In our last edition we discussed the term *mocial*—the emerging integration of social media marketing and mobile marketing. Today you don’t hear too many marketers talk in those terms. In this postdigital age, mobile devices have become the primary means to deliver a brand message, whether it’s an app, text, a banner ad, video, branded content, a native ad, a social media post, or even a telephone call. We can’t really separate digital communications into nice, neat categories. But we can explore the impact of mobile marketing, how it continues to evolve, and what the future might hold, knowing full it can’t be fully separated from desktop websites and email. We’ll also use this chapter to take a closer look at social media marketing, separating the use of networks as advertising platforms from branded and user-generated social marketing content.
Mobile: You Can Take It With You

Let’s admit it. We’re slaves to our smart phones. Ninety-two percent of smart phone users experience anxiety when they’re not near a charger. Ninety-five percent of users say their cell phone is the first thing they look at in the morning. In fact, 60% of our total media time is spent on mobile devices. Sometimes we even have telephone conversations.

Mobile Web Marketing

Mobile-first web design: Most people already go to mobile first when they seek information or entertainment. Even search engines consider mobile friendliness as part of the ranking criteria. So it makes sense to consider the special user experience (UX) requirements of a small screen. One of the key factors to consider is making it easier to click on the right content. Some people, especially those who are not digital natives, have “fat fingers,” which explains why almost half of digital ads are clicked by mistake.

“The concept of the front page has changed. Social and mobile are now the key distribution models.”
Pat Chambers, BuzzFeed

Apps for publishers provide a lot of opportunity for native advertising. The highlighted sections show a sponsored news story, a sponsored photo gallery, and a sponsored video.

Audi combined mobile gaming with product information. As the R8 sports car speeds past on the iPad, the user has to snap a picture. The screen shots are stored in the iPad’s photo album, but only those with the car perfectly framed reveal the R8.
This also created the need for automatic spell checking for texts. Another consideration for mobile is scrolling. Most people don’t mind scrolling down or across, but some sites that go both ways confuse and even irritate some mobile users. Animations take up bandwidth and sometimes complicate design aesthetics. That’s why more sites are using “lazy loading” animations that are loaded in the page, but activate only when they are scrolled into view. Perhaps the biggest UX consideration is simplicity—short copy, bright colors, basic illustrations, crisp photography, and, most important, easy-to-read fonts.

Most website developers have adopted a mobile-first philosophy. In other words, their desktop and laptop designs are created to easily adapt to mobile phones and tablets. Designer Luke Wroblewski describes how it works: “First mock up how your website would look as a responsive layout on mobile screens. Eliminate all excess fluff and keep to only the bare essentials. From this standpoint it’s much easier to scale up your design to wider screens. Navigation menus become wider, content is lengthened along with a possible sidebar. Mobile first design places a higher priority on the mobile experience, which then becomes a baseline for the entire layout.”

**Mobile Advertising**

Steve Jobs was famous for his acerbic wit as well as his creativity. One of his more memorable quotes was “Mobile ads still suck.” Even with the advances made since Jobs’s passing, he’s still right. Advertisers have not really broken through to achieve the same success in mobile as with other digital marketing. Some of the reasons are due to the nature of the device, available technology, and good old human nature. Brands can’t target users on mobile devices like they can on desktop sites. Without precise targeting, advertising effects resemble the old “spray and pray” model, where success depends more on mass quantities of messages and luck. Consumers may expect that kind of marketing communication when it comes to traditional media.

The rapid increase in smart phone use has driven mobile-first web design. Responsive email and website designs look fine on a desktop computer or tablet and automatically convert to a single-column design when viewed on a smart phone.
However, we have a special relationship with our mobile devices. We personalize the covers, the wallpapers, the games, the ringtones, and the apps. Our smartphones are our lives. So we don’t want them invaded with unsolicited messages. It’s okay to seek out information, but the biggest concerns people have about mobile advertising is the violation of personal space.

Brands are still struggling for ways to force a happy marriage between mobile and advertising. Table 12.1 shows a few reasons why it’s a tough match.

### Connecting Digital and Analog Worlds

Mobile technology is the gateway between the virtual and actual environments. Mobile devices are the glue that holds the Internet of things together. Marketers have been scrambling to be part of that digital/analog mix, with varying success. Here are some of the ways:

**Proximity marketing** allows customers with mobile phones to be tracked when they enter a store, where they are at any given point of time, and for how long. The system enables special offer texts to be sent to these customers’ phone. For example, a retailer could send a mobile text message to customers in their database who happen to be walking in a mall. That message could say, “Save 50% in the next 5 minutes only when you purchase from our store.”

Augmented reality shows everything you’re interested in within a given point of view, as indicated in the upper right corner of this screen.
Mondelez International has committed to exploring proximity-based messaging, citing significant gains in point-of-purchase influence. Location-based services send advertising and other information to smart phone users based on their current locations, using a GPS chip built into the phone, or proximity to the closest cell phone towers for phones without GPS features.

In-store beacons are transmitters that deliver radio signals on a specified frequency from a fixed location in or around a given store. Any radio technology can be used to identify locations, but the most useful for shoppers with mobile devices are Wi-Fi, near-field communication (NFC)/RFID, and Bluetooth. Wi-Fi is readily available across smart phone operating systems and is relatively inexpensive to set up, but requires an installed app. NFC/RFID offers greater accuracy for payments and product information, but is not supported on iPhones. iBeacons are Apple’s solution, which are based on Bluetooth and require the installation of apps.

Two-dimensional barcodes, such as QR codes, have connected the digital and analog worlds for a long time. Scanning that ugly little pixelated box can open the door to a beautiful website or app. QR codes have been used in billboards by Calvin Klein and Victoria’s Secret, to name a few. You’ll see them on virtually every for-sale sign for a residential or commercial property. QR codes on every SKU in stores like Best Buy allow shoppers to get prices and specs (making it easier to find the same product on Amazon for a lower price). Apple Passbook is a native app that uses 2D bar codes which allow users to keep coupons, tickets, boarding passes, debit cards, and credit card information via Apple Pay. Shazam is a 2D barcode that allows users to identify, explore, purchase, and share content by scanning audio. Most people use Shazam to identify a song on the radio, a TV show, or in a public place such as a restaurant. Shazam barcodes appear in TV commercials, print ads and out-of-home media, and, when scanned, connect the user to a brand’s mobile website. Content can include coupons, discounts, a list of events, cross-promotions, and any number of sales promotion tactics. As one of the world’s top ten apps, Shazam reaches more than 450 million users in 200 countries, exceeds 90 million monthly active users, and is growing by another 13 million new users each month. Shazam also makes it easy for people to share their discoveries on Facebook, Twitter, WhatsApp, Pinterest, and Google+.

In-Game Mobile Marketing

Brands are now delivering promotional messages within mobile games or sponsoring entire games to drive consumer engagement. This is known as mobile advergaming or ad-funded mobile gaming. More and more game developers, especially in the social and mobile space, are offering their products for free.
So how do they monetize a free product? Brand advertising. Mobile offers a huge opportunity. As eMarketer stated, “Although mobile gamers now make up the largest and fastest-growing segment of the gaming population, mobile gaming revenues still lag behind other channels, like console games.” Still, U.S. mobile gaming revenues were expected to double by 2017.10

There are essentially three major trends in mobile gaming right now: interactive real-time 3D games, massive multiplayer games, and social networking games. This will lead toward more complex and more sophisticated, richer game play. On the other side, there are the so-called casual games—games that are very simple and very easy to play. Most mobile games today are such casual games, and this will probably stay the case for quite a while.

