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Social Media
METRICS

THAT PROVE REAL VALUE

Media Junkies

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Social media is impossible to measure. Right?

Why does measuring social media always seem so complicated?

Probably because there are as many ways to measure social media as there are social media networks (and there are a lot of those).

It's kind of like pulling over in a car and asking for directions from a group of people. Everyone's going to have their own favorite route or shortcut when you really just need one way that works.



So let's cut through the crowd and find the way.

As social media marketers, your job isn't tweeting or pinning or posting. It's driving results for your clients. Social media is just a means to get there.

In order to justify your job and translate your worth to bosses and clients, you've got to be able to understand and quantify the impact of your efforts and campaigns.

The first step is asking the right questions to define your goals. There are hundreds of metrics you could analyze. But which ones tell you whether your strategies are working?

No matter what the social network, all campaigns have at least a few big-picture goals in common. You want people to discover your brand or product, engage with you, visit your site and, eventually, become your customers.

Measure what matters to you

In this guide, we'll explore concrete, measurable performance indicators for these five important areas of the social media sales process:

- *Activity*
- *Reach*
- *Engagement*
- *Acquisition*
- *Conversions*

Taken as a whole, these metrics offer a clear picture of what you're doing in social media channels and how these actions are growing your brand's audience, improving its reputation, engaging new fans and bringing in new business.

ACTIVITY

Activity metrics are the workhorse of social media campaigns.

These are the numbers that show exactly what you're doing on behalf of your clients — including posting, scheduling and optimizing content, answering questions and solving problems.

Although these metrics are the most basic of the bunch, there's real value here - particularly when it comes to analyzing content type and topic for optimal performance and quantifying the money saved through social media customer service.

Media Junkies

1. Post Rate

DEFINITION

Number of posts to each social media network per reporting period (e.g., total number of Facebook posts, Twitter tweets, Pinterest pins, etc.), broken down by average daily rate.

WHY IT MATTERS

This metric is the first evidence to a client or a boss that you're performing the social actions expected. It's also a valuable control number to compare to many of the other metrics we'll discuss to determine whether it's the quantity of posts or quality of the content that is most affecting your bottom line.

HOW TO MEASURE IT

Add up the total number of posts made to each network per reporting period. Divide by total number of days posting to the network to get an average daily rate.

Questions to consider

- What networks are best suited to your client's business type and goals?
- What do you and your client consider an ideal number of posts per network per day for your brand?
- What's your strategy to maintain these accounts for the long term?
- Some industries and brands see better engagement on weekends and after work hours — will you consider off-peak posting times in your strategy?

Resources for more reading

- 🔗 [Optimal outreach for small businesses: How many social media posts per day?](#)
- 🔗 [Sorry, Marketers, You're Doing Twitter Wrong](#)
- 🔗 [My 5 secrets to sharing great content 15 times a day](#)

2. Post Type Percentage

DEFINITION

The percentage of posts to each social media network per reporting period broken down by type (e.g., image, link, video, text, poll, etc.).

WHY IT MATTERS

Different types of content are suited for different channels. Of course you're going to post photos on Pinterest and videos to YouTube, but don't forget those rich interactive formats on networks like Facebook, Twitter, and LinkedIn. Pair this metric with the engagement metrics we'll discuss later to fine-tune your strategies on each network. Visual content generally provide [high engagement](#), and while variety is good, it's okay to have a heavy focus on what is working. If photos perform the absolute best, keep them up.

HOW TO MEASURE IT

At the end of your reporting period, count how many of each type of post you made per social network. Categories could include (but aren't limited to) types like:

- *Photos*
- *Videos*
- *Text*
- *Links*
- *Questions or Polls*
- *Infographic*

Then, divide each category's totals by the total number of posts to that social network over the reporting period. Multiply that by 100 to get the percentage.

Remember to do this for each social network.

Questions to consider

- Based on your brand's industry and engagement history, what types of content resonate most with your audience? What's the right ratio for your brand?
- Do you need to create more or different kinds of content resources to achieve this ratio?
- How can you mash up this ratio with post topic ratio to make sure you're hitting your post goals on both fronts?

Resources for more reading

- [Brands On Facebook Don't Get The Picture](#)
- [Facebook to Brands: You're Posting Stuff Wrong](#)
- [Twitter research shows how multimedia increases engagement](#)

3. Post Topic Percentage

DEFINITION

The percentage of posts to each social media network per reporting period broken down by content topic.

WHY IT MATTERS

Brands tend to have a menu of topics that make sense to post about. For example, a gourmet grocer might post about food news, recipes, new products and sales and special offers.

Often there's a difference within these content topic buckets between what you as a brand want or need to post about and what your audience likes to consume. Pair this metric with the engagement metrics we'll discuss later to figure out how to close the gap between the two and find your brand's optimal ratio.

HOW TO MEASURE IT

First, examine your content inventory and past social media posts (and confer with clients, if needed) to determine your ideal list of post topics.

Then, at the end of your reporting period, manually count how many updates on each topic you posted per social network. Categories could include (but aren't limited to) topics like:

- *Special offers*
- *How-to*
- *Products*
- *Industry news*

Then, divide each category's tally by the total number of posts to that social network over the reporting period. Multiply that by 100 to get the percentage.

