



2012 SOCIAL MEDIA MARKETING INDUSTRY REPORT

*How Marketers Are Using
Social Media to Grow
Their Businesses*

APRIL 2012

BY MICHAEL A. STELZNER

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Examiner

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Letter from the author...

Hello, fellow marketer;

Welcome to our 4th annual study! Social media marketing is here to stay. And for businesses it brings significant benefits, as you'll see outlined in this year's report.

This **42-page report** contains easy to digest insight into how marketers are currently using social media and their future plans.

If you're in charge of marketing your business, you'll want to closely examine the **nearly 70 charts** on following pages. I'll reveal the "not so obvious" findings among this data-rich content.

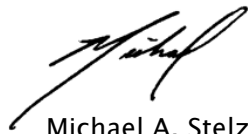
The report will uncover the "who, what, where, when and why" of social media marketing.

More than 3,800 of your fellow marketers provided the kind of insight you won't find elsewhere.

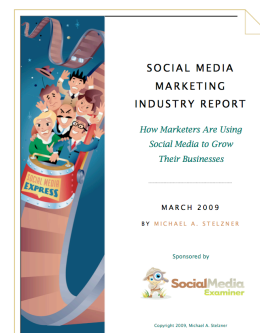
I hope you enjoy it! **If you find value here, please let your peers know about this report.**

You can find the original page for the report here:
<http://www.socialmediaexaminer.com/social-media-marketing-industry-report-2012/>

All my best!



Michael A. Stelzner
Founder, Social Media Examiner



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Executive summary

This study surveyed over 3,800 marketers with the goal of understanding how they are using social media to grow and promote their businesses. On the following pages, you'll discover:

- **The top 10 social media questions marketers want answered:** We analyze thousands of open-ended responses and summarize all of the major questions that marketing pros want answered.
- **The time commitment:** We examine the weekly hours marketers invest in their social media efforts. This analysis will be helpful for marketers just getting started or those seeking support staff.
- **The benefits of social media marketing:** This rather beefy section reveals all the major advantages marketers are achieving with their social media efforts. We also look at how time invested, business size and experience affect the results.
- **Commonly used social media services:** Discover which tools marketers are using and how their usage is changing this year. We also examine which tools experienced marketers are using.
- **Social media sites people want to learn more about:** In this section, we examine the up-and-coming tools (such as Google+ and photo-sharing sites like Pinterest) that marketers are most interested in learning about.
- **Other analysis:** We also examine social media outsourcing and how marketers plan on using other forms of marketing. In addition, we take a look at how business-to-business (B2B) companies differ from business-to-consumer (B2C) companies and whether the size of a business has any bearing on results. We also highlight significant changes since our 2011 study.

How to use this report: Regardless of your experience with social media marketing, there's something here for you. If you're a beginner, take a look at the time commitment, benefits and tools that your peers are using.

If you're experienced with social media, compare yourself against other marketers, see what tools they're looking at next and see whether you're achieving the same benefits as your more experienced brethren.

If you're a social media pro, there's tons of material here to help you develop lots of "how-to" products. You'll want to pay close attention to the top 10 questions section.



Major findings

Here's a quick summary of our primary findings:

- **Marketers still place high value on social media:** A significant 83% of marketers indicate that social media is important for their business.
- **Measurement and targeting are top areas marketers want to master:** Forty percent of all social media marketers want to know how to measure the return on investment (ROI) of social media and find customers and prospects.
- **Video marketing holds the top spot for future plans:** A significant 76% of marketers plan on increasing their use of YouTube and video marketing, making it the top area marketers will invest in for 2012.
- **Marketers seek to learn more about Google+:** While only 40% of marketers are using Google+, 70% of marketers want to learn more about it and 67% plan on increasing Google+ activities.
- **Top three benefits of social media marketing:** The number-one benefit of social media marketing is generating more business exposure (reported 85% of marketers), followed by increasing traffic (69%) and providing marketplace insight (65%).
- **Top five social media networks/tools for marketers:** Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, blogs and YouTube were the top five social media tools used by marketers, in that order.
- **Social media marketing *still* takes a lot of time:** The majority of marketers (59%) are using social media for 6 hours or more each week, and a third (33%) invest 11 or more hours weekly.
- **Social media outsourcing underutilized:** Only 30% of businesses are outsourcing some portion of their social media marketing, only a slight increase from 28% in 2011.

The above summary is merely a taste of what's in this report. On the following pages, you'll find nearly 70 charts that visually convey some fascinating findings. For example, we look at which social networks are used by those who invest the most time in social media marketing and the benefits achieved by those who've been at this for years.



Top 10 social media questions marketers want answered

We simply asked, "What question about marketing with social media do you most want answered?" A significant 2,722 people provided their open-ended responses. We clustered them into groups and ranked them below.¹

The **top 10 social media questions marketers want answered can be summarized in the following keywords: measure, target, engage, sell, time, strategy, tactics, tools, use and selection**—in that order.

Here's the expanded version of the social media questions marketers most want answered:

#1: MEASURE: How do I measure the effect of social media marketing on my business?

The number-one question marketers want answered is how to track the ROI of social media. **For the past three years running, this question has been number one.** A sampling of the questions in this category include:

- What is the best way to measure the ROI of social media marketing?
- How do I track social media performance and make good business decisions?
- What are the best measurement tools?
- Are there any industry benchmarks against which to measure our practices?

#2: TARGET: How do I find my target audience with social media?

Marketers want to know how to locate prospective customers via social media. Here are some of the questions related to this category:

- Which social networks does my target audience use?
- How can I understand the social media habits of my target audience?
- How do I target potential clients in a specific region or industry?
- How do I get noticed by my target audience?

¹ Please note that this question was designed to reveal the single most pressing concern marketers want answered. Because only a single answer was allowed, all of these questions are critical and may represent issues that different businesses face as they grapple with social media marketing programs. In each case, between 122 and 559 different people asked one of these top 10 questions.



#3: ENGAGE: What are the best ways to engage my audience?

Many marketers want to understand how to cultivate loyal fans. Here are a few sample questions in this category:

- How do I create engaging content that will keep people following our social media channels?
- How do I get my Facebook fans to participate more on our page?
- How do we engage our followers with limited company resources?

#4: SELL: How do I sell with social media?

Many marketers want to know how to monetize their social media activities. Here are a few sample questions in this category:

- Can I generate profit from social media efforts?
- How do I speed up the sales process with social media?
- How do I get sales when "social" is not supposed to be sales-oriented?
- How do I best monetize my social efforts?

#5: TIME: How should I best use my time to maximize my social media results?