**Ads and Apps**

For all the reasons previously stated in this chapter, people just don’t like mobile advertising. Mobile devices are very personal, and they don’t want that space invaded. For a marketer, responsive websites are much cheaper to develop and can offer richer content than stand-alone ads, plus they can serve as the vehicle for ads in a native environment. Most people would be more receptive to an ad on a website they opened rather than an intrusive text message.

Shazam has long been popular to track down music sources. It’s becoming more popular for TV commercials to link viewers to mobile websites.

Some brands sneak a message into a mobile game. Others are up front and sponsor the game, creating entertainment that merges the brand image with the interests of the users.
People hate mobile ads, but they love apps. The total mobile ad spend is predicted to reach $85 billion by 2018, and 86% of that will be spent on developing apps.\(^\text{11}\) Apps deliver the highest level of engagement because people actively seek them, download them, use them and have the ability to dump them when they no longer provide value. App development is more expensive than creating mobile ads, but because people invite the messages into their lives, apps are far more engaging.

Unlike ads and responsive sites, app development depends on the platform. Apple iOS is the preferred platform for developers in North America and Europe, while Android wins everywhere else.\(^\text{12}\) Development also varies by the core technology used to create an app. About half of all apps are developed as native apps that deliver customized content and navigation. Native apps are specific to a platform and offer strong security. As a result they are more expensive to develop than apps created in HTML5.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pros</th>
<th>Cons</th>
<th>Examples</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Native apps</td>
<td>Only one OS required</td>
<td>Single platform programming (costly and time consuming to multiple platforms)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Higher speed</td>
<td>Fragmented user base</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Integration with other features</td>
<td>Depends on app store</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Better UX</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Gaming</td>
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<td></td>
<td>High security</td>
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<tr>
<td>HTML5 apps</td>
<td>Multiple OS</td>
<td>Not fully supported on all devices</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Lower development costs (one code base)</td>
<td>Less secure</td>
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<td>Easier to update and manage</td>
<td>Slower</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Faster to market</td>
<td>Does not look or feel native</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hybrid apps</td>
<td>More flexible</td>
<td>Longer development time if used on different OS</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Easy development</td>
<td>Awkward communication between web and native layer</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Integration with other features</td>
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</tr>
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</table>

Table 12.2 Mobile Apps\(^\text{13}\)
About half of all apps use HTML5 or HTML5 hybrid technology. Hybrid technology is a good compromise that has a web-based mobile app wrapped inside a native container. Hybrid apps combine the opportunity for a rich user interface developed in HTML5 with device-specific capabilities accessed through the native code. The biggest advantage is flexibility. Table 12.2 outlines the pros and cons of mobile app development tools.

While downloading apps involves a choice, address push notifications associated with those apps can become very annoying. Push notifications can be much cheaper compared with separate SMS (Short Message Service) marketing once they are set up. But of course, they have to be factored into the cost of the app's development. As with all mobile marketing, brands have to find that balance between providing information people want, when they want it, and bothering people. Smart marketers give the consumer the choice to opt out.

**Where Is Mobile Taking Us?**

All indicators point to mobile becoming the dominant force in online access. With an expected 26 billion devices in use by 2020, a prediction. But it's harder to find ways to integrate mobile in a marketing communication campaign. Here are some considerations:

- Advertisers need to find ways to create adaptive messaging that flows from one device to the next. About 70% of consumers research products on smartphones, but 65% of the resulting purchases take place on other media.
- Marketers will have to balance advances in geotargeting that delivers the right message to the right person at the right time and location with privacy concerns.
- Right now, mobile’s share of ad spend is pretty small, and the vast majority of marketers are not very confident in their ability to measure the return on investment (ROI) of their mobile efforts. Measuring effectiveness will have to go beyond click-through measurements to more robust metrics such as cross-channels and in-store sales attribution, postclick engagement, and brand lift.
- Mobile does not use cookies to target users. But social media platforms like Facebook and Twitter are using consumer-supplied data to follow them online. Cookieless targeting has arrived.
- Programmatic has arrived for mobile. Automating the process of mobile ad purchasing and targeting allows brands to focus on their audience and improve resonance to increase engagement.  

Some people look to major tech events such as South by Southwest (SXSW) to discover the next big thing in mobile and social media. Some of today's mainstream apps, such as Foursquare, Quora, and Google+, rose from SXSW. The blogosphere went gaga over live video on Meerkat and Periscope at SXSW. We'll see where that goes and what comes up next. Despite the breathless excitement about the latest hot app, we have to understand that the biggest hurdle to mobile marketing is the intimate relationship we have with our devices. Aggressive advertising on our smart phones is just as unwelcome as a pushy salesperson. For many people, their mobile device is their only digital connection that's relatively free from marketing intrusion. Mobile spam, in-game ads, location information services, and more sophisticated tracking technology threaten perceptions of privacy and receptivity to marketing messages.
Social Media Versus Social Networking

Most people use the term social media to cover every aspect about interactive online communication. However, to really understand it in a marketing communication context, you need to know the difference between social media and social networking. Social media is the content (media) that’s distributed online. It can be a blog, a video, a newsletter, an article, a white paper, an e-zine, a review, or a personal comment. Social networking is how you distribute that content through social networking sites such as Facebook and Twitter. Social networking is all about engagement. Advertising communicates. Social networking connects—builds relationships. It should be a two-way street—where the marketer listens as much as it tells. Think of social media as the “what” and social networking as the “how” of online interpersonal communication.

Social Networking Platforms

Since we are talking about marketing communications, we’ll limit this section to a brief discussion of some of the top players in social networking and how they are used to deliver advertising. Then we’ll cover social media marketing and why it’s different from advertising. Social media marketing does not include paid media on social networks. As customer experience leader and social media blogger Augie Ray states, “Go ahead and invest in advertising on Facebook and Twitter, just don’t call it ‘social.’ The most popular forms of advertising on Facebook today are retargeting and custom audiences, neither of which are remotely social, and less than one in six dollars use social data.”

We can’t cover all the rising stars in social media. If you’re tuned into the social space, you’ve probably read about the next big thing in this morning’s Twitter feed. Rather, we’ll focus on the current leaders and how they deliver ad messages.

Facebook has rocketed from an obscure chat group to a marketing juggernaut. In fact, Don Mathis in Advertising Age commented, “Facebook is pushing beyond the restrictive label of ‘social’ and rewriting the rules of the game in digital marketing along the way. If nothing else, it highlights that social is not just a channel. Rather, social is a fundamentally different way to understand and execute digital marketing. It is far more about data than platform, and Facebook is making this vision a reality. Success in digital marketing should be about finding precise consumer audiences and identities, not abstractions like campaigns and line items. Atlas is making Facebook more people-focused than ever before, and brands and agencies would be smart to follow suit.” Facebook is solving one of the big problems with social media and mobile devices—inability to accurately target users. Advertisers can find appropriate audiences based on a whole new set of variables, and because targeting is based on demographics and buying behavior, it’s much more efficient.

