

Community, connection, conversation or channel

A business framework for evaluating and embracing social media

November 2011

Social media, social networking or the social web, along with companies that deliver all things 'social', are dominating discussions about the internet, advertising and communication in business as well as personal life. This appears to be an unstoppable bandwagon that all organisations must leap on before they are left behind; but is it that simple? The social network landscape is packed with choices and pitfalls for the unwary, so a careful, well thought out and appropriately nuanced response is required.

Rob Bamforth
Quocirca Ltd
Tel : +44 7802 175796
Email: Rob.Bamforth@Quocirca.com

Clive Longbottom
Quocirca Ltd
Tel: +44 118 9483360
Email: Clive.Longbottom@Quocirca.com

Community, connection, conversation or channel

A business framework for evaluating and embracing social media

Social may be all the rage, and while there are many opportunities for it to add business value, organisations need to be clear about what they are doing, and why.

The internet is now a social web of people, not just computers

The ubiquity of an open network, the internet, has led to a number of services being created to take advantage of this universal connection, but few have had such a large impact as the ability to form online connections that coalesce into highly dynamic groups that mirror and amplify real world connections.

Social networks appear to hold great promise for organisations

Many customers, partners and employees alike are, no doubt, using social media for their personal contacts and communications, and many will increasingly be using it informally for business purposes. It seems a simple next step for organisations to formalise this process. This could usefully spill across into many business processes from sales and marketing, through customer service to product development, with the additional advantage that social protocols can seamlessly span these functional divisions, enabling a more collaborative working model.

Businesses are in danger of overplaying the social card

The ability to reach out and communicate directly with customers and prospects is tantalising but, like other marketing, it can be abused. Organisations need to tread carefully and social networks might provide them with a far more useful way of gathering information and market intelligence than simply pushing out sales and marketing messages. These lines of connection to customers are highly personal and need to be treated with respect.

The social web is not a uniform entity, but diverse and complex

As the social networking tools mature and evolve, they start to fulfil a large and diverse mix of human needs for social interaction, but as a collection of separate threads, not a single holistic solution. Even Facebook, the largest of the social networks, has ebbs and flows of interest and many people have multiple identities and multiple networks that they regularly use.

Comprehension is far more valuable than conversion

The wealth of intelligence that can be gathered from social networks is immense. Organisations that use this to learn more about their prospects, customers, products and services and then reflect this intelligence back into the community will benefit the most. Those that try to control or use the media in a manipulative way will struggle to meet online social norms – and may find that they drive prospects and customers away.

Business use of social media is maturing, but benefits still need to be quantified

Even at this relatively early and experimental stage in the use of social networking by organisations, it is necessary to think about formalising the processes. Not only does it need to be based on a sound business strategy, goals also need to be set that can be measured against in order to justify the levels of investment that will be required to bring success.

Conclusions

Social networks offer many opportunities for organisations to have a far closer engagement with the outside world and, in particular, with customers. However, rather than simply a channel for overt outbound sales or marketing messages, it is one that is best suited for listening, understanding and then reflecting real value back to the community through a customer service oriented conversation.



Introduction

Social media, social networks or the social web? The precise name does not really matter, but the impact of social connections on the drily-technical world of computers and IT networks is having a profound effect on individuals and consequently on the organisations they may buy from or work for.

Something that is at times engaging, fun, entertaining, informative, supportive and cathartic for the individual is somewhat more difficult for organisations to grasp. The social world, just like the internet itself, belongs to no one, so exerting influence can be difficult and problematic, but it may offer organisations a connection or channel to participate in conversations with the community at large. This report aims to understand how and why.

Social spread and reach

Online communities are not new but, during the early use of email lists and bulletin boards from the 1970s onwards, communication was slow and limited to text, the interaction was stilted and those involved reflected a narrow cross-section of society – mainly IT geeks. The explosive growth of the internet as a mass-market public system in the mid 1990s evolved from tools to browse the web of computers and information available and ubiquitous, fast networks. Chat rooms and online community websites sprung up to offer more instant communication between groups of individuals and the acronym ‘www’ sometimes became known as the world *wild* web.