Marketers are still interested in how to manage the time required to conduct social media marketing. Below are a few related questions in this category:

- What are the regular activities I should structure into my day and week?
- How do I plan my team's social media time more effectively?
- What tools can help me maximize my time spent on social media?

#6: STRATEGY: How do I create a social media strategy?

A significant number of marketers are seeking ways to use social media to strategically support business objectives. Here are some sample questions:

- How do I create a social media plan?
- What departments should be involved when creating a social media strategy?
- How do I use social media to grow my business?

#7: TACTICS: What social media tactics are the most effective?

Marketers are looking for proven tactics to speed them along their social media paths. Below are some sample questions asked by marketers:

- What works best?
- Who is doing social media the best?
- How often should I post?



#8: TOOLS: What are the best social media management tools?

With so many social media platforms and potential campaigns and objectives, many marketers are looking for tools to manage their efforts. Here are some of their questions:

- What are the best tools for managing all of our social media efforts?
- How do I automate social activities?

#9: USE: How do I use the different social media platforms?

Marketers want to understand how to use and optimize their experiences with major social media platforms. Here are sample questions from this cluster group:

- How do I use YouTube in marketing?
- How do I use Google+ to reach my customers?
- What do I need to be doing with Pinterest?

#10: SELECTION: How do I select the right social platform for my business?

Marketers are trying to understand the advantages of each social platform and how to select the right one(s) for their business. Below are a few related questions in this category:

- Which social platforms are the most important for my business?
- Which social networks are here to stay and which should I put the majority of my effort into?
- What are the best uses of each platform?

CHANGES SINCE LAST YEAR'S STUDY: Managing the time commitment rose from number 10 in 2011 to number 5 this year. This may be due to the emergence of new platforms like Google+ and Pinterest. This year, finding and engaging customers is a major theme for marketers, moving from number 6 in 2011 to number 2 in 2012.

SUMMARY: Forty percent of marketers indicated determining how to measure social media results and how to find customers or prospects were the top social media marketing questions they want answered. As you can see by examining the above list, marketers have asked some excellent questions. The remainder of this report will attempt to answer some of those questions.

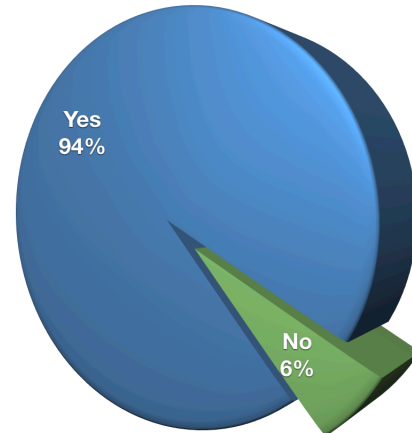


Use of social media marketing

We asked a few questions to determine the survey participants' experience using social media to market their businesses.

Use of social media marketing

We began by simply asking marketers if they use social media to market their businesses. The overwhelming majority (94%) indicated they were employing social media for marketing purposes.

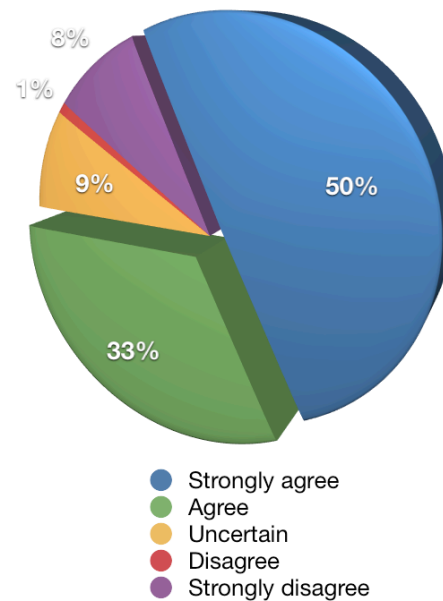


Social media is important for my business

A significant 83% of marketers said that social media was important to their businesses.

This is a drop from 2011 where 90% thought social media was important (62% strongly agreed in 2011).

The solo business owner was more likely to strongly agree (54%) with this statement.