Questions to consider

- Based on your brand's industry and engagement history, what topics resonate most with your audience? What's the right ratio for your brand?
- Do you need to create more or different kinds of content resources to achieve this ratio?
- How can you mash up this ratio with post type ratio to make sure you're hitting your post goals on both fronts?

Resources for more reading

- 🔗 [CHART OF THE DAY: The Difference Between What You Share And What People Want To Read](#)
- 🔗 [Study Reveals Why Consumers Fan Facebook Pages](#)

4. Response Rate

DEFINITION

The percentage of questions, comments or problems from people talking about your brand that you responded to within the reporting period.

WHY IT MATTERS

Your social media audience expects more than just advertisements – they're also often looking for responses to their comments and always looking for answers to their questions and problems.

There's plenty of room to stand out here. A [SocialBakers study](#) found that on average, 70% of questions from Facebook fans go unanswered by brands.

HOW TO MEASURE IT

At the end of your reporting period, manually calculate the number of responses you sent. Divide that number by the total number of questions or comments directed toward your brand per reporting period for the rate. Multiply by 100 to report as a percentage.

Questions to consider

- Do you plan to focus only on answering questions or solving problems? Or do all posts get a response, even if just to say "Thank you?"
- You can't respond to what you don't see. How will you monitor questions ÷ comments that mention you without being directed to you? A social media monitoring tool can help you detect, for example, a tweet that mentions your brand name without using your Twitter handle directly.

Resources for more reading

- 🔗 [Brand Endearment: Return the High-Five](#)
- 🔗 [The Missing Piece to your Social Media Reporting: Response Rate](#)
- 🔗 [5 Metrics to Measure Effectiveness of Social Media Customer Service](#)
- 🔗 [50 ways to max out your social media monitoring](#)
- 🔗 [Consumers Prefer to Do Business With Social Brands](#)
- 🔗 [Social media changing how companies handle complaints](#)
- 🔗 [Why Ignoring Social Media Complaints Is a Huge Mistake](#)

5. Average Response Time

DEFINITION

The average time it takes you, as the brand representative, to respond to comments and inquiries from the brand's social media audience.

WHY IT MATTERS

Customer service is a growing element of social media management, and promptness matters. [42% of customers](#) say they expect a response time of one hour or less when communicating with a brand through a social channel.

This metric speaks to customer satisfaction via social media, and customers who've had a [positive social media customer service experience](#) are more likely to both tell others about their experience and spend more with that company.

HOW TO MEASURE IT

Tools like Sprout Social's engagement report [mustbepresent.com](#) can calculate this metric automatically, or you can keep track by hand of your response times for each social media query you've answered per reporting period. Then add up the response times and divide by the total number of responses to find the average. Benchmark this rate against response rates on phone, email and other service channels.

Questions to consider

- What do you and your client agree upon as the acceptable maximum average response time?
- How can you help set customer expectations about response times?
- How will difficult questions or serious complaints be escalated, especially after hours and on weekends?
- For companies with an international presence, how will you account for time differences?

Resources for more reading

- 🔗 [What's Your Social Media Average Response Time?](#)
- 🔗 [42 Percent of Consumers Complaining in Social Media Expect 60 Minute Response Time](#)
- 🔗 [70% of Companies Ignore Customer Complaints on Twitter](#)
- 🔗 [16 Brands Leading the Way with Exemplary Social Media Customer Service](#)
- 🔗 [Customer service on Twitter: How top brands respond](#)

6. Customer Service Savings

DEFINITION

The amount of money a brand saves per reporting period by solving customer problems and answering customer questions via social media, thus deflecting them from traditional customer service outlets.

WHY IT MATTERS

Social media shines as a way to solve problems quickly and efficiently, and it generally costs less to solve customer issues online than over the phone. If you can answer a question on Twitter or Facebook that prevents a customer from having to send an email or wait on the phone for resolution to their problem, you're gaining goodwill and net savings.

HOW TO MEASURE IT

You'll need a few initial numbers before you can measure this one:

- *Your hourly rate (or if you're working with a team, the total cost to the client per hour of anyone who'll be involved in this effort)*
- *The average hourly rate of the brand's traditional customer service team*
- *The average resolution time of an issue through traditional customer service means (phone, email, etc.)*

Once you have those figures, you can calculate customer service savings in three steps.

Step 1:

- *Count the number of customer questions or problems you solved during the reporting period via all social media channels.*
- *Multiply the number by your average response time (metric 5, above). Divide by 60 to get an hourly number.*
- *Multiply the hourly number by your rate. This is what social media customer service cost your brand for the reporting period.*

Questions to consider

- Do customers who get assistance from the social media team tend to contact the customer service phone number more or less?
- Are you answering the same questions repeatedly? Can you create a new resource or change an existing one to prevent these questions?
- Are you encountering the same problems repeatedly? Is this useful information for a product team to know?

Resources for more reading

- [How to Measure Social Media's Impact on Customer Retention](#)
- [How to Calculate Social Media Customer Service ROI](#)

Step 2:

- *Multiply the initial number of problems and questions solved by social media from Step 1 by the average resolution time of the brand's customer service team. Divide by 60 to get an hourly number.*
- *Multiply the hourly number by the average hourly rate of the brand's customer service team. This is what it would have cost to solve these same issues via traditional customer service means.*

Step 3:

- *Subtract the Step 1 number (social media customer service cost) from the Step 2 number (traditional customer service cost) to determine social media customer service savings per reporting period.*

REACH

Reach metrics are all about quantifying who is hearing your message and how your brand is perceived.