A web of people not machines

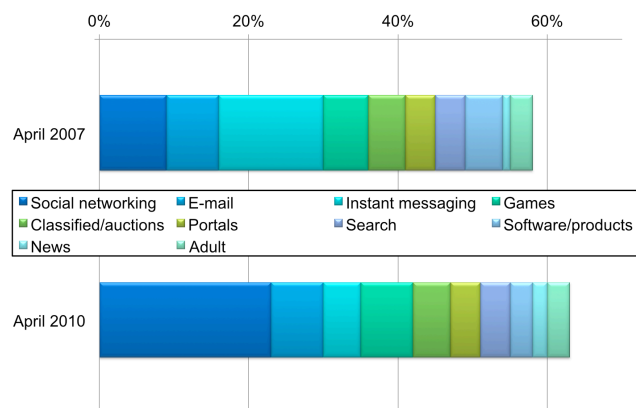
While some service providers still tried to control online communities and orient them around their own user or client base – CompuServe, AOL and, latterly, mobile operator portals – it turned out users preferred to choose their own associates and friends, even online. Increasingly, the web of machines and servers was turning into a web of people.

So began networking sites oriented around shared social topics or issues – past schools, college clubs, friends, shared interests etc. The ease with which additional forms of media – images, sound and, notably, video – could be added further fuelled the value of such sites. Early systems, built around bulletin boards, were still for the geeks only. Then came systems such as Friends Reunited that brought the consumer into using something that enabled them to bring their pasts back to them. LinkedIn provided a business means of building a fairly basic way of communicating with a set of peers. Then, true social interaction arrived with the likes of MySpace, Bebo and Facebook.

What, in many cases, started out as a simple roll call of names has become far more powerful because of the extra information shared, as well as the original shared interest or connection. The concept has evolved from social network and social media into a social web, which is rapidly moving to dominate other online activities. Even the large retail sites, such as Amazon and eBay, encourage feedback and commenting from users that others may be influenced by when it comes to purchasing items. The growth of social interactions has made it difficult for businesses to be able to track what is being said about them, to gauge the overall sentiment of specific groups of people against their brand or product, or to identify ideas that may be of use to the business through the “wisdom of the crowd”.

Figure 1

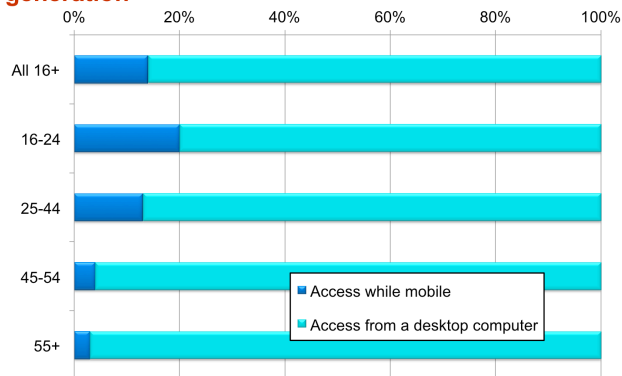
Shifts in recognised internet usage¹



The next wave is mobile

As the internet spread from the desktop, mobile use has provided a new form of immediacy of access. The upside is faster response and the emergence of context – person, place, time – as a valuable mechanism to feed intelligence into the social mix.

Figure 2
Social networking use and a mobile younger generation¹



A person can inform their social web of friends or followers that they have ‘checked in’ to a particular location, so feedback becomes more precise and intense. However, the mobile experience brings with it screen and input limitations, further encouraging terse exchanges of messages.

The prevalence of mobile social networking may seem to be currently a fairly modest percentage in 2010 (see Figure 2) but, given the growth in smartphone and now tablet installed bases, and finally the emergence of very capable mobile social software tools, these percentages, across all age groups, look likely to rise significantly – and rapidly. This mobile social web will generate even more real time and increasingly chaotic behaviours.

No boundaries

Despite an apparent dominance of Western and perhaps even particular West Coast US brands – Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn – the enthusiastic use of social networking has spread round the world. Unlike earlier incarnations, like bulletin boards or chat rooms, usage is not dominated by a narrow demographic, such as geeky young males in the IT industry or teenagers gossiping and learning life lessons in digital playgrounds. Hobbies, shared experiences and common interests bring together many diverse groups in all walks of life, all levels of education and work experience.