It’s no coincidence that organic search on Facebook has dropped to almost nothing, forcing brands to pay for sponsored stories and advertising. Fortunately for marketers, the new advertising model is so robust that they can get better results with measurable ROI than ever before.
Experts expect these enhanced data-based campaigns to replace the old like-based Facebook advertising model. Here’s an example: marketers could leverage Facebook targeting to reach consumers on the desktop ESPN.com site and then use Facebook’s Audience Network to reach that same customer on the SportsCenter app. Besides superior tracking to aid advertisers, Facebook pages are far more detailed than Twitter accounts.

Facebook gives you the ability to promote posts that already exist on your company’s page. They are best served when you are trying to reach established followers. Boosted posts appear higher in the newsfeed, and they will appear on a person’s news feed more than once. The best time to use a boosted post is when you want to reach more of your established followers with that specific content for an extended period of time. Boosted posts don’t show up in the right-hand column. That space is reserved for ads, which are being replaced with high-performing branded content and app-installed ads.

Facebook continues to evolve, with new innovations in branded entertainment. POPSUGAR Rush is a 24/7 series around trending topics. Jimmy Kimmel created a Facebook native series about hot bands appearing at SXSW. BuzzFeed put out a video featuring President Obama promoting HealthCare.gov on Facebook. The finely tuned targeting capabilities around Facebook video are grabbing the attention of marketers and challenging YouTube’s primacy in branded video.18

Twitter is a micro blog in which 140-character messages can link to a product’s website, Facebook profile, photos, or videos. Consumers can and do tweet about just about anything, including products and services. Sometimes these conversations happen organically. However, marketers soon discovered that they can’t rely on having a critical mass of positive tweets at any given time. Enter promoted tweets. They start with a compelling piece of content, such as the announcement of an upcoming product release, a sale, or an event, and add a photo or video to drive higher engagement. Once the promoted tweet is created, Twitter’s target options connect it with the right audience. Twitter lead generation cards work directly within promoted tweets to collect users’ contact information in exchange for the offer. They act like embedded landing pages within the tweets, except they’re much more concise and require much less work from followers. The immediacy of the information and the breadth of coverage makes Twitter a natural to take advantage of current events, as Oreo did during a Super Bowl blackout and, more recently, using the cookies to simulate a solar eclipse. When Wendy’s launched their pretzel bacon cheeseburger, they encouraged customers to tweet and create Facebook posts about their new product. Each week Wendy’s picked their favorite messages and turned them into love song lyrics. Popular singers such as Nick Lachey sang the tweets in elaborately produced music videos on YouTube. Wendy’s claimed 7.5 million Facebook views during this campaign. More important, Wendy’s stock price increased during the launch of the pretzel bacon cheeseburger.19

Wendy’s invited people to tweet the praises of their pretzel bacon cheeseburger, which they turned into lyrics for love songs to the yummy sandwich. Singers made elaborate music videos that were shared by millions. They sold a few cheeseburgers too.
With all the Twitter marketing successes, there are also some noteworthy failures, also due to the immediacy of the information and breadth of coverage. Here are a few to serve as warnings about how quickly things can go wrong.

- **Spirit Airlines** poked fun at the leaked nude celebrity selfie scandal by promoting #BareFares. The airline was attacked for displaying poor taste and poor timing (as opposed to the nude celebrities). The lesson: Don’t try to make a buck off other people’s pain.

- **DiGiorno pizza** latched onto the viral hashtag #WhyIStayed, which was used by victims of domestic violence. The erroneous tweet was pulled after 20 minutes, but it spawned a barrage of angry backlash tweets. The lesson: Know what a hashtag really means before you post.

- **U.S. Airways** was handling a customer complaint, but instead of the usual polite “thanks for the feedback” response, the person in charge fired off a hardcore porn picture that stayed up for an hour. The lesson: Pay attention to every tweet on behalf of your brand and know who’s handling your social media.20

**Google+** provides some features of Facebook, but is also able to intergate with the Google search engine. Other Google products are also integrated, such as Google AdWords and Google Maps. With the development of Google Personalized Search and other location-based search services, Google+ allows targeted advertising methods, navigation services, and other forms of location-based marketing and promotion. Google+ is one of the fastest growing social media networks and can benefit almost any business. We’re not promoting Google, just reporting the facts.

**LinkedIn** is the social network for established business professionals and aspiring young professionals. Individuals and companies can create professional profiles and promote Twitter streams, blog entries, slide shows, and other content on their LinkedIn profile pages. LinkedIn provides its members the opportunity to generate sales leads and business partners.
Members can use Company Pages, similar to Facebook pages, to create an area that will allow business owners to promote their products or services and be able to interact with their customers. Because of its structure and reputation, many businesspeople trust LinkedIn content more than some other online sources. When you’re providing native or even sponsored content on LinkedIn, keep that in mind. It’s a good idea to consider the value you offer rather than talking about yourself or your company. They want to know how you will make them more successful. Short simple copy works best, especially for busy businesspeople scrolling through their news feeds. As with all social media, photos and video get results.

**Foursquare** is a location-based web and mobile social networking platform where users can choose to have their check-ins integrated with other social platforms, such as Twitter and Facebook. The Foursquare Brand Platform allows companies to create pages of tips and allows users to “follow” the companies and receive special expert tips from them when they check in at certain locations. Users can unlock special badges with enough check-ins, playing into the growing trend of gamification. It can be a good marketing strategy for businesses to increase foot traffic or retain loyal customers.

**Yelp** consists of a comprehensive online index of business profiles. Businesses are searchable by location, similar to the Yellow Pages. The website is operational in seven different countries, including the United States and Canada. Business account holders are allowed to create, share, and edit business profiles. They may post information such as location, contact information, pictures, and service information. The website further allows individuals to write and post reviews about businesses and rate them on a five-point scale. Messaging and talk features are further made available for general members of the website, serving to guide thoughts and opinions.

**Photo and Video Networking Sites**

A picture is still worth a thousand words and certainly much more than 140 characters. Engagement from photo and video platforms has rapidly outpaced text-only networking sites. Here are some of the market leaders:

**YouTube**, owned by Google, is usually regarded as the third most popular Internet site after Facebook and Google and the second leading search engine. YouTube sells sponsorships for suites of channels, using keyword targeting rather than demo statistics. YouTube gives the advertiser a grant for video production, then splits the profits from ad sales with the advertiser after the initial investment is covered. The ads on this platform are usually in sync with the content of the video request. For example, a user who searches for a YouTube video on dog training may be presented with a sponsored video from a dog toy company.