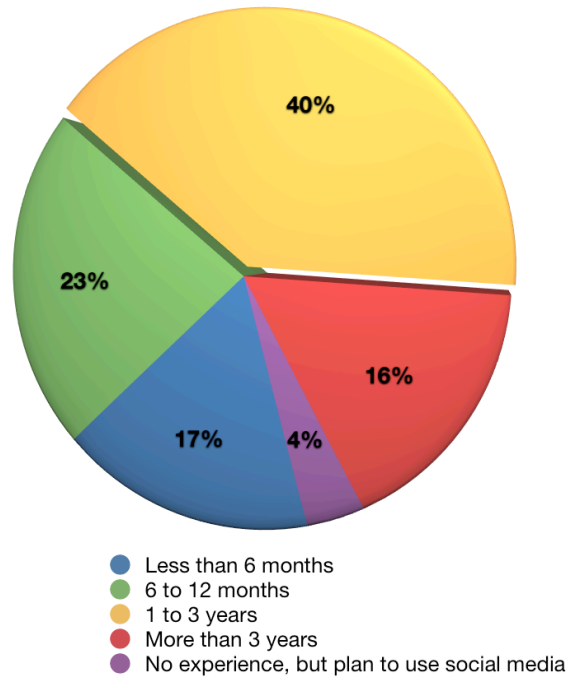




Experience with social media marketing

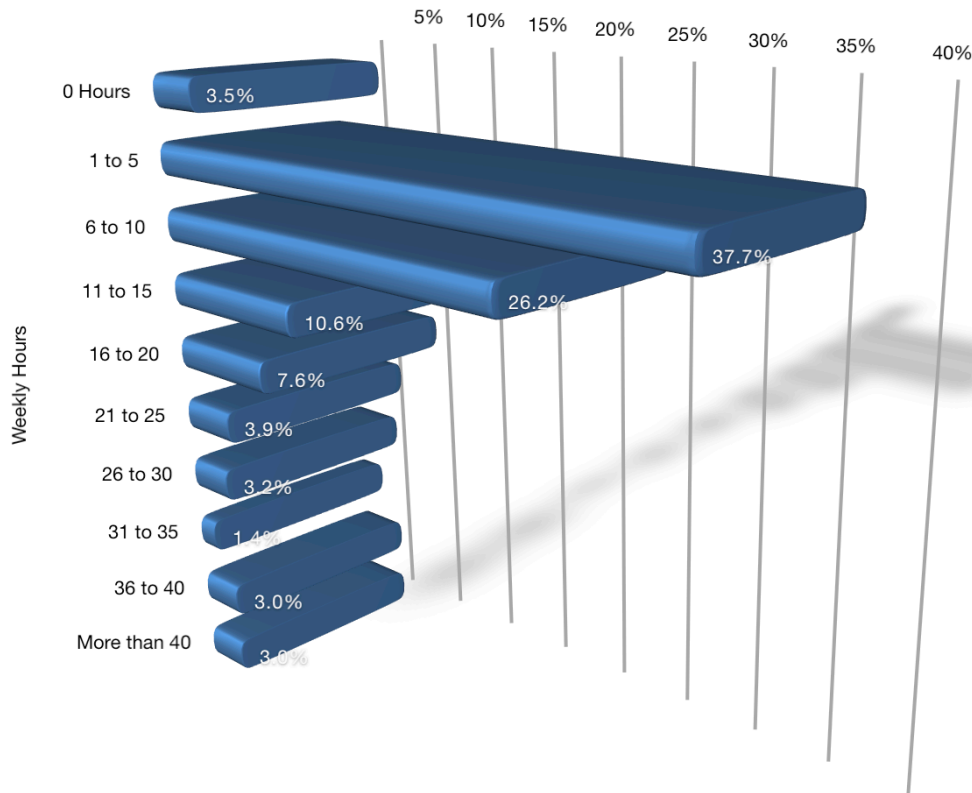
We asked participants to rate their experience using social media marketing.

B2B marketers have been using social media longer (18.3% reported 3 years or more) than their B2C counterparts (14% indicated 3 years or longer).





Weekly time commitment for social media marketing



A significant 59% of marketers are using social media for 6 hours or more and 33% for 11 or more hours weekly. It's interesting to note that nearly 15% of marketers spend more than 20 hours each week on social media.

Those with more years of social media experience spend more time each week conducting social media activities. For example, 77% of people with 3 or more years of experience commit more than 6 hours weekly to social media marketing. And 24.5% of this crowd are spending 20 hours or more each week.

However, more experienced social media users are spending less time with social media compared to our 2011 findings. Only half of marketers with more than 3 years experience are spending 10 or more hours each week on social media, down from 63% in 2011.

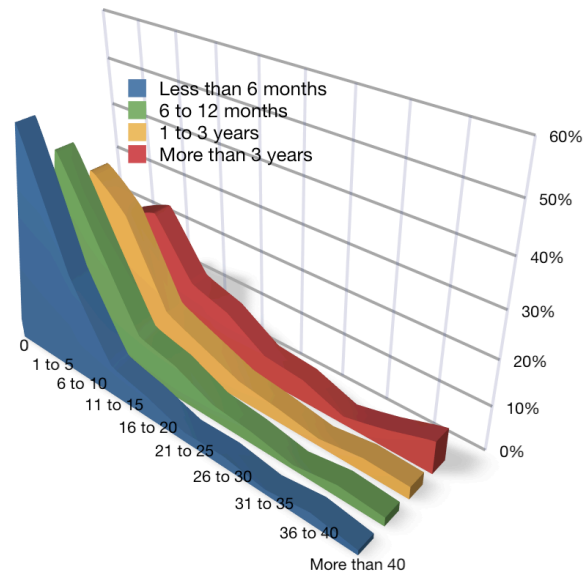


The experience factor

There's a direct relationship between how long marketers have been using social media and their weekly time commitment. **More experience means more time spent on social media marketing.**

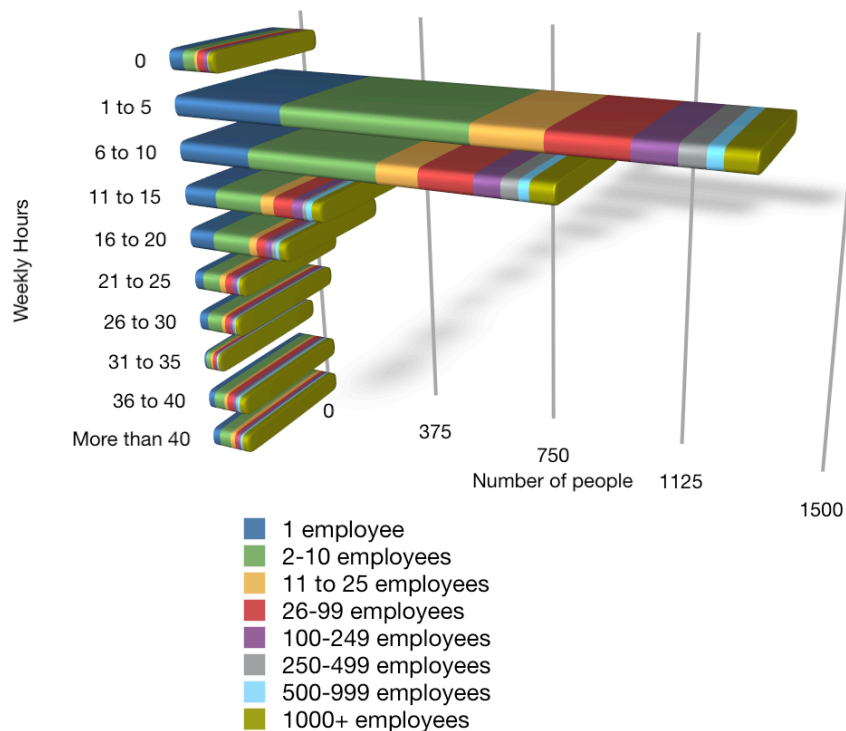
For people **just beginning** with social media, 51% spend **1 to 5 hours per week.**

However, for folks who have been **doing this for 6 months or longer**, most spend **6 hours or more per week** on social media activities.



How the time commitment varies with business size

This chart shows how different-sized businesses invest their time with social media activities.