This diversity could be catered for within a single social network, but the reality is that different interfaces, services and attributes have very different audience appeal. This means that while the big name social brands attract the headlines, there are hundreds of other social networking enterprises in constant use, sometimes appealing more in certain countries or specific demographic groups. According to its analysis of social networks conducted by Ignite in 2011, the scale of variety in social networking sites’ appeal is vast – here is a sample²:

- Douban is mainly China and Hong Kong, median age around 25
- Habbo is strong in Finland, Venezuela and Chile, mostly under 20
- Hyves is almost exclusively Dutch, median age 40
- Plaxo is strongest in South Africa and US, median age 45
- Reunion is mainly US, median age around 50

Some, clearly, only appeal to a particular region, others more to a particular age group, sex or level of education, but there are still plenty of what appear to be specialist networks that have broad appeal among their members. The market strength of the big names does have consequences in stimulating a lot of churn around the edge of the industry. There is a strong impression that the market is open to further innovation and worth tackling, so new entrants keep appearing, but also existing sites stumble and decline, ultimately shutting down or becoming essentially dormant. Not all of these are peripheral or niche, so it pays to keep an open mind about the evolution of the social media landscape.



Social networking and business

The rapid growth and broad reach of social connections make them very appealing for exploitation for business purposes. Many people orient their lives around their social networks, receiving frequent alerts and pointers to 'something interesting' while feeding back into them with status updates, photos and comments. At home, at work or on the move, the link to the social network is a precious bond.

Where might social networks touch an organisation?

In addition to information and entertainment, social connections have other benefits. Most people would value a recommendation or opinion from a friend, relative or peer more highly than advertising or sales collateral. They will almost certainly take even more note of negative comments, disastrous experiences or bad customer service, and want to hear recommendations on who to avoid.

Gathering these experiences from someone they trust, or someone who is in a similar position, has greater value. So belonging to or being involved in something – a club, support group, department, team – rather than operating alone has more merit, as well as satisfying a strong human need to 'bond'. It seems only natural then to expect businesses to be interested in how they might use social networks for communications both within and beyond the organisation in a number of ways:

- **Marketing** – This might be inbound to gather market intelligence or outbound to generate awareness, visibility and leads or simply to put out broader messages such as green credentials or corporate social responsibility.
- **Selling** – Ultimately, most organisations have something to sell and the openness of social networks, combined with instant response and potential for peer recommendations, can create selling opportunities.
- **Support** – Organisations can use social connections to appear more open and responsive, but can also foster communities of interest that are self-supporting, especially if they can dynamically create valued social content.
- **Internally** – Whilst allowing employees access to social media while working can pose some risks, employee involvement can boost morale and satisfaction and may help with recruitment.

Should the business be involved at all?

Despite the potential value of social networks, there is equally significant risk to the business from getting it wrong. To make any serious attempt at capitalising on social networks, there will also need to be a significant investment in people, time and budgets. So the first thing an organisation needs to do as part of defining its strategy is to understand what has led it to the point of considering that it might use social networking for business purposes at all. What are the issues that have brought social networking to greater prominence within the organisation? Are they attempting to:

- Counteract or correct negative opinions being voiced on social networks?
- Do market research?
- Sell more products?
- Lower support costs?
- Appear cool?
- Find testers or champions for new products?
- Foster feedback from customers – good and/or bad?
- React against competitors' social network activities?

Some of these are good reasons for wanting to engage with customers, prospects and the wider community using social media but, while others might be worthy eventual outcomes, they should not be used as a knee-jerk reaction. Any organisation's involvement in social networking needs to be based on a well thought out strategy.



Community, connection, conversation or channel

More broadly, in determining its strategy, an organisation has to decide what are the important aspects of social networks from a business perspective. This is important for working out if and how any interactions will fit with the needs of the business and whether it might be worthwhile. Viewed from an external perspective, there are several elements that the organisation might consider:

Community - There are readymade communities of interest within social networks, and many organisations try to start their own. These can sometimes be seen as a modern day equivalent of the Tupperware party – an opportunity for current and potential customers to share views and hopefully buy more, often guided by a fully- or semi-independent expert. Many online communities and web forums defend vigorously against what is often seen as vendor intrusion into ‘their world’. Well-informed communities can, however, become self-supporting, reducing customer service impact on the organisation and providing valuable feedback.

Connection – Organisations have become much harder to reach. Where once they might have had customer service desks or departments respond to letters of complaint, they now subject their customers to IVR hell (Interactive Voice Recording systems – “press 1 to do X”, etc.) over the phone, or a confusion of distracting options on websites. No wonder so many customers do not feel their voice is being heard or that they can complain about a problem without being threatened that it might be construed as abusing staff. Smart use of social networking services can provide a fresh and responsive way in – but only be addition to existing connections, not a complete replacement.