Most brands maintain their own YouTube channels and support them with ads in social and other media. For example, Toyota ran ads using Google Preferred to promote videos starring Rhett and Link from the *Good Mythical Morning* YouTube talk show. The two-minute clip generated a modest 74,000 views on the Toyota channel, but the comedy team promoted the new Camry on six of their shows, which totaled more than 10 million views. Plugging into videos that influencers are already creating could be more effective than promoting branded videos.21
As demand for video, especially premium content, continues to grow, can YouTube keep up? The YouTube model is not without its detractors: producers complain about unfair revenue splits, there’s little interaction between content creators and users, and the quality and relevance of content varies widely. Given those issues and the insatiable demand for video, the door is open for other players. Facebook and Vimeo are growing in this area. Amazon, Hulu, and Netflix host award-winning, must-see programs. Instagram, Twitter, and Vine are major video sources. New platforms are coming on board with a variety of improvements, including mobile-first design, interactivity with fans, sharing content offline, more favorable revenue splits, easy-to-use channel guides and more innovative revenue monetization models. Despite the emergence of these platforms, we’ll bet that if there’s a better way to dominate online video, YouTube will find it.

Instagram grew to over 200 million users in 2014, surpassing Twitter. But even more significant is a user engagement rate that’s 15 times higher than Facebook’s and 25 times higher than Twitter’s. When it comes to brands and businesses, Instagram helps companies reach their audiences through captivating imagery in a rich visual environment. Moreover, Instagram provides a platform where user and company can communicate publicly and directly. The idea of Instagram pictures is built on the sense that event is happening right now, and that adds another layer to the personal and accurate picture of the company.

Delta Air Lines, Volvo, and a fashion eyewear company were early adopters of marketing on Instagram. Thousands more have joined, as the popularity of the site continues to grow. Adweek reported, “The tactic is a smart one for visually driven brands in industries like fashion and travel—especially those already dabbling in influencer marketing.” For example, Lululemon Athletica, with more than 350,000 Instagram followers and nearly 2 million Pinterest followers, was another early adopter of Instagram video. Its initial post, “Every Mat Tells a Story,” was a series of quick cuts showing a person practicing yoga poses. The video received more than 23,000 likes and over a thousand comments. Instagram’s Hyperlapse video component continues to grow, with over 200 million daily users. Instagram claims the videos double the engagement rate for their photos, which is already much higher than text-based social networking messages. About half of the videos are user generated. Despite increasing advertising activity on Instagram, the platform has been lagging among brands. In mid-2015, just 23% of U.S. brands are on Instagram, while 90% use Facebook, 82% are on Twitter, and 60% run videos on YouTube.
**Vine** is an app from Twitter that uses a 6-second video clip to tell a story. As of 2015, over 8,000 Vines are shared every minute with over 40 million users. The minivideos are a great way to increase the engagement with a brand message, and since the file size is tiny, they are very easy to share on mobile devices.27

- Burberry used Twitter to broadcast its show live during Fashion Week and created four short-form videos on Vine. The most popular featured quick images of various celebrities in attendance. The results: of the 180,000 mentions using the #LFW hashtag, 10,000 were about Burberry, more than any other brand.28
- Dunkin’ Donuts created the first-ever TV ad from a Vine, a billboard ad unit for *Monday Night Football*. The spot quickly recreated a key play from the game (a San Diego Charger touchdown) but substituted Dunkin’ Donuts menu items for the actual players.

**Pinterest** allows users to create and share theme-based image collections. The challenge is to connect relevant marketing messages to content created just for fun. The website has proved especially popular among women, with the popular categories being food, drink, DIY, crafts, women’s apparel, home decor, and travel.30 Pinterest does not generate its own content; rather, it draws from many resources around the web and compiles them in one convenient location for users.

**Snapchat** is popular with Millennials because (a) images disappear after viewing and (b) their parents haven’t discovered it yet. Many experts view Snapchat as a bigger threat to Twitter than Facebook and Instagram. As more companies start using Snapchat, Twitter will feel even more pressure.31 Snapchat Discover allows brands to interact with consumers, much like the old daily newspaper. Stories are refreshed each day, rather than hanging on to rehashed and reused content they may have already seen. *National Geographic*, *VICE*, and *MTV* got on board early to publish fresh daily content.

The popular messaging app is encouraging marketers and media companies to shoot ads vertically instead of the typical wide angle landscape shots. Snapchat says shows and ads shot vertically are viewed nine times more frequently than horizontal ones. As Troy Young, president of Hearst Digital mentioned, “Mobile phones are vertical devices. Turning it sideways is a lot of work.”32 Given its rapid growth and popularity with Millennials, it’s amazing that only 1% of marketers were using Snapchat in 2015.33 That’s bound to change.

“We should be looking at making that transition from the online experience to the offline world easier. It’s all about reducing friction.”

Marisa D’Amelio,
agency development manager, Google

Pinterest users pin what interests them—fashion, food, travel tips, decorating ideas, cat pictures, whatever. Sometimes it’s branded content. Sometimes it’s pure advertising.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Platform</th>
<th>SEO</th>
<th>Brand Awareness</th>
<th>Customer Communication</th>
<th>Traffic Generation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Twitter</strong></td>
<td>Tweets about a webpage generate higher search rankings.</td>
<td>Consistent placement of brand messaging is easy with HootSuite and TweetCaster. Sponsored tweets can be purchased to highlight brand content.</td>
<td>The leading platform for customers seeking customer support. Peer-to-peer communication is simple, easy to track and can be public or private.</td>
<td>Referral traffic growing fast. Photos and videos make Tweets more clickable. Promoted tweets reach new audiences.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>LinkedIn</strong></td>
<td>Not one of the top influencers in social media, but personal and company profiles contain searchable text.</td>
<td>Business pages, influencer posts, and publishing platform increase brand awareness. Sponsored updates provide added reach.</td>
<td>About half of people using social media for customer service do it through LinkedIn Company Pages and LinkedIn Groups.</td>
<td>Considered a second-tier source compared with other platforms.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>YouTube</strong></td>
<td>Plenty of text, tags, and other searchable content. With over 1 billion users, the sheer size limits the ability to find desired content.</td>
<td>Channels attract viewers to targeted content and subscriptions increase viewership. Videos paired with preroll ads can get lost.</td>
<td>Easy-to-use tools allow marketers to respond to user comments and ratings.</td>
<td>An important source of traffic, but ranked below LinkedIn and Google+.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Google+</strong></td>
<td>Links with more +1’s appear higher in search results than likes and retweets on other platforms.</td>
<td>Higher search placement for branded webpages as well as their authors. Higher exposure and rich platform for sharing multimedia.</td>
<td>Targeted messages to interest groups through Circles are available but not widely used yet.</td>
<td>Referral traffic lower than other platforms but rising.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Pinterest</strong></td>
<td>Activity associated with a webpage is a major factor in higher search rankings.</td>
<td>Puts photos and animated GIFs front and center. Interests tool helps users sort through heaps of information.</td>
<td>Public comments and repining visual content is available, but lack of private messages limits utility.</td>
<td>Each photo links back to a source webpage, which helps build referral traffic.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>SlideShare</strong></td>
<td>Content with tags and titles but links inside PDFs with a presentation are better for SEO.</td>
<td>Slide presentations are easily embedded in a webpage. Linear format allows brands to build a case in controlled environment.</td>
<td>Links can be shared easily, but seamless interaction between brands and consumers limits effectiveness. Consider using a slide with contact information.</td>
<td>Not as intuitive as other platforms. Consider using embedding SlideShare presentations in a website and using links in email, newsletters to the site.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Instagram</strong></td>
<td>Works better for mobile than desktop, so SEO is limited, but Facebook connection factors into searches.</td>
<td>Most of today’s largest brands use this platform. Easy to use, with a clear interface and high visual.</td>
<td>Videos, ads, and private messaging enable more engaging interactions and easier one-to-one contact.</td>
<td>Users can’t click on a link and be redirected to a brand page.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 12.3  The Social Media Landscape
Table 12.3 is adapted from Adobe’s CMO’s Guide to the Social Media Landscape. It provides a snapshot of the strengths and weaknesses of the major social networking sites. The color coding—green (good), yellow (okay), and red (bad)—is handy for a quick overview. Features for each platform change constantly, so check out cmo.com for the latest version.