Now that you have quantified your activity, it's time to consider who's listening and what kind of messages they're receiving.

These metrics determine how large your potential audience is and at what rate it's increasing, but also delve into the sentiment surrounding your brand to determine what your audience really thinks of you.

Share of voice and share of conversation metrics help brands understand their part of the larger industry ecosystem.

Media Junkies

7. Reach

DEFINITION

A brand's largest potential audience on a given network per reporting period, including peripheral audience members (like friends of fans) who may have encountered your brand without engaging it directly.

WHY IT MATTERS

We all want our messages to be seen by the largest number of people possible. As social media grows into a primary method for sharing important marketing communications, reach is an important metric of a brand's potential on a given social media network.

HOW TO MEASURE IT

Add your total network to the total network of anyone who shared one of your posts during the reporting period. Some channels report this figure automatically, while others offer very little to help you determine it.

Facebook: *Facebook Insights > Weekly Total Reach*

Twitter: *Your total followers + total followers of anyone who retweeted any of your posts during the reporting period.*

Google Plus: *Total number of those who have you in a circle + total number of circles of everyone who has shared your content per reporting period.*

LinkedIn:

Group: *Group statistics > total members*

Company page: *Company statistics > total impressions last 7 days*

Personal page: *Total number of connections plus number of connections of anyone who shared any of your posts per reporting period.*

Pinterest: *Total number of followers per reporting period.*

Questions to consider

- What networks offer tools can help determine reach automatically?
- Which followers or fans show up regularly as sharers of your content? Are these audience members worthy of special outreach?

Resources for more reading

- 🔗 [Find And Reward Your Social Media Superfans](#)
- 🔗 [Study Shows That Facebook Doesn't Help Brands Drive Engagement; Superfans Do](#)

8. Influence score

DEFINITION

Influence scores, offered by providers like [Klout](#), [PeerIndex](#) and [Kred](#), give users one overall score updated in real time to show how your brand is faring in its social media presence compared to others and over time.

WHY IT MATTERS

While one number can't tell you everything you need to know about your social media strategy, the simplicity of influence scores makes them popular. They're also very easy to benchmark over time.

Each of these tools also offers a more in-depth dashboard to help users discover the social media actions that raised or lowered their influence as audience members (and potentially, influencers) reacted to their posts.

HOW TO MEASURE IT

Join any of the provider sites listed above and connect your applicable social networks to receive your overall score. Compare over time or against industry competitors as applicable.

Questions to consider

- How much attention should you pay to these metrics?
- How will you choose the right one for your brand?
- What activities or patterns (posting more often, a piece of content that got widely shared, etc.) match up with a rise or fall in influence score?

Resources for more reading

- 🔗 [Social Influencer Analysis Smackdown: Klout vs PeerIndex vs Kred](#)
- 🔗 [Can Social Influence Be Distilled Into A Score? Part I, The Potential](#)
- 🔗 [Can Social Influence Be Distilled Into A Score? Part 2 - Potential Pitfalls](#)

9. Audience Growth Rate

DEFINITION

The rate at which a brand adds (or loses) audience members per channel. When viewed as a percentage of overall audience per channel, audience growth rate is a more useful metric than simply looking at new fans or followers.

WHY IT MATTERS

Followers and fans shouldn't be the only metric you pay attention to, but there's no denying the fact that growing your audience is a good thing. Consumers exposed to a brand in social media are [2.8 times more likely](#) to search for that brand than consumers with no social media exposure, so it's important to be able to show that your audience is growing at a healthy rate.

HOW TO MEASURE IT

Per reporting period, divide new audience members by total audience members. Multiply by 100 to report as a percentage.

Twitter: $\text{New followers} \div \text{total followers}$

Facebook: $\text{New fans} \div \text{total fans}$

Google Plus: $\text{Newly added to Circles} \div \text{have you in Circles}$

LinkedIn:

Group: $\text{New group members} \div \text{total group members}$

Company: $\text{New followers of company page} \div \text{total followers of company page}$

Personal: $\text{New connections} \div \text{all connections}$

Pinterest: $\text{New followers} \div \text{total followers}$

Questions to consider

- Which social network has the highest audience growth rate? Which are growing more slowly?
- Is the growth rate for one social network more important than another?
- Compare your audience growth rate over time. Does a seasonal or campaign-based pattern emerge?

Resources for more reading

- 🔗 [The Influenced: Social Media, Search and the Interplay of Consideration and Consumption](#)
- 🔗 [How To Measure The Value Of A Fan Or Follower In Social Media](#)

10. Brand Awareness

DEFINITION

Overall number of mentions of your brand online per reporting period.

WHY IT MATTERS

This number represents overall social buzz about your brand each reporting period. The more mentions, the more buzz your brand is getting.

Many mentions will come from social media networks, but most monitoring tools can track mentions from all over the web, such as niche forums, blog comments and news stories.

HOW TO MEASURE IT

Set up all varieties of your brand name or product name (including potential misspellings, various types of punctuation, etc.) in a Google Alert or more comprehensive social media monitoring tool. Then count the mentions per reporting period, making sure to remove your own posts and any spam mentions. Compare results over time.