Conversation – Once a connection has been established, full bidirectional communication can occur. All too often, businesses have broadcast their opinions, products and services through various forms of marketing, targeted to a greater or lesser extent. Sadly, even the best targeted marketing rarely results in a conversation and often nothing more than a single response, which, at best, only incrementally adds to the intelligence of a customer database. Customer service research often indicates that the primary reason that customers leave is they feel they are being ignored. Well-structured and suitably staffed investments in social networking can ensure that customers feel valued, get immediate responses and are able to fully discuss their needs in an open and complete dialogue.

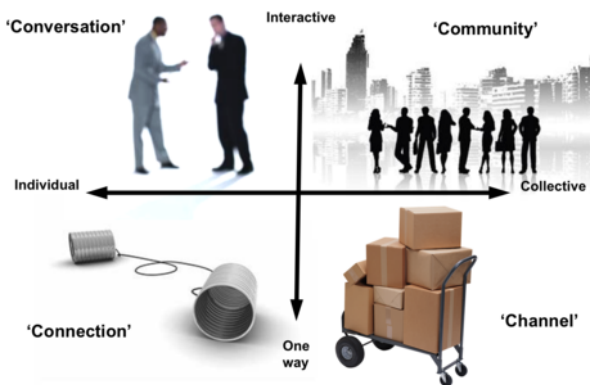
Channel – There are times when something needs to be distributed en masse to all or large sections of a community. Not perhaps a marketing exercise, but something that affects a significant number, such as a product recall, upgrade availability, or perhaps an offer, although this would need to be carefully couched. Video is one area in particular where the channel element of social networking has been used to great effect.

Organisations can tackle social networking in one of two ways. Either they engage with existing social networks or they create their own, perhaps a forum community on their website, or through dedicated services in social networks, such as corporate Facebook pages or Twitter feeds. If they create their own, they can control who has access and use moderators to control and, essentially, censor comment. This is often the model employed by those most cautious about content leakage, such as the traditional media, where business is dependent on controlling and selling information. However, considerable work has to be done to attract people to such a site.

For most other organisations this is probably too strict an approach and will limit any value they can garner from social connections. To fit into the etiquette of social networks, organisations need to be much better at listening and evaluating communications and reflecting their analysis back to stimulate and gently influence if they want to be seen as valued participants in the social community. They also want to reach out to the greatest possible number of people – but in a targeted manner. The large social sites, such as Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn, provide this capability – but with less overall control to the business. Other sites may have distinct demographics that they are aimed at that make them very useful as targets for the business.

Figure 3

Social networking interaction



Challenges of social media

While social networking can offer many benefits to an organisation, there are also many challenges to make its use effective. One major issue relates to the relative immaturity of the mass social network phenomena. While online communities have existed for some time, the current crop of even major social networking sites are still relatively new, are experimenting with many aspects from security to how to become even more sticky to their users, and are still subject to rapid change.

There are some industry commentators who predict that social networks will take over from established forms of business communication, such as email, within a matter of years, and yet others who proclaim the market as a bubble eerily reminiscent of the dotcom crash. With these sorts of wildly differing opinions, organisations need to take a close look at what they might be getting into:

- **Evaluate** – there are many different forms of social media; some are destination sites where users browse and communicate for a while, others are quick fire-and-forget updates, yet others are simply ways to share recommendations. Each type will require a different approach. Within the different types there are potentially hundreds of individual sites or services. It is impossible to address them all, but easy to miss out ones that might be really useful.
- **Segment** – despite the mass appeal of certain sites and services, these are not necessarily the right places for all businesses, products or services. A good social strategy will look to apply traditional marketing techniques for segmentation and targeting of the most worthwhile groups.
- **Relevance and reach** – it is not sufficient to simply connect, but also to engage and, to do this, both parties need to be relevant to each other. Understanding who uses which sites, and for what purposes, in the social media landscape is fundamental for reaching out to people, and working out what they might value in return for the connection.
- **Balanced participation** – Communities may not take kindly to those who appear to be directly touting for business or are perceived to be abusing their access. This will vary enormously from group to group and it is vital to understand and correctly use any network's social protocols.
- **Filtering and weighting** – Not all social media is real, and there are already mini-industries trying to subvert, overload and otherwise create artificial comment or recommendations; there have been media claims citing evidence of this in the hospitality industry. There are also individuals who are unrepresentative of the community, and those who shout loudest might not be as important as others who apparently 'silently' influence. Organisations need to know how to best filter and understand what is really happening and not fall prey to engineered social media or social malware – and how to leverage the truly independent proponent to counter the "outlier" opponents to the business, its products or services.
- **Privacy, intrusion and censorship** – Applying control and moderation directly to the social flow is difficult to accomplish and will often be seen as interfering or an unwelcome intrusion into what people feel are their own spaces, personal comments and communication (despite them being open, unencrypted and public). Organisations not only have to respect the appropriate social etiquettes, they also have to be careful about the security and privacy of any personal information they access.
- **Internal integration** – all organisations will interact with their customers, suppliers, stakeholders and employees in a variety of ways, and there is a great risk in over-focusing on social networking as a means of connection to the detriment of other means. This risk is exacerbated if the organisation allows separate internal departments or groups to 'do their own thing' with social networking, and leads to confused communications.