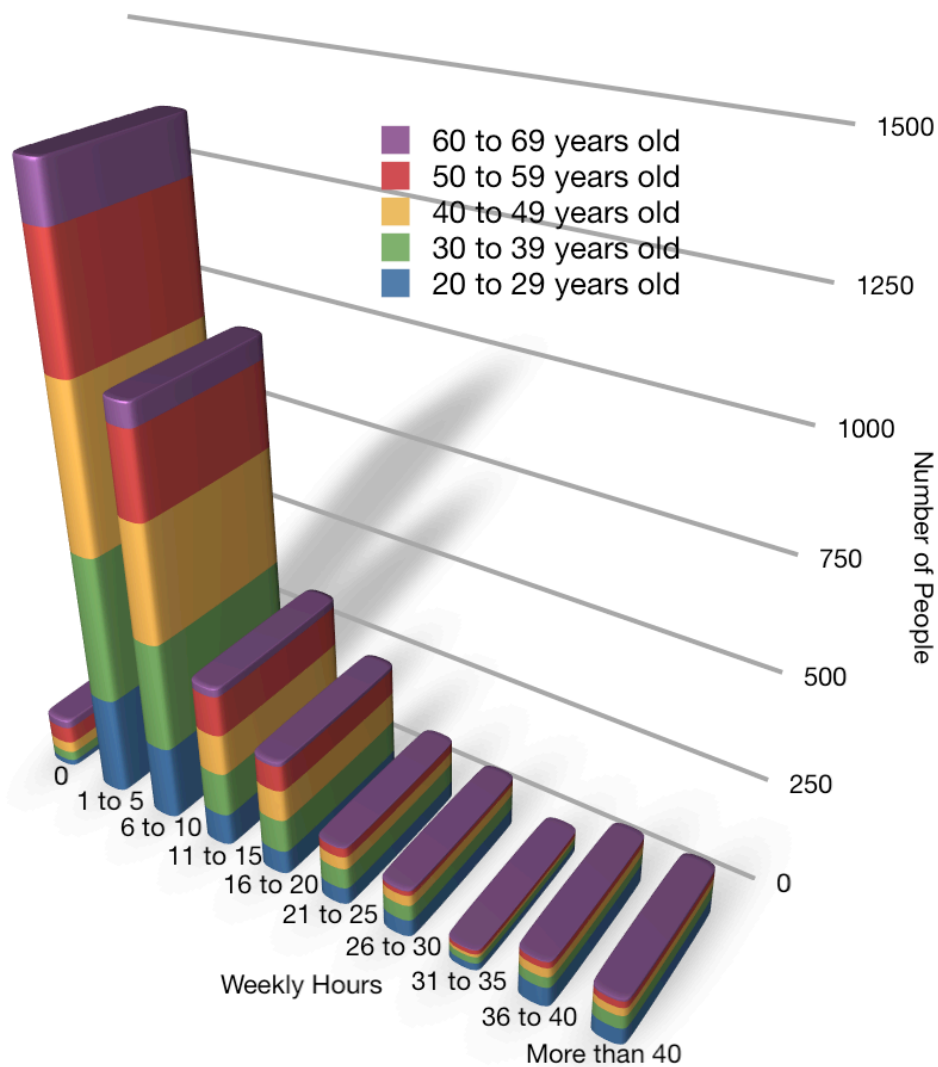




Age factor

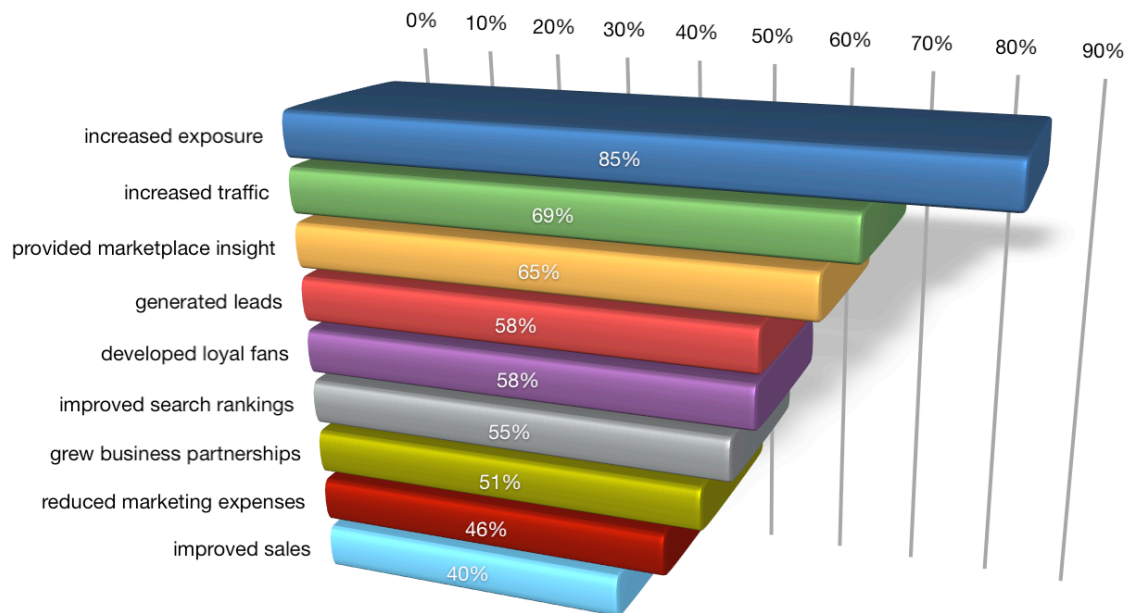
There's a direct relationship between the marketer's age and time spent marketing with social media. The younger the marketer, the more time he or she spends on social media.

People aged 20 to 29 years spend more time than other age groups using social media marketing (with 43% spending 11+ hours weekly, up from 41% in 2011), followed by 30- to 39-year-olds (35% spending 11+ hours per week, down from 37% in 2011).





Benefits of social media marketing



The top two benefits of social media marketing are increasing exposure and increasing traffic. A significant 85% of all marketers indicated that their social media efforts have generated more exposure for their businesses. Increasing traffic was the second major benefit, with 69% reporting positive.

Nearly two-thirds of marketers are using social media to gain marketplace intelligence (65%). Tied for fourth place, 58% of marketers indicated generating leads and developing loyal fans were benefits of social media.

Changes since our 2011 study: Lead generation increased 7% from our 2011 study to 58% this year. Several categories saw decreases: Improvements to search rankings fell from 62% in 2011 to 55% in 2012. Only 40% saw improved sales in 2012, compared to 43% in 2011. We added two new categories this year: providing marketplace insights and developing a loyal fan base.

Some questions that naturally emerge from the above chart might include, "Can I achieve more benefits by investing more time in social media?", "Are marketers who've been using social media for years gaining even better results?" and "Is there a difference between B2B and B2C?" The following charts address these questions.

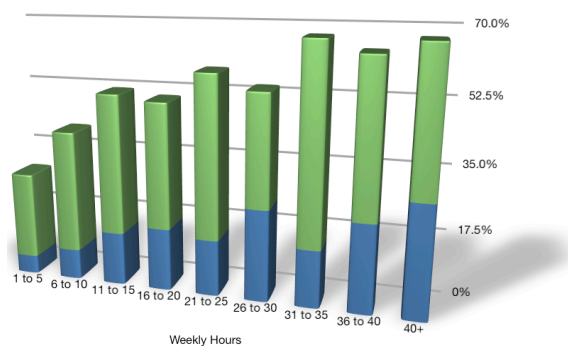
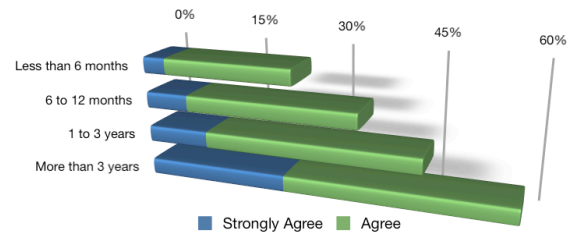


Improved sales

It takes time to develop relationships that lead to sales. However, a large percentage of marketers who take the time find great results.