Social Media Marketing

Social networking allows people to build (or destroy) personal relationships. The same is true of brands attempting to interact with consumers. In social media marketing, engagement means that customers and stakeholders are participants rather than viewers. Social media in business allows anyone and everyone to express and share an opinion or an idea somewhere along the business’s path to market. Each participating customer becomes part of the marketing department, as other customers read their comments or reviews.

Engagement in social media marketing can be divided into two parts:

1. Proactive posting of new content and conversations, as well as the sharing of content and information from others.
2. Reactive conversations with social media users responding to those who reach out to your social media profiles through commenting or messaging.

Traditional media is limited to one-way interaction with customers, or “push and tell,” where only specific information is given to the customer, without any mechanism to obtain customer feedback. On the other hand, social media marketing is supposed to be participative, where customers are able to share their views on brands, products, and services. Traditional media gives the control of the message to the marketer where social media marketing shifts the balance to the consumer.

Before companies discovered there was potential for managing this virtually uncontrolled word of mouth (WOM), most of the brand conversations were organic—they sprang up at the grassroots level and took on a life of their own, sometimes to the disadvantage of the brand. Market models developed where brands could integrate their messages on social media platforms. They sponsored stories, found bloggers who could say something nice about them, and snuck product information into content people valued. Increased sophistication of semantic technology let companies detect the right time and place to touch consumers with micro targeted campaigns. The results were impressive. Companies basked in the glow of likes, shares, followers, and all the other measures of social acceptance. However, many brands discovered that earned praise didn’t translate to sales.

To create realistic expectations of what social media marketing is supposed to accomplish, you need to define it. Of all the definitions out there, this one seems to be the best: brands’ use of social networks as the platform to tell their messages with sponsored stories or through influencers who share brand-friendly messages to encourage conversations about the brand. Paid advertising on these sites is not really social media marketing, because it’s a top-down strategy. In these cases, Facebook or Twitter essentially has the same function as a magazine or television program, except that if people are engaged, they can share, click to visit a site, or buy direct.
The Venn diagram in Figure 12.1 shows the narrow range of effectiveness where messages from the brand intersect with receptivity from the consumer. Social media marketing outside of this intersection may generate online activity, but it may not result in meaningful marketing results.

**When Social Media Marketing Works**

The nature of marketing is trying to sell something. Some brands hit the sweet spot in Figure 12.1. Social media marketing works best when you can provide information about a brand that people want to hear about so that you can increase engagement. In other words, hit people at the right time, with the right information, so they buy something.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Brand Category</th>
<th>Examples</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Narrow, select vertical markets</td>
<td>Sports teams, TV programs, Movies, Style brands</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brands with a purpose (related to a cause that resonates)</td>
<td>USAA, Chipotle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brands with better products and service</td>
<td>Apple</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Social media marketing can be used for good causes that resonate with consumers. Specific topics like concern over genetically modified food mesh with Chipotle’s social media campaign. The cause can be even more generic, such as self-esteem and bullying. Dove and Coca-Cola took their recent happiness-oriented campaigns to Twitter using targeted campaigns to turn online hate into something positive. With branded hashtags #SpeakBeautiful (Dove) and #MakeItHappy (Coke), the brands attempted to use marketing to make the Internet a happier, friendlier place. With #SpeakBeautiful Dove hopes to foster positive self-esteem for women and girls. “Twitter allows us to send one-on-one responses to women and girls to inspire them to help change the way we talk about beauty on social media;” said Jennifer Bremner, director of marketing for Dove. “It only takes one tweet to ignite a positive trend online.”

For Coke, #MakeItHappy uses ASCII art—which generates images out of lines of text—to target different hateful tweets and turn those words into cheery imagery. According to Coke, its campaign received 95% positive and neutral responses. Writers from Gawker pranked the brand to inadvertently tweet lines from Adolf Hitler’s *Mein Kampf*, the very type of hate speech the campaign was hoping to stamp out.

Brands with strong reputations for quality have an easier time with social media marketing. Apple has no official company profile on Facebook or Twitter, yet it beats Samsung for creating buzz. Both companies introduced new products in the fall of 2014. Within a few days of the launch, Samsung generated 2,350% © Augie Ray

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more fans, followers, and subscribers on Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube, but Apple still delivered far more Word of Mouth. And as we’ve heard for decades, Word of Mouth is the best advertising.

**When Social Media Marketing Doesn't Work**

To really understand social media marketing, we have to separate the marketing from social media. Social media by itself is great for building relationships, increasing awareness, and enhancing a brand’s reputation. That’s why public relations and social media are so intertwined. However, as social media and customer experience thought leader Augie Ray points out, “Social media is poorly equipped to deliver trust, traffic, acquisition and purchase—the primary objectives of marketing a brand.” Marketers need to take an honest look at what they want to accomplish. Earning friendship is a good thing but it doesn’t always lead to a sale.

Whether they use social media platforms or desktop sites, marketers who continue to pump out content that has no value to their target audience will continue to waste money and time and will eventually lose ground to the brands that have figured out how to boost engagement. Nevertheless, marketers continue to soldier on with social media marketing programs in the face of rapidly declining effectiveness. In a 2014 survey of U.S. marketers, fewer than one in six chief marketing officers (CMOs) knew if there was any positive impact from social media marketing for their brands, yet they still intended to double that investment. With falling organic reach, very low engagement levels, and inability to measure quantitative success, that increase will not be sustainable. No wonder the tenure of CMOs is so short.

**Social Sponsorship**

Social networking sites facilitate WOM marketing by encouraging followers to retweet and repost content to spread the word. But making this happen organically gets more difficult every year. WOM traffic is hard to predict and even harder to control. So brands are improving the odds through social sponsorship. In the most simplistic terms, they are buying followers. This is how it works:

- Brands find bloggers and other influencers who already have a substantial following.
- Influencers are compensated to post content favorable to the brand (videos, photos, blog posts) and share material from other sources.
- Sponsored content is placed by the site owner or social media account holder.
- Sites and accounts are independent of brand accounts.
- Promoted tweets and boosted posts are not considered as social sponsorship.

