

# **Analysis of Social Media in the Field of Marketing**

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### **Abstract**

Marketing is the action or business of promoting and selling products or services. It includes marketing research, advertising, selling, and delivering products to potential consumers.

Social media platforms are websites and applications that enable users to create and share content and participate in networking with others. These online communication channels have made marketing products and services a new channel for promotion.

The incorporation of social media marketing has risen in popularity within the last decade. Businesses create social media campaigns for local, national, regional, and international platforms. Using successful social media platforms can help build brand awareness and lead to increased online or in-store sales.

Traditional ways of marketing through advertising in print or broadcast and word-of-mouth suggestions are still effective for local and regional products or services. Global social media marketing can come with barriers such as improper social practices and incorrect language interpretations.

## Introduction

The field of marketing is rapidly changing thanks to the introduction of social media. The standard, routine ways of targeting new customers are now seen as ineffective. Marketing's success depends on reaching people who could potentially be interested in a product or service. Social media can be used as an effective advertising and networking tool accessible by everyone (*Northern Colorado Business Report, 2013, p.11*). While identifying a target audience is not easy, social media gives marketers a large opportunity to connect with any active user on numerous social media platforms such as Twitter, Facebook, or Instagram. The purpose of this report is to see how social media has changed the face of the marketing industry and what old methods of marketing are still effective.

This report will include statistics and information from sources such as the *Northern Colorado Business Report*, *Journal of Advertising Research*, and the *International Journal of Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Marketing*. Methods of social media marketing and networking, old methods of marketing, global marketing initiatives, and how to use social media effectively in marketing will be discussed. The report will start out with what businesses or marketers should look at before starting a marketing campaign regionally, nationally, and internationally. Successful platforms on social media for marketing will be discussed in detail along with the importance of geotargeting and how to engage an audience. How to reach consumers without social media will be and proper ways to start a social media campaign will be reviewed. When looking at how to market to a consumer or target audience, correct language and public opinion will be touched on. The importance of website and in-store traffic will be looked at as well as barriers in using social media to market in global markets.

## Marketing Businesses

### What to Look for When Marketing

Determining how to start a social media campaign for a business or service can be a daunting task. A social media marketing campaign will rely on a few basic principles and objectives to serve a company (*Northern Colorado Business Report, 2013, p.11*). When looking to build a brand regionally, a social media impression needs to be made (*Journal of Advertising Research, 2012, p. 296*). A local company or service needs to work off the idea of being accessible and open to questions or comments sent to them via social media platforms like Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram and respond as quickly and efficiently as possible.

*National campaigns.* National companies need to build brand awareness before starting a social media campaign. Brand awareness is name recognition with a product or service. Having brand awareness before executing a campaign will help in gaining more followers and more responses online.

*International campaigns.* International campaigns can run into issues with language barriers and miscommunication which will be discussed later in the report. One of the largest hurdles in international marketing has always been reaching potential customers in local geographic markets (*EContent, 2012, p.22*). Marketers must watch for a decrease in measuring success, managing and maintaining information, and keeping the message regional and country-specific. Since effective social media campaigns operate in real time, marketers must be aware of time zone changes and having the lines of communication open at any time. According to a Buddy Media survey of 105 Fortune 1000 brand managers, these were the biggest obstacles for their business in international markets (*Fig. 1*).