For example, 58% of marketers who have been using social media for more than 3 years report it has helped them improve sales. More than half who spend 11 or more hours per week find the same results and over 65% of those who spend 30+ hours earn new business through their efforts.

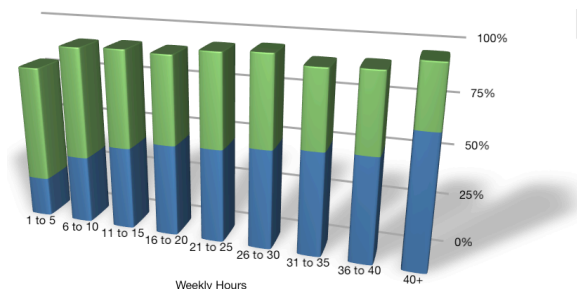
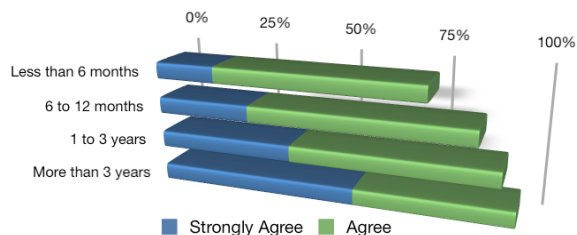
Small business owners with 2 or more employees were more likely to see improved sales from social media (51.5%). Conversely, 60% of all marketers taking this survey report social media has *not* helped them improve sales. This may be because they lack tools to track sales.



Increased exposure

Even with a minimal time investment, the vast majority of marketers (85%) indicated their social media efforts increased exposure for their business.

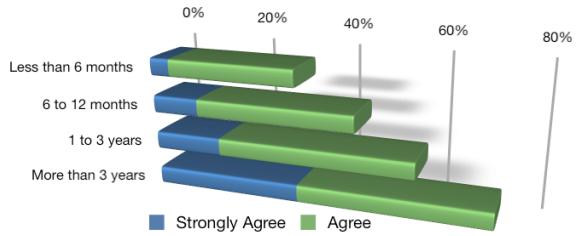
Nearly all marketers who've been employing social media marketing for a year or longer report it generates exposure for their business. A significant 95% of those conducting social media activities for more than 3 years agree, as opposed to 73% of those who've been doing it for 6 months or less.



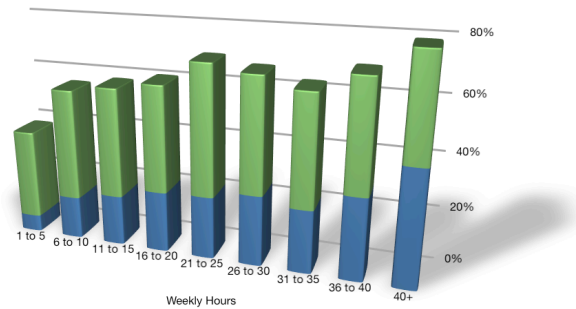


Grew business partnerships

Those who invest the most time in social media marketing gain the most business partnerships. Of those with 3 years or more of experience, 72% saw new partnerships. However, 44% of people who've invested at least 6 months in social media marketing also report new partnerships were gained.



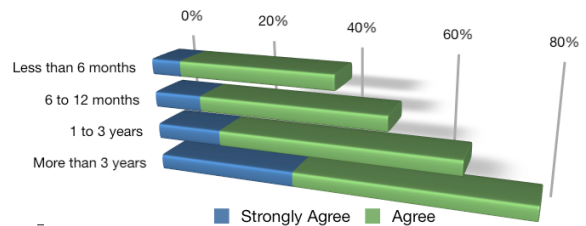
Fifty-six percent of those investing as little as 6 to 10 hours per week in social media were able to build new partnerships.



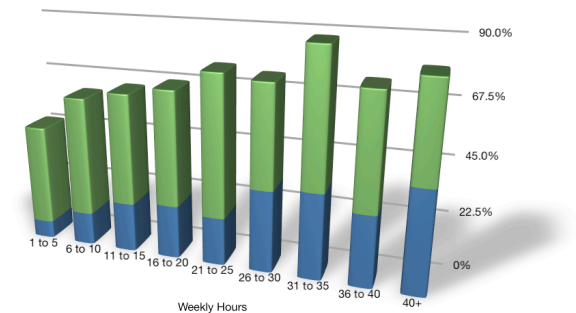
Marketers selling to other businesses were more likely to achieve this benefit (56%) than those selling to consumers (44%). Both of these are declines from 2011 (61% for B2B and 51% for B2C).

Generated leads

By spending as little as 6 hours per week, 61% of marketers see lead generation benefits with social media. This is a significant increase over 2011 (52%).



A significant 65% of small business owners were more likely than others to generate leads, compared to the 58% average for all marketers.

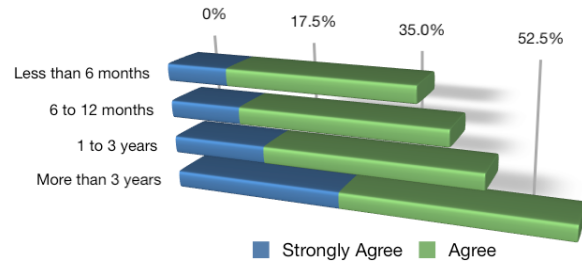


A strong 78% of marketers with 3+ years of experience gained leads from social media marketing.



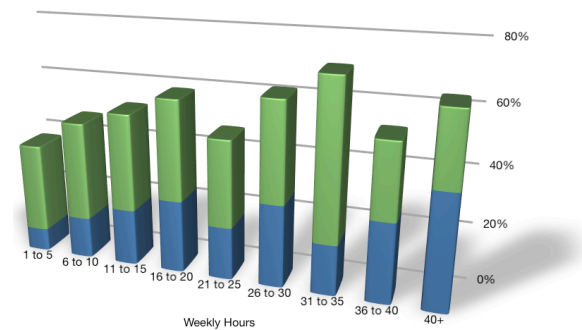
Reduced marketing expenses

The main financial cost of social media marketing is the time it takes to gain success. Nearly half of those who spend at least 11 hours per week on social media efforts saw a benefit of reduced marketing expenses.