Questions to consider

- Where do most of your mentions come from? Are they the same places you're spending most of your time?
- Will you compare your performance only against yourself over time or do you want to track specific competitors?
- Are there seasonal patterns you can expect or discern? (Some brands will have more buzz at certain times of year – snowblowers in the winter, for example.)

Resources for more reading

- 🔗 [20 Social Media Monitoring Tools](#)
- 🔗 [How House M.D. can help marketers demystify Social Media symptoms](#)

11. Sentiment

DEFINITION

Percentage of overall brand mentions that were positive, neutral or negative in sentiment.

WHY IT MATTERS

Measuring social buzz is important, but remember, all publicity isn't good publicity. It's important to know if the buzz you're getting is for the right reasons or the wrong ones.

Negative attention in social media can quickly escalate into a crisis, but a brand with strong positive sentiment is at a distinct advantage. [63% of consumers](#) are more likely to buy new products and try new services if they read positive social media comments about them.

HOW TO MEASURE IT

Assign a sentiment of positive, negative or neutral to each brand mention (or find a tool that automatically will do so). Divide the number of each by the total number of brand mentions per reporting period. Multiply by 100 to report as a percentage.

Questions to consider

- Are positive mentions growing and negative mentions decreasing?
- Can you discern patterns based on the activity you're seeing? For example, are many of the negative mentions about the same topic or problem?
- Do you have a plan for outreach when it comes to particularly negative mentions?
- Is there a way to amplify positive comments beyond a simple retweet or re-share?

Resources for more reading

- 🔗 [Hot or Not? What the Web Thinks of You](#)
- 🔗 [Top 5 Reasons Social Media Sentiment Should be Your Focus](#)
- 🔗 [Never Trust Sentiment Accuracy Claims](#)

12. Share of Voice

DEFINITION

The amount of conversation going on around your brand as compared to the amount of conversation going on around other brands in your space.

WHY IT MATTERS

Whatever your business, you've probably got competitors. This metric lets you know how your brand stacks up against competitors and in the overall marketplace conversation.

HOW TO MEASURE IT

First, gather up your total brand mentions for the reporting period. Then, do the same for each major competitor in your industry. (Metric 10, Brand Awareness, will guide you through this process.)

Divide your brand's mentions by total industry mentions to get your percentage share of voice. The formula looks like this:

Your brand mentions ÷ Total industry mentions (Your brand + competitors A,B,C, etc.)

Multiply by 100 to report as a percentage.

A sustained social media campaign should grow share of voice, so measure over time to chart incremental change.

This number is easiest to report as one lump sum across all channels, but you can also try segmenting your share of voice by a social channel like Twitter to see how the results vary.

Questions to consider

- Is your share of voice growing over time?
- Which competitors have the strongest share of voice? What can you learn from their social media strategy?
- Is your share of voice stronger in one channel than others? How can you take your successes in one channel and apply those lessons to another?

Resources for more reading

- 🔗 [How to Create a Share of Voice Report](#)
- 🔗 [Is Share of Voice a Useless PR Metric?](#)

13. Share of Conversation

DEFINITION

This metric focuses on how often your brand is associated with a specific word, phrase or conversation type.

WHY IT MATTERS

Measuring share of conversation makes sure that your brand is getting traction in the right discussions, for the right reasons. If you sell fireworks online, for example, you want your brand to be the one mentioned in conversations about New Year's Eve. It's the degree to which a brand is associated with the problem, opportunity or need that it sets out to help with.

HOW TO MEASURE IT

Confer with your client to develop a list of keywords or phrases that signify the topics of conversations your brand should ideally be part of.

Monitor these keywords using social media monitoring tools and separate out the instances in which your brand is mentioned.

Divide brand mentions for the desired term by total mentions of the term to get your share of conversation. The formula looks like this:

Brand mentions for key terms ÷ Total mentions of key term

Questions to consider

- What key phrases are important to the brand?
- Is there an existing keyword list for SEO you can compare with your social media monitoring list?
- To what level will you step into the conversations when your brand is mentioned?

Resources for more reading

- 🔗 [Infographic: Social listening is a catch-22 for brands](#)
- 🔗 [How To Discover Your Perfect Value Proposition](#)
- 🔗 [A Social Media Best Practice: The Value of Growing your Share of Conversation](#)

ENGAGEMENT

Engagement — the effect your message is having on those who hear it — is a brand's lifeblood. And measuring engagement is crucial to a strong social media strategy.

By this point in the process, you and your client or boss know exactly what you're doing and how it's reaching your brand's audience.

Now it's time to talk about impact. In this section we'll measure how engaged your audience is, including how likely they are to talk to you, spread your message and more. By dissecting your engagement metrics, you'll know what types of content resonate most with your audience.

14. Applause Rate

DEFINITION

The rate at which you receive approval actions, or virtual “applause,” including +1s, likes, thumbs-ups, favorites, etc., on your content from your audience per reporting period.

WHY IT MATTERS

Approval actions are a sign that your content is on the right track. Although these actions don’t constitute a big commitment for audience members, they still show a level of engagement with and approval of a brand’s content.

HOW TO MEASURE IT

Divide the total number of applause actions by total number of posts per reporting period. Multiply by 100 to report as a percentage.

