emergency Response

1. Timeliness
2. Transparency
3. Training


Effective emergency response to negative publicity includes three T's: timeliness, transparency, and training. By responding quickly (timeliness), a company can nudge press coverage toward its response to the controversy rather than focusing on the controversy itself. A company should also admit any wrongdoing (transparency), after which it can then focus the conversation on actions it is taking to resolve the wrong. Finally, a company should have a plan in place for its employees to respond to complaints (training). AirBnB, a hospitality network that provides an alternative to hotels, uses "scenario planning" to create protocols for every possible negative situation, allowing the company to respond quickly and resolve negativity in more effective ways. The lessons on applying scenario planning to the web are clear. By giving employees a set protocol on how to respond to common complaints, customer service representatives can respond confidently, knowing they are giving an appropriate response.

The Taco Bell ORM Emergency



Image Source: JJ O'BRIEN NOLAN/VIA FACEBOOK

Taco Bell's Response

FOOD | NUTRITION | SOCIAL

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UPDATED STATEMENT REGARDING SOCIAL MEDIA ISSUE

Irvine, CA - June 3, 2013

What is the Issue?
On June 2nd, we learned of a photo circulating online illustrating a Taco Bell restaurant team member violating our food handling procedures with a stack of taco shells.

Our food handling procedures are strict and we have zero tolerance for any violations. In the spirit of full transparency, we want to inform you of what we know in order to respond to customers' questions on our social media channels.

How Did this Happen?
The taco shells were used for training in March before we launched a new product, and were in process of being thrown out. Two employees, however, used them to take a photo for an internal contest in which company and franchise employees could submit for approval photos of themselves enjoying their first bite of the product. The contest had clear guidelines about what was acceptable and unacceptable. This image was clearly unacceptable – it violated the rules and spirit of the contest, and the employees never submitted it. But an employee posted it on a personal social media page in violation of the franchisee's policies, and it emerged online in social media.

What we did
We immediately investigated the situation and learned these facts from our franchisee. We are continuing our investigation and our franchisee is cooperating fully.

Our first question was, were the taco shells served to customers? In short, absolutely not. The taco shells were sent to restaurants for training purposes before the new product launch, so team members could use them to practice making the new product before it became available to the public. These shells were a part of that training, were never intended to be served to customers, and were discarded. This is standard operating procedure, and our franchisee confirmed this protocol.

What We're Doing
We do not believe these employees harmed, or intended to harm, anyone. But we deplore the impressions this has caused to our customers, fans, franchisees, and team members. The behavior is unacceptable for people working in a restaurant. Our franchisee is responsible for the employment and conduct of his restaurant's employees and he has informed us that he immediately suspended the employee shown in the photo and is in the process of terminating his employment. The employee who took the photo no longer works there. As we complete our investigation we will work with our franchisee to implement any additional action we find appropriate to address this situation and ensure it never happens again.

ABOUT TACO BELL® CORPORATION

Taco Bell Corp., a subsidiary of Yum! Brands, Inc., (NYSE: YUM), is the nation's leading Mexican-inspired quick service restaurant. Taco Bell serves made to order and customizable tacos, burritos, and specialties such as the exclusive [Doritos® Locos Tacos](#), gourmet inspired [Cantina Bell® Menu](#) and lower calorie [Fresco Menu](#). The company encourages customers to "Live Más," both through its food and in ways such as its [Feed the Beat®](#) music program and nonprofit organization, the Taco Bell [Foundation for Teens](#). Taco Bell and its more than 350 franchise organization have nearly 6,000 restaurants across the United States that proudly serve more than 36 million customers every week.

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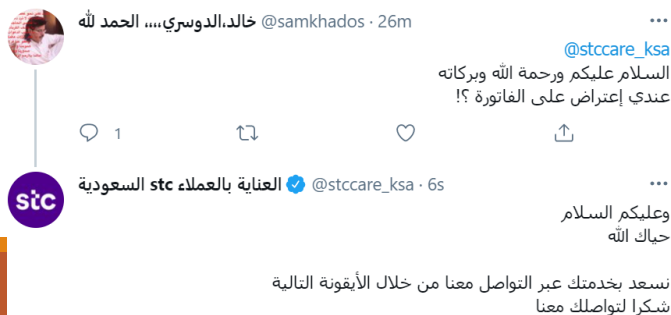
KEY LINKS

- ▶ TACO BELL CAREERS
- ▶ YUM! BRANDS - PARENT COMPANY

Take it Offline

If negative things are said online about a company, it should do what it can to take the conversation offline as quickly as possible. The company should respond once with an invitation to call or email for further support. The more frequently a brand is associated with the negative content online, the greater the number of people that are likely to see the negative content, and the higher the likelihood that search engines will rank the negative content higher.