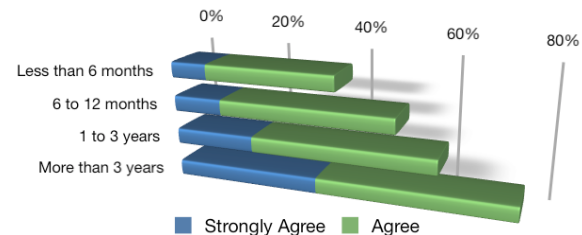
The self-employed (57%) were more likely than others to see reductions in marketing costs when using social media marketing.

Over a third of all mid-sized and large company respondents said social media had *not* reduced their marketing expenses.

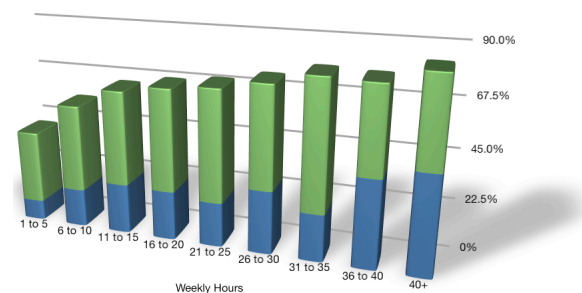


Improved search rankings

Improved search engine rankings were most prevalent among those who've been using social media for a year or longer, with nearly 59% or more reporting a rise, a significant drop from 2011 (73%). Of those with 3 or more years experience, 75% report benefits.



At least 56% of those investing a minimum of 6 hours per week in social media marketing saw improvements in search engine rankings (a drop from 65% in 2011).

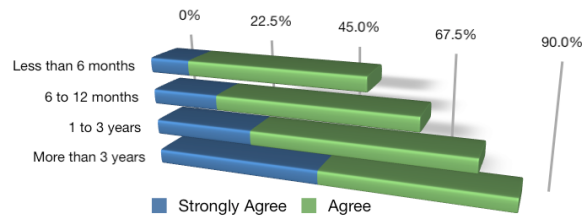


Marketers selling to other businesses were more likely to achieve this benefit (59%) than those selling to consumers (50%). This is down from 66% and 59% in 2011.

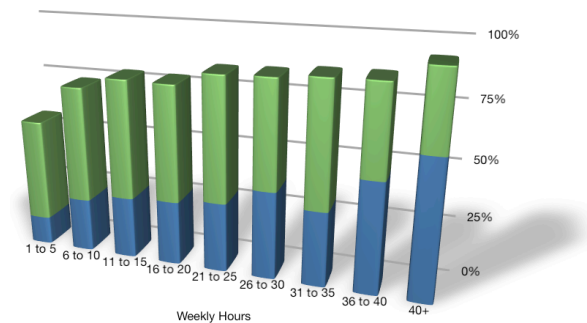


Increased traffic

A significant 74% of participants found that increased traffic occurred with as little as 6 hours per week invested in social media marketing. And those who've been doing this for 3 years or more reported substantially better results (84% reported benefits).

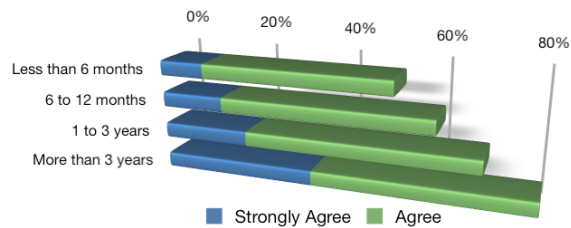


Large brands (75%) reported substantially more benefit than small businesses (68%).



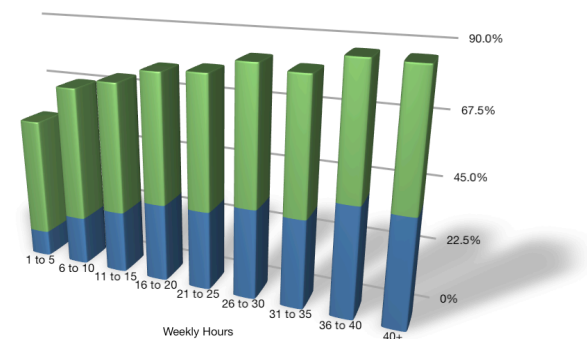
Provides marketplace insight

Nearly 65% of marketers found social media to be a helpful tool in understanding the marketplace. Of those with at least 1 year of experience, 70% or more found benefit.



B2B companies (68%) were significantly more likely than B2C (59%) to use social media for intelligence-gathering.

Those spending at least 6-10 hours per week were more likely to gain benefit, with 72% of those spending 11 hours a week noting gains.



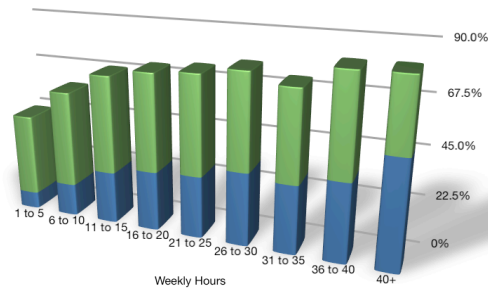
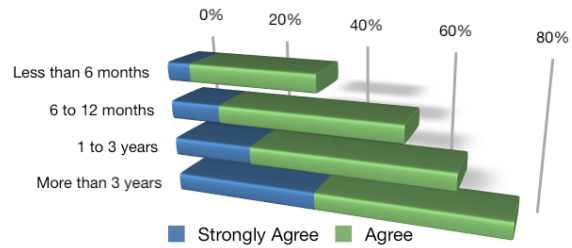


Acquiring loyal fans

B2C companies (63%) were much more likely to develop a loyal fan base through social media than B2B (54%).