Calculated per social network:

Twitter: Total number of favorites ÷ total posts

Facebook: Total number of likes ÷ total posts

Google Plus: Total number of +1s ÷ total posts

LinkedIn: Total number of likes ÷ total posts

Pinterest: Total number of favorites ÷ total pins

To get deeper insights into how well specific pieces of content are performing, you can also analyze this number per post.

Questions to consider

- Which networks bring your brand the most applause?
- What types and topics of content provoke the biggest response?
- Are there discernible patterns in terms of post structure or time posted for your most popular content?

Resources for more reading

- 🔗 [Best Social Media Metrics: Conversation, Amplification, Applause, Economic Value](#)
- 🔗 [How to Pick the Right Social Media Metrics](#)

15. Conversation Rate

DEFINITION

The rate at which your audience interacts with your brand's posts to a social network per reporting period.

WHY IT MATTERS

Engagement is a key performance indicator for many social media campaigns — particularly on Facebook, where engagement rates help determine how much of your audience will be shown future posts. This is where you'll find engagement being expressed (or not).

HOW TO CALCULATE IT:

Divide the total number of comments per network per reporting period by the total number of posts per reporting period. Multiply by 100 to report as a percentage.

Calculated per social network:

Twitter: Total number of replies and @ mentions ÷ total posts

Facebook: Total number of comments ÷ total posts

Google +: Total number of comments ÷ total posts

LinkedIn: Total number of comments ÷ total posts

Pinterest: Total number of comments ÷ total pins

To get deeper insights into how well specific pieces of content are performing, you can also analyze this number per post.

Questions to consider

- Is conversation a key performance indicator for your client?
- What sort of conversations resonate most with your audience?
- What content types or content topics seem most likely to cause a conversation?
- What time of day does your audience like to have conversations?

Resources for more reading

- 🔗 [Best Social Media Metrics: Conversation, Amplification, Applause, Economic Value](#)
- 🔗 [How to Measure Social Media Success – For Beginners](#)

16. Amplification Rate

DEFINITION

The rate at which your audience members share your content through their own networks per reporting period.

WHY IT MATTERS

Amplification shows approval of your content, grows your reach, builds trust for your brand and helps to bolster your reputation as an authority in your field. And if search engines begin to lean on social signals like sharing as an indicator of quality content, amplification could also help boost your organic search traffic.

HOW TO MEASURE IT

Divide the total number of amplification actions by the total number of posts per reporting period. Multiply by 100 to report as a percentage.

Calculated per social network:

Twitter: Total number of retweets ÷ total posts

Facebook: Total number of shares ÷ total posts

Google Plus: Total number of shares ÷ total posts

LinkedIn: Total number of shares ÷ total posts

Pinterest: Total number of repins ÷ total pins

To get deeper insights into how well specific pieces of content are performing, you can also analyze this number per post.

Questions to consider

- Which networks most amplify your audience by being shared?
- If you're analyzing per post, which posts most amplify your audience? Do they have any common themes in terms of content type or content topic?
- Can your most successful content on one network be cross-posted to another network?

Resources for more reading

- 🔗 [Best Social Media Metrics: Conversation, Amplification, Applause, Economic Value](#)
- 🔗 [What's the most important social media metric?](#)

17. Average Engagement Rate

DEFINITION

The percentage of your total audience that has engaged with your content in any way on a social channel per reporting period.

WHY IT MATTERS

As your audience grows, engagement should grow alongside it. Adding new fans and followers who aren't interested in you isn't a big help to a brand. Engagement is what drives your audience to action.

Average engagement rate is your best barometer as to how you're doing in connecting with your fans and followers.

This number might seem alarmingly low — the average engagement rate for brands on Facebook is [somewhere between 1% and 1.5%](#) – but once you begin measuring, your most important comparison will be against yourself over time.

HOW TO MEASURE IT

Add up the total number of engagement actions across each social network per reporting period; then divide it by the total in your audience on that network.

Facebook: $\text{People Talking About This} \div \text{total fans}$

Twitter: $\text{Total number of retweets+mentions+replies} \div \text{followers}$

Google+: $\text{Total number of shares} + \text{comments} + \text{+1s} \div \text{number of people that have you in Circles}$

LinkedIn:

Group: $\text{Member posts+member-originated discussions+comments+likes} \div \text{total group members}$

Company page: $\text{Likes+comments+shares} \div \text{total company followers}$

Personal page: $\text{Likes+comments+shares} \div \text{total connections}$

Pinterest: $\text{favorites+comments+repins} \div \text{total followers}$

Multiply by 100 to report as a percentage. Compare over time.

Questions to consider

- Which network has the highest overall engagement for your brand?
- Does that network rank highest in applause, conversation or amplification? Knowing which kinds of actions are driving your audience can help you create better content for them.
- Are there strategies you're using in your top performing network that can be carried over into other networks?
- If engagement grows while audience doesn't, you might want to prioritize content that encourages sharing. What can you change about your content?
- If audience grows while engagement doesn't, you might want to prioritize content that encourages conversation. What can you change about your content?