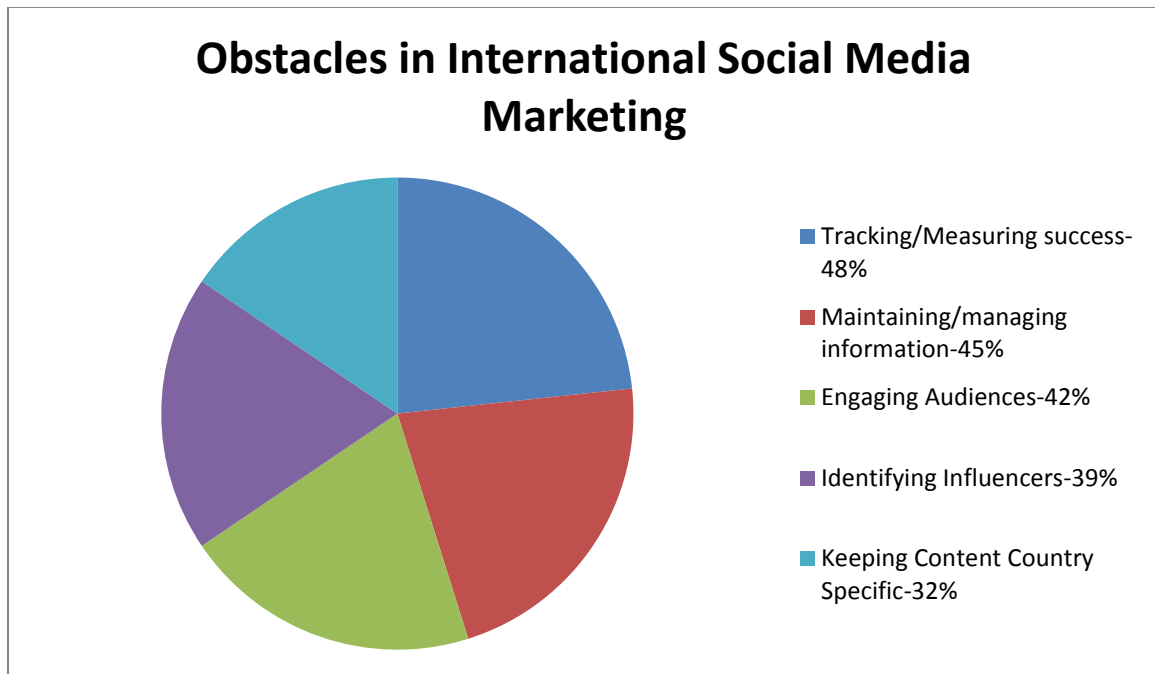


Fig.1. Obstacles in International Social Media Marketing

### Successful Platforms

Successful platforms to use when embarking on a social media marketing campaign include Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, YouTube, and LinkedIn depending on the type of company or service a marketer is working with (*National Report, 2014, p.34*). YouTube is critical for companies selling or distributing products. YouTube videos can help consumers who are curious how a product works, how it is assembled, or can answer product base questions. (*Distributor Focus, 2013, p.20*). Geotargeting can be used by determining the location of a website visitor and delivering specialized content based on his or her location. Geotargeting is the method of determining the geolocation of a website visitor and delivering different content based on location. Location can be determined as a visitor's country, region, state, city, zip code, organization, or IP address (*Journal of Advertising Research, 2012, p. 299*). A platform's

success should be seen through increased website traffic as well as in-store traffic if a business storefront is used. Some businesses have seen a 300% increase in website traffic from using Facebook (*Casual Living, 2013, p. 90*).

### **Reach Without Using Social Media**

Companies and services can take a traditional route without the use of social media to market themselves. Flyers posted in public areas, advertisements in publications like magazines and newspapers, television commercials, and word-of-mouth recommendations can all be included in successful campaigns and increase business (*International Journal of Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Marketing, 2012, p. 146*). Traditional marketing efforts work best for local or regional businesses or services since their reach of potential consumers is in a smaller area.

## **Barriers When Marketing Via Social Media**

### **Global Markets**

*Language Barriers.* When marketing globally, language barriers can become a problem for marketers. Marketers should look for an in-country manager or bi-lingual team member to assist with proper language use on social media platforms. This manager or team member will also help with cultural sensitivities and nuances in socially shared text and images (*EContent, 2012, p.22*).

*Best Practices.* Global marketers should have an overall communication strategy driven by social media activities geared towards the target audience. The wrong way to approach social media marketing internationally is to have someone write stories for social media and then

sending it to a translator. Marketers that take a “think global, act local” approach and are aware of cultural and technological trends can avoid missteps and ensure effective communication with their audiences (*EContent, 2012, p. 25*).

*Using Popular Platforms.* In international marketing, using social media platforms that are most popular will bring in more traffic to a company’s social media page. For example, in the Asia-Pacific region, spending because of good social media marketing practices will increase significantly over the next two years. In this region, 90 percent of social media users have an account on Facebook, followed by 66 percent using Twitter, and 62 percent using YouTube. 47 percent use other social media platforms most popular in the region (*EContent, 2012, p.22*).



## **Conclusion**

### **Summary of Findings**

Incorporating social media marketing requires research on target markets, clarity in language used, and awareness of potential barriers. This form of marketing is the best way for companies and services to spread awareness of their brand.

### **Future Predictions**

Social media marketing will become the most popular way to market over the traditional ways of marketing including advertising in publications and radio and television commercials. Social media marketing will lead to more word-of-mouth recommendations and website or in-store traffic.

### **Recommendations**

1. Be aware of language used in social media marketing on various platforms. On the Internet, what is said cannot be unsaid.
2. Create basic principles and objectives before starting a social media campaign. Decide what location should be targeted first (local, regional, national, international).
3. Use successful platforms on social media for a marketing campaign. Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Pinterest, YouTube, and LinkedIn are good choices to start with.

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