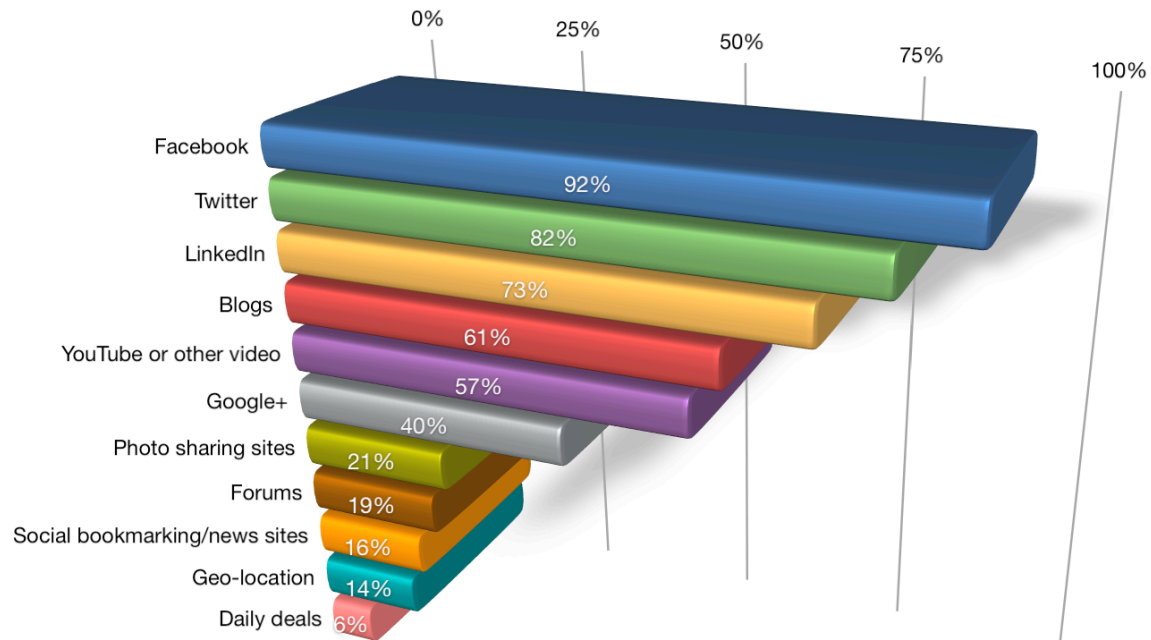
Of those who have been using social media for at least 1 year, 65% found it useful for building a loyal fan base.

Time invested makes a difference. Sixty percent of those spending at least 6 hours a week found benefit, compared to 46% of those spending 5 hours or less per week.





Commonly used social media tools



Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, blogs and YouTube were the top five social media tools used by marketers, with Facebook leading the pack. All of the other social media tools paled in comparison to these top five. The top five have remained virtually the same since 2011.

We added a few **new categories** this year, including Google+, photo sharing sites (such as Pinterest, Flickr, and Instagram) and daily deals (such as Groupon and LivingSocial). We also removed MySpace from our study.

CHANGES SINCE 2011: Google+ (introduced in late 2011) is used by 40% of social media marketers. This is very significant considering the age of this newcomer. Social bookmarking sites dropped significantly from 26% in 2011 to 16% in 2012. Forums also dropped from 24% in 2011 to 19% in 2012. In addition, geo-location services like Foursquare dipped from 17% in 2011 to 14% in 2012.

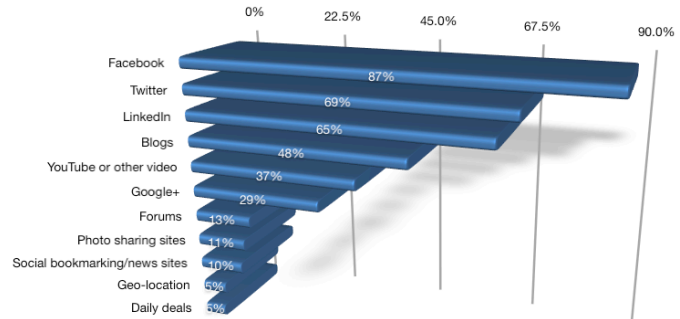
The self-employed (79%) and owners of small businesses (79%) were more likely to use LinkedIn. Larger businesses were more likely to use YouTube (73%) and less likely to use blogs (55% or less).

A close examination of which tools experienced social media marketers are using compared to those just getting underway provides further insight.



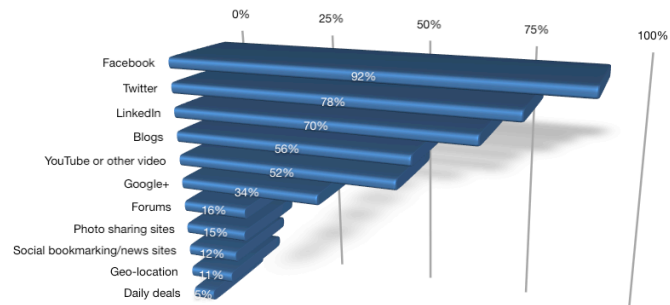
Tools used by those with less than 6 months experience

Those just getting underway with social media marketing rank Facebook as their number-one choice (by a long shot), followed by Twitter and LinkedIn. For those new to social media marketing, Twitter rose from 64% to 69% since our 2011 study.



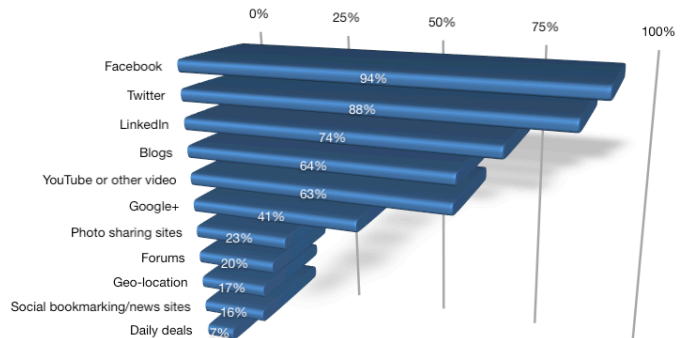
Tools used by those with 6 to 12 months experience

For marketers who have been employing social media marketing for 6 to 12 months, Facebook and Twitter remain the top two choices.



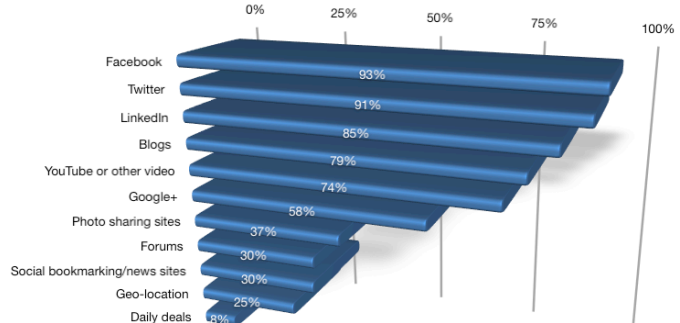
Tools used by those with 1 to 3 years experience

Facebook and Twitter are the two standouts among the tools used by social media marketers with 1 to 3 years experience.



Tools used by those with 3+ years experience

Nearly all marketers with 3+ years of social media experience use Twitter and Facebook. This group is also very active with LinkedIn (85%), blogging (79%) and video (74%).