It is also a good idea to create social profiles for responding to positive and negative customer conversations online. An example is the Twitter handle @comcastcares. When a complaint is made about @comcast on Twitter, @comcastcares is dedicated to responding to those complaints. By responding quickly to complaints and taking the conversation private, Comcast limits the general public's view to only a limited number of short complaints rather than a long stream of negative back-and-forth conversations between Comcast and dissatisfied customers.





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Everyone Participates in ORM

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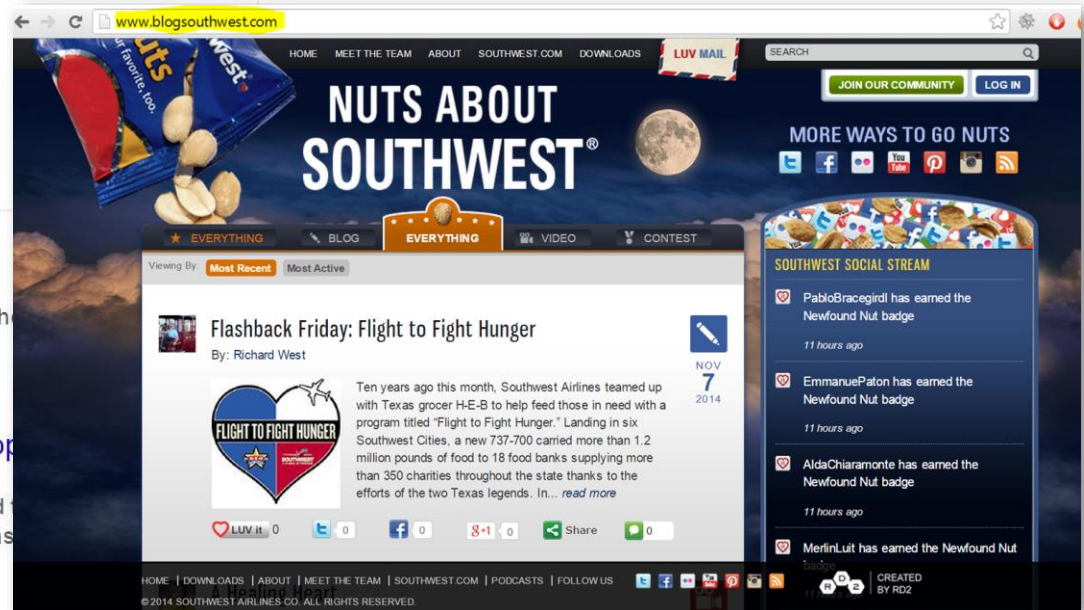
Southwest Airlines - Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

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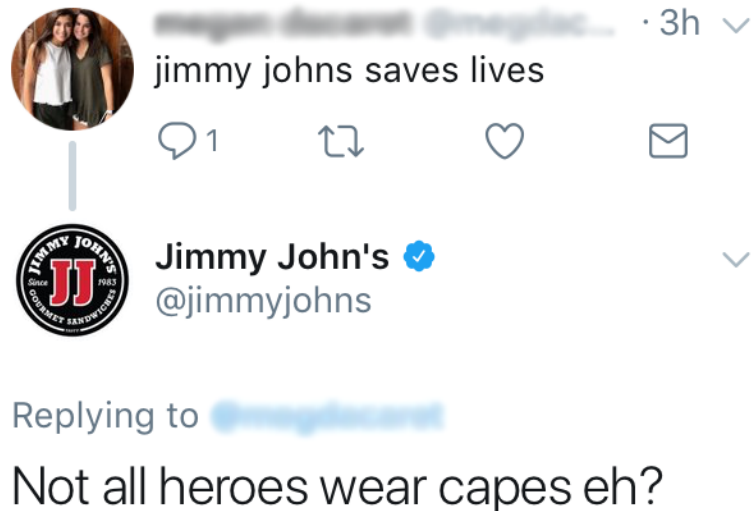
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Other Sites That Rank Well

- Charity/Cause microsites
- Customer support sites
- Product microsites
- Event microsites

Reputation Management via Social Media

Brands and companies are mentioned in many of the millions of conversations that occur daily on social media. Many social media monitoring platforms allow companies to track online conversations relevant to the company, and often to respond to these conversations. By engaging with customers on social media, the company shows that it is serious about doing right by its customers in a publicly observable venue. In addition to “social monitoring,” companies can engage in “social listening,” in which companies analyze the data produced by all these conversations to gain insights into customers’ thoughts and sentiments about a company.