Resources for more reading

- 🔗 [Brand Engagement Rate Still 1%, But Facebook Is OK With That](#)
- 🔗 [4 Ways to Measure Social Media and Its Impact on Your Brand](#)
- 🔗 [Facebook Engagement: We're Still Doing It Wrong](#)
- 🔗 [Is Your Business Benchmarking its Engagement Rate?](#)
- 🔗 [Why Social Media Engagement Is A Real Metric \[INFOGRAPHIC\]](#)

ACQUISITION

Acquisition metrics are where we gauge a brand's ability to turn engagement into action.

An engaging social media presence is great for brand awareness, but it should ultimately lead to something more — most likely, targeted traffic to your website.

Acquisition metrics are mostly calculated through an analytics suite like Google Analytics and work to tie your various social campaign activities to specific goals and events on your brand's website.

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18. Click-Through Rate

DEFINITION

The rate at which your audience clicks on a link within a post on a given social network.

WHY IT MATTERS

Posting great content doesn't mean much if no one's actually clicking through to view it. Isolating this metric at a per-post level offers social media managers great intelligence as to what kind of content their audience most likes to consume.

By comparing the click-through rate of one post to another within the same network, you can easily identify what kinds of posts are working best and examine any major outliers.

HOW TO MEASURE IT

Per post, divide the number of clicks on the link by the total number of people who saw it. (You'll need a tool or URL shortener like bit.ly that measures clicks per post to get these numbers.) Multiply by 100 to report as a percentage.

Questions to consider

Analyze content with high click-through rates for common denominators:

- Are they about the same topic?
- Written by the same author?
- Constructed similarly?
- Posted around the same time?
- Long or short?

Resources for more reading

- 🔗 [5 Essential Social Media Metrics to Track and How to Improve Them](#)
- 🔗 [The Most Overrated Social Media Metric](#)

19. Social Referral Visits

DEFINITION

The amount of traffic to your site per reporting period that was referred there from a social media source.

WHY IT MATTERS

Analyzing referral traffic allows you to see which social channels — and which content on them — are driving visitors to your website, where you can begin to convert them from prospects to paying customers. This can help you focus on driving repeat traffic from social channels to your website.

HOW TO MEASURE IT

A web analytics tool like Google Analytics will easily segment traffic from social networks. In Google Analytics, the path Traffic Sources > Social > Network Referrals allows you to view referral traffic numbers specifically for social networks to see which are sending visitors to your website.

For deeper analysis, click on the name of any referral source to see which specific content is driving visits.

Questions to consider

- Which networks drives the most traffic? Are they the ones you spend the most time on, or do you need to re-prioritize?
- Compare your referral traffic per network to some of the metrics in the engagement section. Is your most engaged network also the one bringing you the most traffic, or are there some surprises?
- What kind of content drove the most traffic on each network? Is it the same content for each network or different types?

Resources for more reading

- [How to Measure Your Social Media Traffic Using Google Analytics](#)
- [5 Simple Metrics to Track Your Social Media Efforts](#)

20. Percentage of Social Visits

DEFINITION

The percentage of traffic to your site that is referred by any social media source.

WHY IT MATTERS

As a social media marketer, a big part of your job is using social media to bring traffic to your brand's site. This metric tells you how big a slice of the overall traffic pie belongs to your social media efforts.

HOW TO MEASURE IT

In Google Analytics, follow the path Traffic Sources > Social > Overview. Divide the number of visits by social referral by overall visits per reporting period. Multiply by 100 to report as a percentage. Study the percentages over time to determine rate of growth.

Questions to consider

- What percentage of traffic comes from social sources today?
- What percentage came from social sources this time last year?
- Using those figures, what do you and your client believe is a reasonable traffic goal for social media referrals? How will you get there?

Resources for more reading

- 🔗 [How Much Traffic Do You Get From Social Media?](#)
- 🔗 [Small Businesses Get Nearly Half of Traffic from Social Media](#)

21. Visitor Frequency Rate

DEFINITION

The percentage of social media-referred visitors to your site that are returning, as well as the percentage that are new to your site.

WHY IT MATTERS

The percentage of new visitors helps measure how social media exposes your brand to new customers. The percentage of return visitors indicates that social media is helping connect them with content.

HOW TO MEASURE IT

In Google Analytics, the path Traffic Sources > Sources > Referrals displays the “% new visits” per source. Focus on the social media sources you see there. Some will be a familiar URL but some might look different. Here are some of the variations you might see:

- **Facebook:** *facebook.com or m.facebook.com (mobile)*
- **Twitter:** *t.co (Twitter's URL wrapper)*
- **Google Plus:** *plus.url.google.com*
- **LinkedIn:** *linkedin.com*
- **Pinterest:** *pinterest.com or m.pinterest.com (mobile)*
- **Potentially many others,** *such as youtube.com, reddit.com, stumbleupon.com or quora.com.*

For any figure, subtract this number from 100 to determine your returning visitors percentage.

Questions to consider

- Which is more important for your brand to cultivate: new visitors or repeat visitors?
- Which social channels have the highest number of repeat visitors? That's a sign that you're cultivating an engaged audience.
- Which social channels have the highest number of new visitors? That's a sign that you're reaching a brand-new audience.
- How does visitor frequency rate for social channels compare to non-social channels? Does this give you any insight or ideas for refining your social media strategy?

Resources for more reading

- 🔗 [4 Social Media Goals Every Business Should Measure](#)
- 🔗 [Analytics Basics: Unique Visitors, New vs. Returning Visitors](#)

22. Visit Duration

DEFINITION

The average time a visitor referred by a social media network spends on your website.