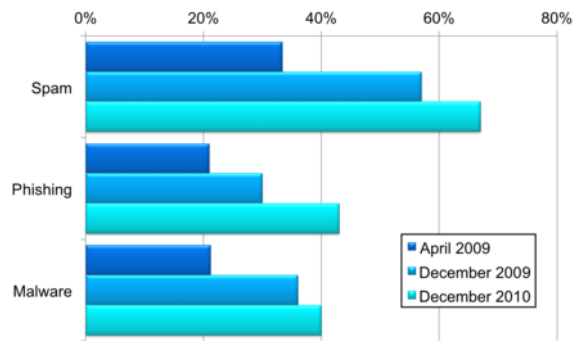


As business use and exploitation of social media soars, the security and privacy issues will rise significantly too. If social networks do start to take over from traditional tools for communications, they will, no doubt, also take over as a primary target for abuse and criminal behaviour.

The growth in inappropriate activities has already been noted, with research from Sophos demonstrating a rise in the use of spam, phishing and malware on social networks (Figure 4).

This may very rapidly change the dynamics of social networks from being open and inclusive, as they are today, to being more isolated and protective. This will have a significant impact on how individuals will allow businesses and other organisations to interact with them on social networks as they become more wary and defensive.

Figure 4
Reports of spam, phishing attempts or receiving malware on social networks³



Early stages today

Unlike the bold assertion of a website address on marketing collateral and employee business cards, the indications that companies are exploiting the benefits of social networking can be more subtle. There may be listed Facebook pages to befriend and Twitter handles to follow, but these might only indicate a fleeting presence, and not how seriously the organisation is taking their investment, how seriously they are being taken by the community, or how much they are gaining.

Many businesses are already engaging in social media, but efforts are often patchy or sporadic and only dipping no more than a toe in the water of the social media ocean.

The variation in what is being tried and the levels of success in what is, so far, a fairly young marketplace can be seen from a sample of indications of the activities of FTSE 100 companies, according to research conducted by Three_D, the digital, social media and conversation division of PR agency threepipe (Figure 5).

Outbound communication, whether to encourage potential new recruits, or for pushing out messages around corporate social responsibility, have shown early promise, along with some use as an alternate path for customer support. Even at this early stage, it is possible to detect that organisations have some idea that different forms of social media might have different uses, but the relatively high numbers using Twitter for recruitment suggests that the approach is a bit experimental.

The immediacy of updates and viral nature of the medium means that good and bad sentiment can spread very quickly across large numbers, and this is often seen by many organisations as a reason to engage with social networks – trying to stop bad comments or, at least, respond to them. Stifling this form of feedback is not a good approach, and will more often than not backfire. It is far more useful to understand how negative comments fit alongside positive ones and understand any trends or recurring themes. Engaging with those with negative perceptions in a positive manner (e.g. “We are sorry to hear that you found a problem – how can we help?” rather than “That’s not how to do it – do it this way instead”) can turn opponents into proponents, and can enable a cascade of knowledgeable people who can further educate others if the same problem occurs elsewhere.