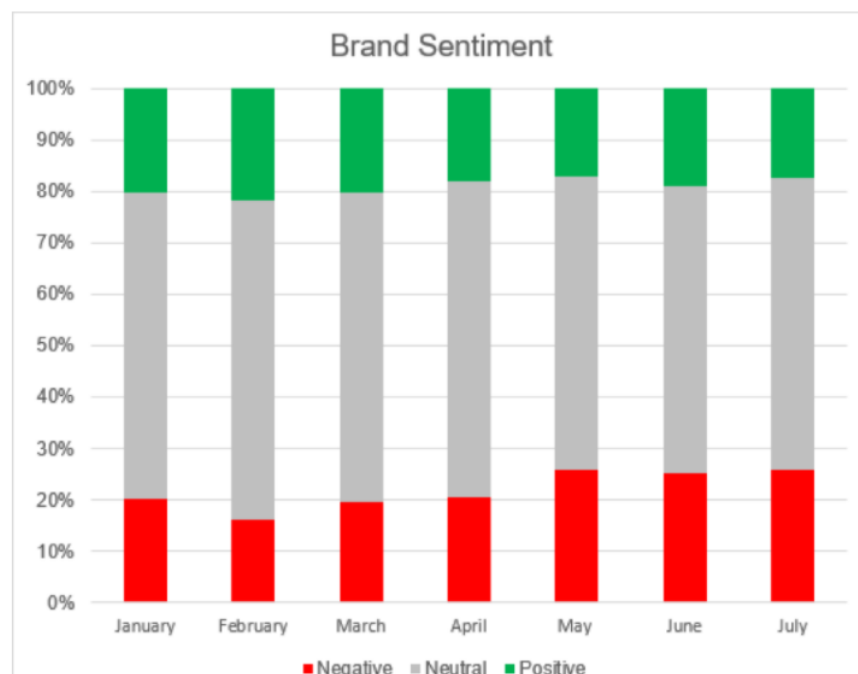


Social media monitoring. The standard prescription for companies conducting reputation management on social media is to respond to all comments both positive and negative. By responding to positive comments, these positive comments about the company are amplified. By responding to negative comments, the company shows that it strives to fix problems and thereby can often prevent negative events from escalating into social media crises. These are the potential benefits to engaging in social reputation management. There are also downsides to consider.

First, social reputation management requires significant resources. An employee or group of employees needs to be monitoring social media for company mentions around the clock. [Most consumers expect to receive a response from a social media company within hours of posting to the company.](#) Because of the fast-paced nature of social media conversations, especially on Twitter, company responses need to occur rapidly.

Second, any communication from a company's social media profile is considered by consumers to be a communication from the company itself, not just a conversation with a company employee.

Social listening. A variety of techniques exist for extracting useful information from social media conversations. For example, researchers have used social media data to measure the strength of a [brand's associations](#) and to [measure customer sentiment for brands](#). While those are examples of more advanced techniques, basic social listening typically consists of (1) scraping all public mentions of a company from social media platforms, (2) coding those mentions as positive, negative, or neutral, and (3) summarizing the average sentiment being expressed about a company (e.g., 18% positive, 63% neutral, 19% negative). (See Figure 9.1.8.) This can provide companies with an ongoing measure of the general positivity or negativity of social media activity about a company. While useful, social listening has pitfalls that companies should be aware of.



First, it can be difficult to find all company-relevant mentions on social media. When scraping relevant mentions, a company like Apple will find several irrelevant fruit mentions mixed in (Figure 9.1.9). A large company like Apple also needs to monitor mentions of each of its products and its well-known executives.



Figure 9.1.9

A second pitfall comes in the coding of sentiment. Because of the volume of social media mentions, it is unrealistic to manually code each of these mentions. Instead, coding is typically done by a software program. [These programs have advanced in recent years, but they are still notoriously unreliable.](#)

Finally, it is questionable whether the summarized sentiment score is even informative or useful. Social media conversations about a company are often not an accurate representation of the attitudes of the general population of customers about a company. Social media users may like to post negative things about McDonald's food, but millions of people still eat there every day.



SOCIAL MEDIA MONITORING

- Looks back
- Gathers information
- Focuses on details
- Measures success



SOCIAL LISTENING

- Looks forward
- Analyzes information
- Looks at the big picture
- Guides as strategy



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Brand insights at your fingertips.

Mention enables brands and agencies to monitor the web, listen to their audience and manage social media.

[Start your free trial](#)

✓ No credit card required ✓ 14 days free ✓ Cancel anytime

Social Media and Web Monitoring and Listening Tools

Welcome to Mention!



Thanks for choosing Mention to monitor the web.