WHY IT MATTERS

The longer a visitor spends on your site, the more likely they are to be engaging with your content, finding answers to their questions about your products and potentially becoming a customer. And since the visitors we're focusing on have come from a social source to see a specific piece of content, you want them to stay at least long enough to consume the content (i.e., the time it takes to read the article or watch the video).

HOW TO MEASURE IT

In Google Analytics, the path Traffic Sources > Social > Network Referrals displays the "average visit duration" per social media source.

Questions to consider

- Does a longer time spent on your site always mean a higher amount of engagement?
- How does visit duration compare across different social channels? If, say, Twitter visitors are staying twice as long as Pinterest visitors, what does that mean for your brand?
- How does social referral visit duration compare to other kinds of referral sources?
- Compare visit duration to pages per visit to bounce rate: does a clearer pattern emerge?

Resources for more reading

- 🔗 [Standard Metrics Revisited: #4 : Time on Page & Time on Site](#)
- 🔗 [How to Interpret Time on Site](#)

23. Pages per Visit

DEFINITION

The average number of pages a visitor referred by a social media network sees during a session on your site.

WHY IT MATTERS

Knowing a visitor has gone deeper into your site to see multiple pages is generally a good sign of engagement.

And if they've come from a social source, they probably came to see a specific piece of content. If they hang around and see more afterward, that's an indication of an engaged visitor who's looking to learn more about you (and potentially become a customer).

HOW TO MEASURE IT

In Google Analytics, the path Traffic Sources > Social > Network Referrals displays the "Pages ÷ Visit" per social source.

Questions to consider

- Compare pages per visit to visit duration to bounce rate: does a clearer pattern emerge?
- What social channel averages highest in pages per visit? What channel averages lowest? Compare your strategies for the two.
- How does pages per visit for social channels compare to other kinds of referral sources?

Resources for more reading

- 🔗 [How to Get the Most Out of Google Analytics](#)
- 🔗 [Increasing Pageviews Per Visitor](#)
- 🔗 [For Average Time on Site and Pages per Visit, Is High or Low Better?](#)

24. Bounce Rate

DEFINITION

This metric represents the percentage of visitors who only went to a single page of your site, bouncing back to the place they came from rather than clicking further into the site.

WHY IT MATTERS

Social media is known for its rapid-fire, short-attention-span qualities, so it's not too unusual for a visitor to click on a link to your site from a social network, get what they need from the content, and move on.

That means here, you'll want to look out for particularly low bounce rates - they're an indicator that the audience coming from the social channel in question is a more engaged one that wants to learn more about you. It may be worth investing more time there.

HOW TO MEASURE IT

In Google Analytics, the path Traffic Sources > Sources > Referrals displays the bounce rate per source. Focus on the social sources you see here. Some will be a familiar URL but some might look different. Here are some of the variations you might see:

- **Facebook:** *facebook.com or m.facebook.com (mobile)*
- **Twitter:** *t.co (Twitter's URL wrapper)*
- **Google Plus:** *plus.url.google.com*
- **LinkedIn:** *linkedin.com*
- **Pinterest:** *pinterest.com or m.pinterest.com (mobile)*
- **Potentially many others,** *such as youtube.com, reddit.com, stumbleupon.com or quora.com.*

Questions to consider

- Which social referral has the lowest bounce rate?
- Compare bounce rate to visit duration to pages per visit: does a clearer pattern emerge?

Resources for more reading

- [Bounce Rate vs Exit Rate](#)

CONVERSION

These are the metrics every boss and client is clamoring for: the ones that tie social media activity directly to making money.

Depending on your business and its goals, a conversion can mean different things. Purchasing a product, signing up for a trial, renewing a membership, subscribing to a newsletter and downloading software are all examples of potential conversions that are or lead to sales.

We'll use Google Analytics throughout this section, and most of these metrics require that you have set up goals and goal values in Google Analytics first.

(Don't worry, we've included lots of great resources for doing so.)

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25. Assisted Social Conversions

DEFINITION

When someone visits your site, leaves without converting, but converts later during a subsequent visit, that's an assisted conversion. This number focuses on those conversions that were touched by social media at some point over the course of a visitor's journey to becoming a customer.

WHY IT MATTERS

A relatively new addition to Google Analytics, this metric is huge for legitimizing the power of social media. Now it's possible to see how often social media is involved in the overall course of netting a new customer.

HOW TO MEASURE IT

You'll need to first define a conversion goal in order to see this number. Once you've done that, click through the path Traffic Sources > Social > Conversions in Google Analytics. Then click *Assisted vs. Last Interaction Analysis* on the page. Find the metric *Assisted Conversions* on the left.

Questions to consider

- What percentage of total conversions does social media account for? (This metric should be directly underneath the conversion number.)
- Which social network is converting the best? Is it the one you spend the most time on?
- Are there any surprise social media channels that are converting that you hadn't accounted for? Do you need to adjust your social media strategy as a result of this insight?

Resources for more reading

- 🔗 [Assisted Conversions - What Are They and Why Should You Care?](#)
- 🔗 [A Beginner's Guide to Conversion Goals in Google Analytics](#)
- 🔗 [How to track events in Google Analytics using GAConfig.com](#)
- 🔗 [Google Analytics Configuration Tool](#)

26. Assisted Social Conversion Value

DEFINITION

The total monetary value of socially assisted conversions per reporting period.

