



# Point of View: Social Media



“REDEFINING  
THE **RELATIONSHIP**  
BETWEEN **CONSUMERS**  
AND **BRAND MESSAGING**”

**S**ocial media are redefining the relationship between consumers and brand messaging: what was once a linear process in which the marketing team essentially controlled the brand message has been transformed into a multi-nodal communications environment in which consumers respond, participate, and even repurpose brand messaging—sometimes as much if not more than the brand itself.



# Redefining the Relationship Between Consumers and Brand Messaging



This online participation has several important implications for brand marketing:

- What had been previously a one-way message flow with fairly predictable timing cycles, has now become a diverse, always-on, sometimes raucous conversation between many interested parties;
- The speed at which information flows through the social network is unprecedented, and requires a brand team to carefully monitor the social space in real-time;
- The ease of creation means that there will inevitably be a wide range of voices—pro and con—for any particular topic or brand. Brand teams need to have contingencies in place, not just for adverse event reporting, but for how to handle negative firestorms that can arise (such as the Motrin Moms incident)—or, how to leverage and amplify favorable brand advocates as they emerge;
- Because messages are being passed around rapidly, the brand team needs to create very focused and “sharable” message units that won’t get distorted as they’re passed along the network.

## STRATEGIC USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA TACTICS

The first step in a successful social media campaign is to align the campaign with the overall brand strategy, keeping in mind that social media is not a magic panacea. Like all great marketing, there is no simple recipe for social media marketing success. However, addressing some basic questions upfront will dramatically increase your odds of success. These questions include:

- What is my customer’s social media profile?
- Where are my customers talking?
- What are they talking about?
- If I could start a conversation, what would the topic be?
- Who would be a credible participant in that conversation?
- What do I do if the conversation goes off topic?
- What do I want them to do as a result of the conversation?

## SOCIAL MEDIA TRENDS

Social media participation, online video, and mobile technology are the three dominant and unstoppable trends of the current marketing environment. While there may be a short-term backlash for some of these particular technologies and brands, in the long-term these three interrelated trends are fundamentally reshaping both communications as well as the wider culture.

For example, the power and strength of the social network in the healthcare process is a force that is just beginning to be understood. As social network technologies mature, more and more patients will take advantage of their extended social networks to develop powerful virtual care teams comprised of friends, family members, and even healthcare professionals. These virtual care teams promise to radically alter how healthcare services, patient compliance, prevention, and lifestyle changes are delivered.

An analysis of some of the most popular social media channels illustrates not only the breadth and depth of their growth and usage, but their increased relevance to the healthcare community.



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## FACEBOOK

- More than 175 million active users
- More than half of Facebook users are outside of college
- The fastest growing demographic is those 30 years old and older
- Average user has 120 friends on the site
- More than 3 billion minutes are spent on Facebook each day (worldwide)
- More than 18 million users update their statuses at least once each day
- More than 4 million users become fans of Pages each day
- Five “fibromyalgia” groups within Facebook, one with 80 + members

## VIDEOS

- 12.7 billion—The number of online videos watched by American Internet users in a month (November 2008)
- 1,890 “fibromyalgia” videos at YouTube
- Three “LYRICA” videos at YouTube

## MOBILE

- Nearly 40% of mobile users report they access the Internet from their mobile devices—representing a 6.5-point increase since September 2007

## BLOGS

- 133 million—The number of blogs on the Internet (as tracked by Technorati)
- 900,000—The number of new blog posts in a day
- 329 million—The number of blog posts in 2008
- 289 “LYRICA” mentions at Technorati
- 2,240 “fibromyalgia” mentions at Technorati

## IMAGES

- 10 billion—Photos hosted by Facebook (October 2008)
- 3 billion—Photos hosted by Flickr (November 2008)
- 6.2 billion—Photos hosted by Photobucket (October 2008)



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## SOCIAL MEDIA TREND RESOURCES

While there are many professional resources available to track your brand in the social space, there are also many “do-it-yourself” resources that are very powerful and convenient:

### Quantcast.com & Compete.com

Enter in website URL to pull graphs on monthly website traffic, page views, and time spent on site with keywords used in search. Quantcast will provide a high-level audience profile as well as traffic, key words, and other sites visited by audience. Compete.com data = 95% confidence. Quantcast is +/- 20% margin of error. Compete.com can compare up to five sites side-by-side.

### BlogPulse.com

Enter in up to three search terms to graph the level of chatter/blogs using that particular term. May select chatter over the last two, three, or six months.

### Google.com/Trends

Follow latest search trends on sites and keywords.

### WebsiteGrader.com

Compare sites based on usability, traffic, and a variety of other metrics. Also conduct head-to-head comparisons between two sites.

### Dataopedia.com

Dataopedia has woven together an elegant mashup of these data-driving sites, providing an omniscient view of any site. Traffic Stats, Popularity, Multimedia, Technical Data, and Company Info all presented in a single summary page, with corresponding tags containing additional information.

For more information, visit

[www.CadientInteractive.com/Hatch](http://www.CadientInteractive.com/Hatch)