The level of compensation varies depending on the scope of the project. It can be as economical as linking more users to the influencer’s blog, or it can be a substantial cash payment to a well-known blogger to play ball with a brand. For example, Lowe’s built a series of Vine “life hack” demonstrations, working with their agency BBDO and photographer Meagan Cignolis (who already had a large Twitter following). She shot the entire campaign on an iPhone, which was distributed on Twitter, Facebook, and Tumblr. Other compensation can be payment in kind, such as products, travel, loyalty points, or all of the above.
Social sponsorship can take several directions. Sponsored conversations direct to bloggers, podcasts, and social media platforms like Twitter and Facebook work great for long-format reviews, discussions, essays, and photo collections. Digital brand ambassador programs recruit content providers to comment on brand sites after sampling the product. These can range from a top-down influencer compensation program, mentioned earlier, to a more bottom-up grassroots effort.

**Social and Word-of-Mouth Marketing**

Social media has altered the landscape of WOM, helping spread buzz faster and more efficiently than face-to-face communications. It’s done more than simply turbocharge WOM. It has also brought this “alternative” form of marketing to the mainstream. WOM is based on the simple premise that a recommendation from a friend carries more weight than an ad message. But social media has blurred what that means. Social networking has given WOM marketers a clearer way to measure the impact of their campaigns. Marketers can see how far an influencer’s opinion spreads by analyzing retweets or shares. It also becomes easier to see if an influencer’s discussions are relevant and in line with positioning. Plus it all occurs in real time. When combined, WOM and social become a dynamic duo.

Conversations begun online continue in person, and recommendations spread more quickly, allowing communities built around brands to gain traction. “You start conversations in one channel, continue them in a second and finish them in a third,” says Karin Kane, vice president of client services for evolve24, a Maritz Research company that uses business analytics and research to measure brand perceptions, reputation, and risk. “When communication is happening in so many channels, it becomes almost impossible to separate online and offline.”

Social media marketing is also closely tied with search engine optimization. In fact, 7 of the top 10 factors that correlate with strong Google organic search are social media dependent.

Using social media to turbocharge word-of-mouth marketing can be a smart strategy. Integrated with traditional media, social media can even generate a pop culture phenomenon. Samsung Galaxy’s epic Oscar selfie in 2014 is a great example. Within 45 minutes, the celebrity-packed picture was retweeted 1.3 million times. Maurice Levy, CEO of Publicis, said the tweet was worth $800 million to $1 billion in marketing value. More than 37 million people saw this “spontaneous” selfie, and only 8% of the comments were negative.
Then there are the epic failures. Skittles wanted to demonstrate their social media expertise. Their homepage featured tweets with the #skittles hashtag. A chatter tab had live Flickr and YouTube feeds. The Facebook fan page was displayed under a “Friends” tab. Everything started out as planned, but it didn’t take long to go terribly wrong. Without a filter or moderator, profane tweets began cropping up on the homepage, which of course went viral. So much for being social media savvy.

**Writing Company Blogs**

Access to the blogosphere means that anyone can become a journalist. Unfortunately not everyone is a good one. The cost of traditional publishing prevents most hacks from inflicting their drivel on the public. Unfortunately there are no such restraints online. As a result, fact checking, grammar, and basic civility sometimes take a back seat to self-expression. Because blogging is such a personal activity, we’ll focus on using blogs to sell something. Keep in mind, writing for style and meaning is just as critical for blogs as with print. Maybe even more important, because once it’s on the Internet, it’s never going away. More people can see it, share it, comment on it, and love it or hate it. Before you post your first commercial blog, you should review the body copy checklist in Chapter 8. Then set it aside and look at it a couple of days later. Remember “write hot, edit cold”? Also remember, once it’s posted, it will last forever.

Here are some other purposes of blogs for business or pleasure:

- **Informational blogs**: Pick any topic, but make sure you do your research. Make sure the facts can stand up if you’re making a claim. Cite your sources, and be clear when you’re stating your personal opinion.

- **Company blogs**: These should reflect a more human side to a company or brand beyond a recitation of features and benefits. Perhaps personal stories, unusual facts, or other information that makes the reader want to like the company as well as buy its products.

- **Cultural insights**: Maybe you have some expertise with certain ethnicities, age groups, neighborhoods, or hobbies that you’d like to share. Marketers may be able to use your information, or it may just be entertaining to a general audience.

- **Technology updates**: Geeks read what other geeks write. Maybe you want to share what you saw at the Consumer Electronics Show. Or you tried the next killer app. A lot of people want to know what’s the next big thing.

- **Industry specific blogs**: You may have some information to share about what’s new in any given industry, including advertising. You can discuss what’s in and what’s out and look like an expert in your field. It’s amazing how many blogs start with “The 10 hottest trends for _____.” It works!

- **Creative rants**: It’s okay to vent, just make it clever and entertaining. Give solid reasons for your criticism beyond “That really sucked.”
- **Travel blogs:** Reveal hidden details the ordinary tourist never sees. Talk about the people you’ve encountered and share their stories. You may encourage someone to explore the world or just entertain the armchair adventurer.

- **Writing blogs:** These can be random musings about anything and everything, or they can be very focused about specific topics. More than any of the above, they must be well written. Double- and triple-check everything before hitting that send button.

Here are a few tips to make your blogs more interesting, relevant, and searchable.

- **Ask, don’t tell:** Perhaps you lead with a provocative question to draw readers in (refer to Chapter 8’s discussion of headlines). Or you close with a thoughtful question that encourages comments.

- **Think visually:** Visuals attract readers. Review Chapter 6 for basic design and web design trends, and find something that’s compelling and relevant to your message.

- **Promote yourself:** Your blog may have its own Google+ or Facebook page. That’s a perfect place to promote your latest post. It will generate more comments and help your search rankings. Tweets can also encourage visits to your blog.

- **Support other bloggers:** Use social networks to comment on other blogs and retweet other blog posts occasionally. Your support will be reciprocated.

- **Study blogs you admire:** Find some blogs you really like and follow them for several weeks or months. Discover what makes them consistently interesting, well written, and meaningful. Then interact. Let them know you value their effort. A lot of the motivation behind blogging is ego. We all seek validation.

SmartBear’s blog features compelling titles, attention-getting images, and relevant content. They’ve taken a rather dry topic and made it fun and interesting. Plus they’ve connected it to social media, made it easy to comment, and highlighted other blog posts.
When AT&T lost an exclusivity deal with a key smartphone manufacturer, the communications giant was faced with the dual challenges of keeping users from leaving and creating loyalty among those who stayed. To reach the young Asian American demographic, a key and tech-savvy group of influencers, the interTrend advertising agency teamed up with Wong Fu Productions. Wong Fu is a team of Asian American filmmakers that specializes in artfully portraying young Asians who rarely see accurate depictions of themselves in mainstream media. With a massive following among YouTube viewers, Wong Fu was a perfect partner to show off AT&T’s powerful new devices and robust 4G network in a dramatic, cinematic web series featuring online celebrities Jen FrmHeadToToe and Victor Kim.

To maximize buzz and appeal, “Away We Happened” was shot, produced, and released in real time with a crowd-sourced plot. Having masses of viewers come together to both discuss and determine the story’s developments was unique, intense, and newsworthy, but it was also a calculated way to reach young Asian Americans. interTrend’s research had shown that the group is more comfortable and participatory in group settings. Young Asian Americans were also found to be more passionate about content when identifying socially and culturally with the subjects.