Figure 5
How many FTSE 100 companies are using social media and for what?⁴

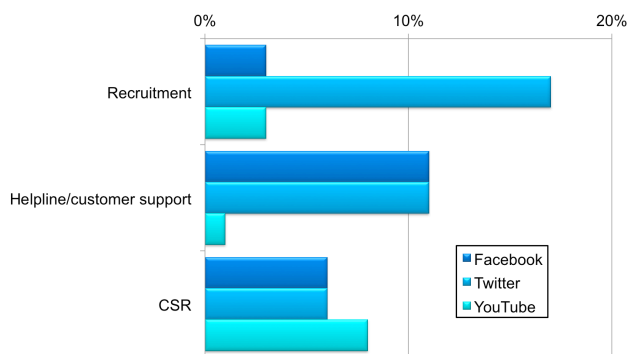
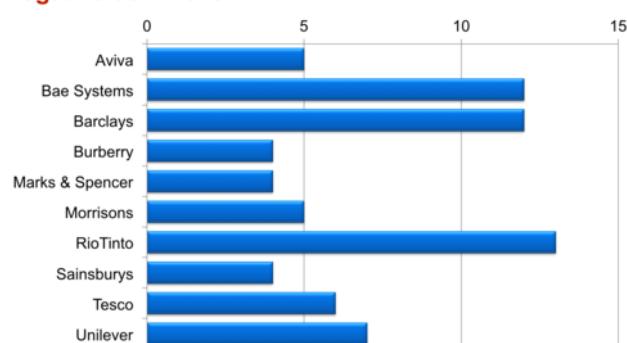


Figure 6
Twitter sentiment - ratio of positive comments to one negative comment⁴



Even where companies or industries have a track record of negative sentiment, perhaps from adverse reports in the mainstream media, tackling those issues head on by being open and honest in the approach to social media could prove worthwhile.

Many of the FTSE 100 companies engaged in social media are finding that positive comments outweigh the negative ones (Figure 6) but, in most cases, even those negative comments will contain information that is of value to the organisation. The key is to make sure that all information can be captured – good or bad – and put to good use.



Listening well and gathering information is only part of engaging well with online social groups. Being responsive, providing comments that are seen as helpful and valuable rather than simply sales or overt marketing messages, will encourage more and much better responses from social network communities. This requires significant time and investment and, while it might seem nice to be 'liked', just as the relationship most employees have with their managers, it is far more important to be treated fairly and effectively.

The products and services offered by companies sit at different levels across an individual's needs. Not everyone will want an intense relationship with an organisation supplying basic shelter and foodstuffs, but they might have a more emotional bond to an organisation that supplies them with luxury goods or treats. Similarly, their expectations will be coloured by the overall brand and marketing messages, and they will expect any social interaction with a particular organisation to match those perceptions. With that in mind, it is interesting to see how a sample of FTSE 100 companies differs in their engagement on a particular social network.

	Time to answer questions	Average comments per post	Average likes per post
Aviva			
BT			
Carnival			
Morrisons			
Pearson			
Reckitt Benckiser			
Sky			
Tesco			
Vodafone			
Key	1 Hour or less 1 to 10 hours more than 10 hours	More than 50 10 to 50 less than 10	More than 100 20 to 100 less than 20

Sample FTSE 100 activities on Facebook⁴

Each of these companies need to understand if its interaction with the Facebook community is an accurate reflection of reality and, if so, how does it compare with similar organisations. For this type of 'benchmarking' it may need external help. There is a rapidly growing industry of companies looking to support businesses with their social networking strategies as social media agencies take over from PR agencies, social media consultancies take over from marketing consultants and social media optimisation (SMO) takes over from search engine optimisation (SEO). However, such services do need to be integrated into existing scoring systems with the existing means of interaction and response – areas such as any feedback mechanisms in place to gauge satisfaction with direct response to web activity, the contact centre, with mail response and so on.

This may open up opportunities for companies to experiment further in social media, but for it to be of lasting value, it has to become embedded in the existing business processes and not be regarded as some trendy add-on, in the way that many companies initially addressed the internet. This will, most likely, still involve the support of a number of differently skilled agencies and other third parties but, ultimately, the organisation has to take ownership of its social networking strategy.



Conclusions and recommendations

While few organisations will look to social networking to address their total business communications needs, it seems likely that most will use it for something. It might be as basic as uploading a few videos onto YouTube or posting comments advertising job openings and, while these might seem trivial, they have to be recognised as the corporate or official communications they really are, and should be subject to at least a little more rigour. Few organisations want to be exposed in the media for being heavy handed or careless with customers and their privacy or want their employees making inappropriate or risky public comments.