Get alerted

Set up alerts to get notified whenever keywords are mentioned in real time.



React in seconds

Reply to mentions directly in the app. Work smartly to share positive mentions on your social networks, or via email.



Collaborate

Share alerts and assign tasks to your friends or coworkers to improve your online presence.



Statistics & Exports

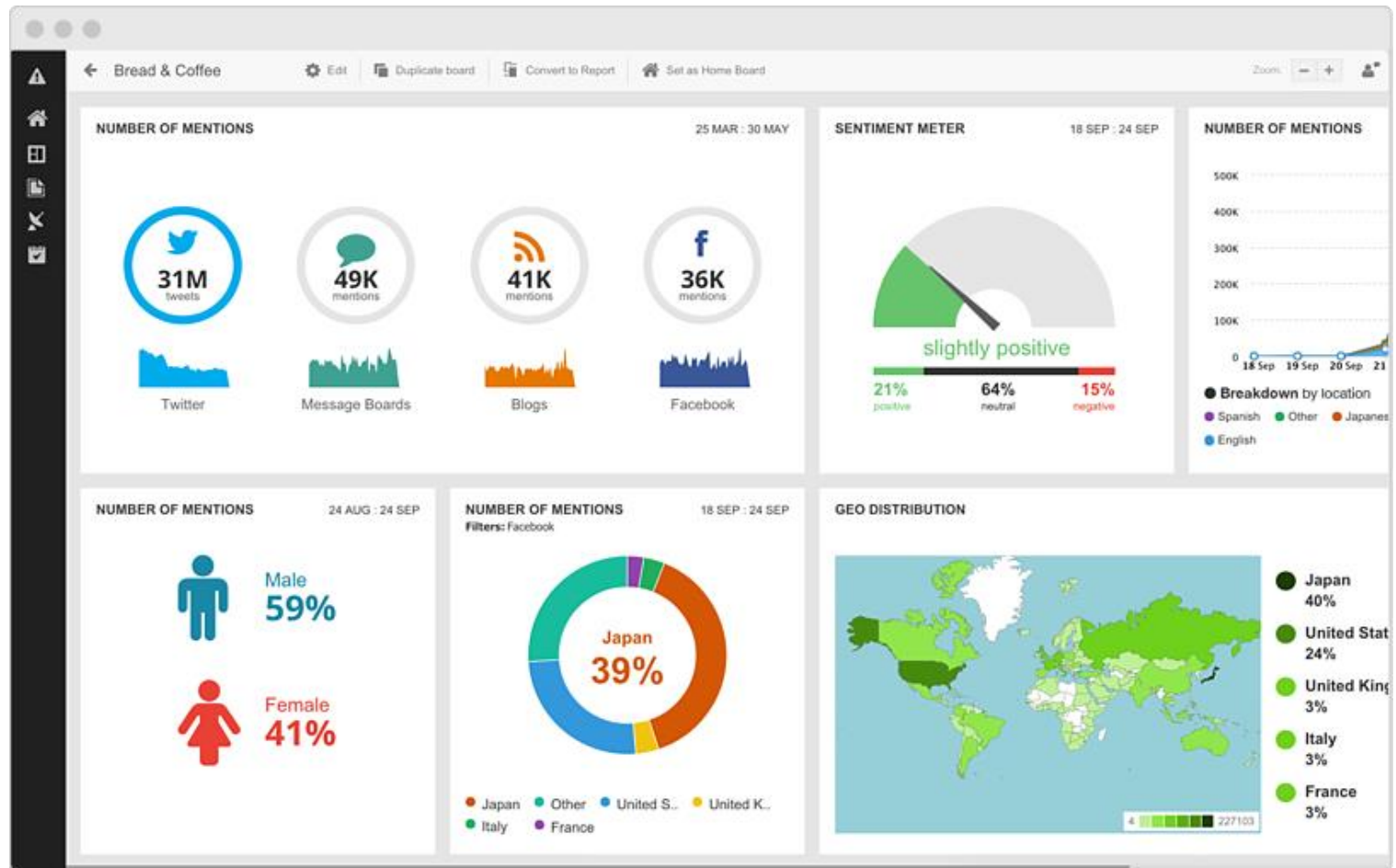
Get a snapshot of your mentions by source, language, and over a selected period of time. Generate reports and export data to compare yourself with your competitors.

[Create your first alert](#)

Social Media and Web Monitoring and Listening Tools



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Alerts

Monitor the web for interesting new content

How often

As-it-happens

Sources

Automatic

Language

English

Region

Any Region

How many

Only the best results

Deliver to

RSS feed

Create Alert

Hide options ▲

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