In addition, the campaign had a wildly popular Facebook page, allowing fans to debate each installment’s developments and share observations, opinions, and excitement with friends. Feeding off the loyal fan bases of Wong Fu, Jen FrmHeadToToe, and Victor Kim, the viewership, participation, and reach of the campaign snowballed.

Everything lined up perfectly, and “Away We Happened” far exceeded the client’s expectations, made headlines in entertainment and marketing circles, and earned multiple awards in the advertising industry. The message was communicated loud and clear: AT&T was proved not only to be a fun brand but a leader in technology and innovator in communication.46

We encourage students to write personal blogs. They are great outlets for creative writing, showcasing your work, and expressing your personality. But if a blog displays poor writing skills or an inability to make a point, you’re taking several steps backward in your career. If it’s not perfect, don’t post it, and reread Chapter 8.

**Tumblr:** Dozens of great open-source sites are available to help you build a good-looking blog. But not many have the built-in marketing advantage of Tumblr. Rather than relying in simple banner ads,
Tumblr requires advertisers to create Tumblr blogs that can feature brand messages throughout the site. Tumblr ad formats include:

- **Sponsored mobile posts**—advertising blog posts that show up on users’ dashboards, allowing them to like, reblog, and share the sponsored posts.
- **Sponsored web post**—the largest instream ad unit available catches users’ attention when looking at their dashboards. It also allows the viewers to like, reblog, and share.
- **Sponsored radar**—picks up exceptional posts from the whole Tumblr community based on originality and creativity and allows advertisers to place their posts to earn new followers, reblogs, and likes.
- **Sponsored spotlight**—a directory of popular blogs through the community and a place where users can find new blogs to follow. Advertisers can choose several categories for placement.

### The Limits of Social Media Influence

Whether you call it word-of-mouth marketing or buzz or whatever, one of its real powers is to create and sustain a brand. Where would Harley-Davidson be without a small, but rabid, gang of brand evangelists in black leather jackets? Ben & Jerry’s would be just another ice cream if people didn’t talk about their support for worthy causes. Macintosh might just have been another futile experiment in operating system development if dedicated art directors, designers, and other right-brainers didn’t spread the word within and between agencies and studios. Without a strong brand story, digital content and viral seeding campaigns have had mixed success to create a buzz. Sometimes the most modest effort becomes an overnight viral sensation. Most times when major funds are invested in a ham-fisted push to go viral, the results are dismal. The risks are magnified. Mistakes happen faster, and they travel around the world at the speed of light. Trolls can turn a well-intended marketing effort into a global PR disaster within hours. What’s more, the Federal Trade Commission has firm guidelines about disclosing compensation, and all parties should know the rules before starting a social sponsorship campaign. As with native advertising, the government wants the gullible consumer to be told that someone is paying for the content. Finally, all the warm and fuzzy good will built up with even the best word-of-mouth marketing may not convert to sales or counteract a bad customer experience after the sale.

“Social marketing eliminates the middlemen, providing brands the unique opportunity to have a direct relationship with their customers.”

Bryan Wiener, CEO, 360i

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Keeping Up With Social Trends

We won’t take a snapshot and use it to predict a trend. The best we can do is report the facts as they stand when we write this and what some of the experts are predicting for the next few years. Katy Lynch, the portfolio director for Manifest Digital, one of the nation’s leading media marketing firms, provided this view of the social media landscape:

- We’ll see an increase in private message platforms such as WhatsApp, Snapchat, Kik, and WeChat. With only 1% of marketers using Snapchat in 2015, there’s a lot of room for growth.
- Video is everything, especially short-form video. By 2017, 74% of web traffic will come from video. Mobile users are 300% more likely to view video than laptop and desktop users. Short-form is important because 45% of viewers stop watching after 1 minute; 60% after 2 minutes. So we’ll see more commercial use of Vine and Hyperlapse.
- Social commerce will continue to grow. Brands will sell more products through social media, especially now that sites such as Tumblr and Pinterest have a buy button. Half of all social media purchases happen within one week of sharing, tweeting, liking, or favoriting the product.

We’re sure to see better metrics for accurate evaluation of advertising messages. We can also expect to see more blending of content and advertising. What’s more, we expect to see trends toward more consolidation by the major platforms, but also more startups taking hold. But if you really want to stay ahead of the game—guess what? You can’t. Even the experts have missed the mark, so we won’t make too many bold predictions. However, we can say with some confidence, when platforms do a better job of engaging their users, they will be able to attract more advertising revenue than their rivals. As marketers look for better metrics and more accountability, engagement will be the most important component of ROI—far more important than a cute name, cool graphics, and racking up hundreds of Facebook likes. If people spend more time on a site, share it more often, and respond to the content, advertisers will find a way there, whether it’s native advertising, sponsored content, or some new form of brand messaging. Site developers who want to become the next dot-com billionaire understand that, even though many say advertising is an evil capitalist plot.

“Social media is about sociology and psychology more than technology.”

Brian Solis, principal and digital analyst, Altimeter Group
For the first 10 years of my life, there were never enough answers to all of my questions. If I couldn’t learn something in an encyclopedia or at the library, it would remain a mystery. The Internet changed that. I finally had a place to exercise a mind that never rested. Where does the color go when textiles fade? What’s the fewest number of pitches ever thrown in a baseball game? I had answers at my fingertips—it was like search engines were built just for me.

Everyone has a different motive when defining their career path, but I chose advertising for two primary reasons.

First, my brain doesn’t have a dominant hemisphere, which really seems to throw people off. The conventional notion of “art versus science” never applied. In school I enjoyed photography and physics, graphic design and statistics. I quickly found that success in advertising often comes with an ability to understand and balance both ways of thinking. I’ve never encountered a target audience that was exclusively right-brained, or a totally left-brained account team. Resist being lopsided—you’ll end up fighting people who tip the other way.

Second, there’s a core advertising principle that always appealed to me—discovering how people think and what drives their decisions. I had the good fortune of landing an internship in brand planning (think advertising psychology) while in school. I’d sit in front of focus group tapes and take notes for days at a time. I felt like the protector of insights—the ones that would drive the strategy, that would inspire the creative, that would help a brand relate better to its customers. It was like having an exclusive news story, or a killer chili recipe. That feeling convinced me I was moving in the right direction.

Now I find myself working at Google. How did I get here? Well, search is all about understanding what people are looking for and giving them the information they need. The foundation of our business is consumer insights, not in the form of surveys or focus groups, but in the form of search behavior. Without a doubt, the kid who needed to know what bears do when they’re hibernating has found a home here.

Tim Kirberg, account manager, Google
thinkwithgoogle.com
Chapter 12

Sarah Hofstetter
As top marketers wrestle with the task of figuring out how to best position their brands in the fast changing digital age, many Fortune 500 companies have turned to Hofstetter, as president of 360i. She helped set up one of the first social media practices at any agency, which these days serves as a hub for social community management at 360i. The shop estimates that it helps top brands connect with upwards of 150 million consumers daily, and the social practice shepherded the firm as one of the fastest growing—up 75% year over year.51

Augie Ray
For more than 20 years Augie Ray has focused on spotting digital, mobile, and social trends and interpreting their meaning for customer experience, marketing communications, products, and services. He’s been on the cutting edge of digital, as a community manager, launching websites, developing web and email programs, leading mobile application programs, and executing corporate social media programs. As a self-described customer experience leader with emphasis in social media, digital innovation, collaborative economy, and customer feedback, Augie Ray’s frequent and provocative blogs provide fresh insight about digital marketing.