WHY IT MATTERS

Ever wished you had a dollar for every time someone asked you what the ROI of social media is? This figure lets you start collecting by tying social media actions to money-making conversions.

HOW TO MEASURE IT

You'll need to first define both a conversion goal and goal value in order to see this number. Once you've done that, click through the path Traffic Sources > Social > Conversions in Google Analytics. Then click *Assisted vs. Last Interaction Analysis* on the page. Find the metric *Assisted Conversion Value* on the left.

Questions to consider

- What percentage of total conversion value does social media account for? (This metric should be directly underneath the conversion number.)
- How does your assisted conversion value compare to your last interaction conversion value?
- Compare the assisted social conversion value for each network individually. Which social networks make the most money?

Resources for more reading

- [About Social Analytics](#)
- [Google Analytics Social Reports Provide Huge Metrics Edge](#)

27. Last Interaction Social Conversions

DEFINITION

When someone visits your site and converts, the visit is called a “last click.” This is the total number of conversions that happened this way per reporting period, where the visit originated from a social media channel.

WHY IT MATTERS

If assisted conversion rate shows social media’s ability to make the introduction, last interaction conversion rate shows social media’s ability to close the deal.

The higher these numbers, the more important the social network’s role in driving completion of sales and conversions.

HOW TO MEASURE IT

You’ll need to first define a conversion goal in order to see this number.

Once you’ve done that, click through the path Traffic Sources > Social > Conversions In Google Analytics. Then click *Assisted vs. Last Interaction Analysis* on the page. Find the metric *Last Click or Direct Conversions* in the center.

Questions to consider

- How does your last interaction conversion number compare to assisted conversions?
- Which social network is converting the best? Is it the same network that converted best in assisted conversions?
- Are there any surprise social media channels that are converting that you hadn’t accounted for? Do you need to adjust your social media strategy as a result of this insight?

Resources for more reading

- [🔗 Analyzing Channel Contribution](#)

28. Last Interaction Social Conversion Value

DEFINITION

Total monetary value of last interaction conversions from social media sources per reporting period.

WHY IT MATTERS

This metric gives you the ability to directly tie a dollar figure to the conversions in which social media played the biggest role in closing the deal.

HOW TO MEASURE IT

You'll need to first define both a conversion goal and goal value in order to see this number.

Once you've done that, click through the path Traffic Sources > Social > Conversions in Google Analytics. Then click *Assisted vs. Last Interaction Analysis* on the page. Find the metric *Last Click or Direct Conversion Value* on the right.

Questions to consider

- How does your last interaction conversion value compare to your assisted conversion value?
- How do both of these values compare to the site's overall conversion values?
- Compare the last interaction social conversion value for each network individually. Which social networks make the most money?

Resources for more reading

- [New Google Analytics Social Reports: Measure SMM Value, View Streams](#)

29. Assisted/Last Interaction Conversions Ratio

DEFINITION

This ratio pinpoints each social network's overall role in a conversion: whether the network is more likely to assist along the conversion path or get credit for the last click.

WHY IT MATTERS

Often, the “last click” before a conversion gets all the credit. But assisted and last interaction conversions are equally important. Knowing which social networks are more likely to create an assist and which are more likely to create a last click conversion can help you create the right kind of content and resources to fine-tune your strategy for each social network.

HOW TO MEASURE IT

In Google Analytics, click through the path Traffic Sources > Social > Conversions in Google Analytics. Then click *Assisted vs. Last Interaction Analysis* on the page. Find the label *Assisted/Last Click or Direct Conversions* on the right.

A number closer to 0 means that social network functioned more in a last-click capacity. A number closer to 1 means that social network functioned equally in an assist and a last-click capacity. The higher the number, the more the social network functioned in an assist capacity.

Questions to consider

- For which networks is social media operating in a last-click capacity?
- For which networks is it an assist capacity?
- How does this affect your strategy for each?

Resources for more reading

- 🔗 [Advanced Multi-Channel Funnel Analysis using Google Analytics](#)

30. Social Media as a Percentage of Total Conversions

DEFINITION

This metric is the percentage of total conversions that can be attributed to social media.

WHY IT MATTERS

Social media can't be measured in a vacuum. Measuring social media conversions as a percentage of overall conversions helps social media practitioners know what they're contributing to the brand's bottom line and how that number changes over time in relation to their efforts.

HOW TO MEASURE IT

In Google Analytics, the path Traffic Sources > Social > Conversions will show you this percentage (as well as your overall social media conversions — a mashup of assisted social conversions and last interaction social conversions).

Questions to consider

- Benchmark this number month over month: is it trending upward or downward?
- Are there noticeable patterns you can dissect for better strategy?
- What percentage of total conversions do you and your client agree social media is capable of bringing in?

CONCLUSION

Not every one of these 30 metrics will make sense for every brand to measure, so pick and choose what makes sense for your brand.

The metrics that matter most are those that help you determine how successful social media is at meeting your brand's specific goals — which could be anything from becoming better known in the marketplace to engaging with influencers to selling more products.

Once you know what you're looking for, determining the value of social media is within reach of every social media marketer.