This means that there should always be a social media strategy, even if it is a relatively passive approach of saying and doing little. However, there is potentially a lot to be gained from engaging with, and especially listening to, the wider community, and social networks currently occupy a very important position. Once an organisation has decided that a more active social media strategy is worth pursuing, there are a number of aspects that need to be considered to understand where the value might lay and what pitfalls there might be to avoid:

- **Commitment** - Shallow engagement or lack of commitment glares, so it is very important to not just add social networking logos and links, but to put people and resource in place to show that real attention is in place. The last thing a customer wants is to be given an opportunity to be ignored. Any social media plan should be for a long-term engagement. While it is important to define success criteria and measure the return on social media investment, this must be tempered with knowledge that it takes time to understand and shape customer behaviour.
- **Balancing important vs interesting** – because there is so much personal involvement in social networking, it is all too easy to work in areas that individuals find to be of personal interest. These are unlikely to be in precise alignment with the business goals, and may sometimes work directly against them. For example, the organisation might be trying to quietly understand more about its market, but without alerting its competitors.
- **Social data mining** – The information that can be gleaned from social networks is immense. They contain personal data, behaviours, responses to stimuli and a candour and immediacy that are hard to find any other way. Rather than simply using this to personalise and target responses back that appear heavy handed, this data can be used to generate new information and intelligence based on social dynamics.
- **Automating social processes** – Finding the nuggets of value from the mass of social network noise is a huge challenge, but full scale data collection and information harvesting is key to understanding the nuances and trends. Automating this process is vital, and allows feedback and responses to be made in sufficiently ‘human’ real-time to fit with the social expectations of this form of communication.
- **Moderation** – individuals are very sensitive to what is perceived to be overt control or censorship of online social spaces by organisations (with the possible exception of forums or communities specifically hosted by the organisation); for example with moderated feedback comments in online news sites. Even here, however, the opportunity for peer review, feedback and moderation is widely used. Organisations should aim to foster, support and encourage peer moderation as social networks operate on a principle of shared trust, and some individuals within the community will emerge as balanced opinion leaders. Where direct action by the business is called for, any information deletion must be explained – for example, due to inappropriate language or illegality (such as racism, sexism or whatever).
- **Loosely coupled, highly aligned** – Often, new aspects of technology applied to the business are isolated and separate from the mainstream business processes. They are started by enthusiastic advocates, run as ‘science projects’ and often not suitably championed at senior levels of the organisation. At the opposite end of the spectrum they are embedded too tightly into an existing function that does not adequately



understand the real value of the new concept. Both approaches are a mistake. Technology amplifies or exaggerates existing good (and bad) business practice, and new ideas need freedom to flourish, but also be applied in alignment with existing practices so that they do not appear as separate silos to those outside the business. A level of formality and co-ordination is required in the organisation's attitude and communication with social contacts to ensure consistency of voice.

- **Finding the right skillset** – Many organisations have advocates and power users of social media hidden in their organisation, and not necessarily in obvious departments such as marketing or customer services. Find and use the in-house social enthusiasts, but align them to the social network business strategy. This is likely to span multiple departments and skillsets, so combine talents from different areas, but bring it under the controlling influence of someone familiar with customer engagement, support and communications rather than just messaging and branding. Bring in external expertise when there are gaps or it is clear that the external knowledge is valuable, such as new and best practices for business use of social networking.

References

- 1 Ofcom communications market report 2010
- 2 Ignite Social Media - 2011-social network analysis report
- 3 Sophos security threat report 2011
- 4 The Communicator's guide to FTSE 100 social media use - three[d] March 2011



About Transversal

Transversal is the UK's leading provider of Dynamic Knowledge Management solutions for customer-facing web sites and contact centres. Our blue-chip customer base includes Direct Line, JP Morgan, Fujifilm and the BBC.

By fundamentally changing the way information is shared between customers and staff, Transversal enables organisations to transform the quality and efficiency of customer service. We deliver the right answer at the right time and eliminate customer frustration and, ultimately, lost business.

Based in Cambridge, UK, Transversal was founded in 2000 by Dr Davin Yap and Professor David MacKay, a world authority in the field of information theory and neural networks.

Through our close ties to Cambridge University, we employ some of the most gifted graduates and PhDs – enabling Transversal to offer world-class products and services to all our customers.



About Quocirca

Quocirca is a primary research and analysis company specialising in the business impact of information technology and communications (ITC). With world-wide, native language reach, Quocirca provides in-depth insights into the views of buyers and influencers in large, mid-sized and small organisations. Its analyst team is made up of real-world practitioners with first-hand experience of ITC delivery who continuously research and track the industry and its real usage in the market.