Jessica Rodriquez
As Univision’s chief marketing officer, Rodriquez represents the new generation of Latina executives who are blurring the lines between Spanish-language programming and new media. She was former executive vice president of programming and scheduling at Univision. She believes using social media is the core of everything the network does. She comments, “What’s interesting and speaks to the duality of our audience is that they’ll engage with our programming in Spanish, but when they go on Twitter, they comment in English. On Facebook, it’s more of a mix.”52

Clara Shih
Clara Shih, as cofounder and CEO of Hearsay Social, has been called the most influential thought leader in social marketing on the vendor side. After being named to the Starbucks board last December, the Stanford grad—whose résumé also includes stints at Google, Microsoft, and Salesforce—stands to play a major role in the coffee chain’s future. Expect Shih, author of the best-seller The Facebook Era, to keep the company tuned into all the latest trends—and what its customers want.53
McHenry’s is a locally owned department store offering name-brand women’s, men’s, and children’s clothing, cosmetics, skin care and perfume, shoes and accessories, and home goods such as china, glassware, cookware, linens and towels, and other home décor. It has a long history in town and is loved by its customers.

Traditional retailing today is one of the most difficult categories in which to prosper. Factors such as the rise of e-commerce, rent, personnel, cost of goods, fickle consumer tastes, and unpredictable economic factors are constant challenges. While there is enthusiasm and nostalgia for “locally owned” or “independent” businesses, traditional retailing and even inspired, new boutiques on Main Street USA face daunting business challenges at every turn. Consumers continue to gravitate to stores such as Wal-Mart for “everyday low prices,” Target for “cheap chic,” or Amazon for convenience and price advantages and many other competitors. How can a local department store such as McHenry’s drive store traffic and customer loyalty?

Here are some key factors that affect McHenry’s. Currently they spend about $500,000 annually on messaging, typically in local print and newspaper. Ads primarily are sale focused. McHenry’s has not used TV advertising or video. While McHenry’s does have a Facebook page, this is all that it has in social media. McHenry’s has a website, but it does not offer e-commerce. As a traditional, locally owned department store, McHenry’s has a flagship store on a centrally located downtown street. The store is known for its quality products, name brands, and wide variety of merchandise and employs sales staff in every department. It has a loyal (but aging) customer base. Other than being a “locally owned department store,” McHenry’s lacks a compelling brand image to appeal to one of its key target markets: women, ages 17 to 24, and 25 to 44. Its current messaging tagline is “Quality merchandise for all ages.”

Despite some challenges, McHenry’s has a number of strengths. McHenry’s carries a wide range of merchandise. It features name-brand apparel, such as Ralph Lauren, along with name-brand upscale denim, such as Citizens, 7ForAllMankind, Paige, and J Brand. It also carries name-brand cosmetics and perfume. McHenry’s also features special occasion apparel: formal wear, prom dresses, dress suits, and career wear. To top it off, the store carries gourmet cookware and name-brand home goods. McHenry’s has very knowledgeable salespeople and a great gift registry.

1. How can a locally owned retailer compete with retail chains like Target, Kohl’s, T.J. Maxx, and Macy’s or specialty retailers like Banana Republic, J. Crew, Chico’s, Williams-Sonoma, Sur La Table, Bed, Bath & Beyond, Pier 1, and Crate & Barrel?

2. How should the McHenry’s brand evolve to become more distinct and competitive? What could McHenry’s brand and creative messaging platform be?

3. What type of social media should a store like McHenry’s have? How can McHenry’s develop and maintain a unique voice in social media?

4. What type of promotions should McHenry’s offer (special “events,” sales, seasonal, and/or others) to retain a McHenry’s brand identity?
1. Social Media Monitoring

(Contributed by Daradirek Ekachai, PhD, associate professor, Marquette University.)

Social media only works if it is well monitored. Here’s one way to approach that process.

- Pick a company or brand. Generate a specific set of keywords, which might include the company name, an acronym for the company or brand, topics, issues, the tagline, and leadership (CEO names).
- Review and select a monitoring tool. Tools could include Addictomatic, IceRocket, Technorati, Google Blog Search, Social Mention, Google Alerts, and Google Insights.
- Now, identify what elements you wish to monitor.
- Having chosen a monitoring tool and elements you wish to monitor, record what you find from the online conversations and/or videos about the chosen organization or brand over the course of two weeks.
- Write a one-page report including a purpose, methodology, results, and a conclusion, and share your findings with the class.

2. Twitter School Ambassador

(Contributed by Daradirek Ekachai, PhD, associate professor, Marquette University.)

This assignment has two objectives. First, to familiarize yourself with Twitter, its writing style, its lingo, and how to tweet professionally. Second, to get you to move above and beyond tweeting what you had for breakfast or sharing what you think is cool.

- For this exercise, you will act as both strategist and writer—and you’ll be a brand ambassador for your university.
- The goal is to tout the best your college has to offer via Twitter.
- Pick a topic or focus related to your school and promote it. You must begin early in the semester and tweet regularly for 10 weeks.
- Your tweets can be in the form of an original text tweet, a retweet, a reply to other Twitter users, or pictures (use photo services such as Twitpic or Instagram, or yfrog). You could also pose questions you’d like others to answer. (Tip: Use hashtags so nonfollowers can find your tweets.) Remember that your tweets are your public “digital footprints,” so be sure to mix professionalism with your own personality.
- Your instructor will create a hashtag for the class and share it with the students. You are encouraged to use the class hashtag so that tweets can be easily followed. (If you like, you can have your tweets automatically update your Facebook status by placing #fb at the end of your tweet.)
Exercises

- Additionally, you must follow at least five people or accounts from within the university or related advertising or public relations media. You can also refer to Chapter 16 for ideas on whom to follow.
- After 10 weeks, turn in a summary of your tweets, including an analysis of how well you were engaged with this assignment. In other words, you will be asked to assess how successful your Twitter-based promotion was.

3. Conversations With Mom

- This exercise is crafted to help you explore and analyze the power of social media through the eyes of mom bloggers, one of the most influential groups of bloggers. This assignment could be easily reshaped to target other groups as well.
- Do a quick search of the most influential mom bloggers. We like this resource: http://www.babble.com/mom/work-family/top-mom-bloggers/
- Pick a blog and track conversations on the blog over the course of a two-week period. Be sure to note topics, images, responses, and branded sponsors.
- At the end of the two weeks, write a short summary noting topical trends as well as how copy, images, and outside links were used to support stories. Finally, note the kinds of branded sponsors the blog hosted and how the content dovetailed (or did not) with those sponsors.
- Share the finds in class and, again, look for trends.


- Interactive practice quizzes
- Mobile-friendly eFlashcards
- Carefully selected chapter-by-chapter video and multimedia content