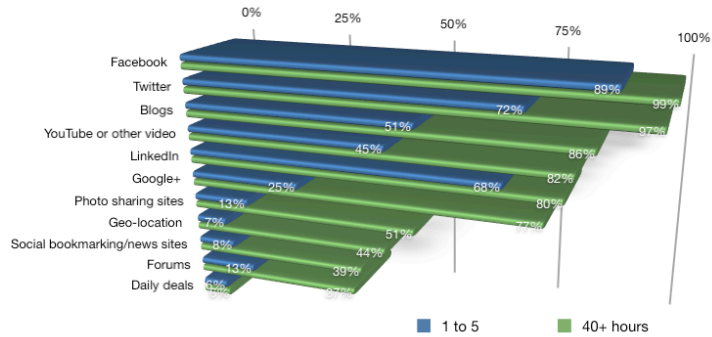




Tools used by those who commit small versus large amounts of weekly time to social media

This chart shows where those putting in the least time are investing versus those putting in the most time.

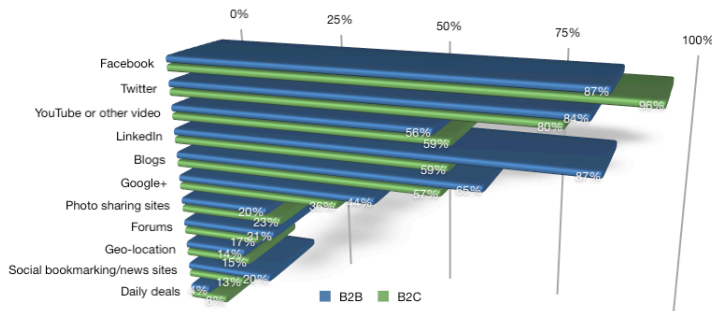
There are a few interesting findings here. Marketers investing 40+ hours per week are much more focused on Twitter, blogs, video and Google+ than those investing a few hours a week with social media.



Tools used by B2B versus B2C

This chart shows how B2B social media use differs from B2C-focused businesses.

B2C are more focused on Facebook and B2B are more focused on LinkedIn, Twitter and blogging.





How will marketers change their future social media activities?

We asked marketers to indicate how they will change their social media use in the near future. Survey-takers were asked to indicate whether they will increase, decrease, remain the same or not utilize various social media networks and tools.

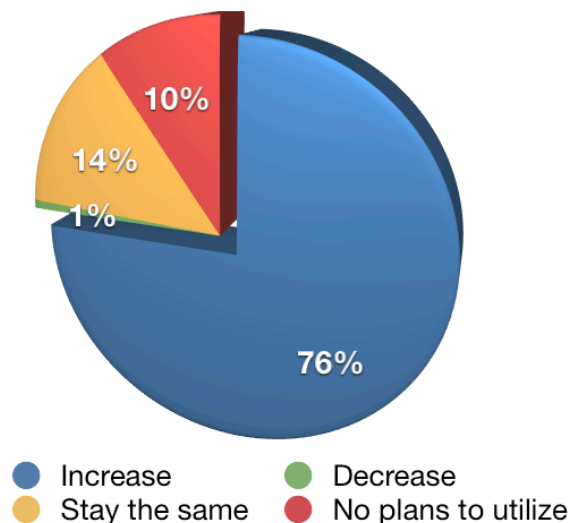
Marketers plan on increasing their use of YouTube/video (76%), Facebook (72%), Twitter (69%), blogs (68%), Google+ (67%) and LinkedIn (66%) in that order. A significant 75% said they have no plans to utilize daily deals or will reduce their efforts. Fifty-seven percent have no plans to utilize geo-location. Here is a breakdown by social media channel:

#1: YouTube/Video

For the second year in a row, YouTube/video is the top area where marketers plan on increasing their social media efforts.

A significant 76% of marketers plan on increasing their YouTube and/or video marketing. This is slightly down from 2011 (77%).

Businesses with 26–999 employees indicated this is a key growth area, with at least 80% responding affirmatively. Younger marketers (77% of those aged 20–49) are also more likely to increase their video production than older marketers (68% of those aged 60+).



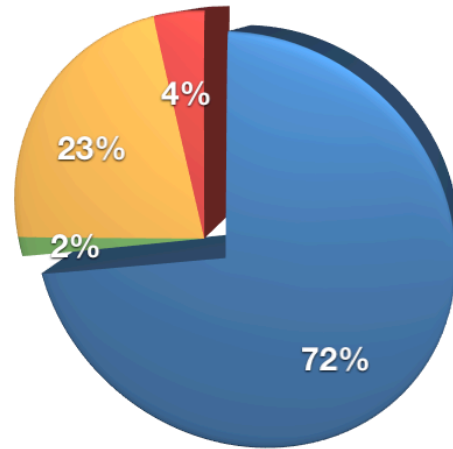


#2: Facebook

Facebook is clearly a top choice. **Ninety-two percent of marketers are using Facebook and 72% plan on increasing their activities.** Less than 4% of marketers surveyed do not plan to utilize Facebook. Second only to YouTube/video, Facebook is an area where marketers feel they can achieve substantial results.

Seventy-six percent of B2C plan on increasing Facebook efforts. Seventy-seven percent of small- to mid-sized businesses (26-499 employees) will also increase their Facebook activities. **Facebook is also the top focus for people just getting started with social media marketing (79%).**

Additionally, small- to mid-sized companies with 26-499 employees are more likely to increase their Facebook use (77%) than small (70%) or large (69%) organizations.



- Increase
- Stay the same
- Decrease
- No plans to utilize



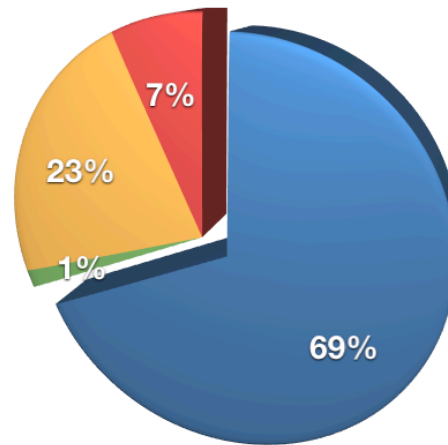
#3: Twitter

A majority of marketers (69%) will increase their activities on Twitter, slightly down from 73% in 2011.

Enterprise-level businesses and small businesses of 25-99 employees are most likely to increase their activities on Twitter, with 75% reporting affirmatively.

Of marketers working 21 hours or more per week with social media, as many as 80% say they will increase their use of Twitter in 2012.

Marketers aged 20-29 (78%) are far more likely than their peers (68%) to increase their use of Twitter.



- Increase
- Stay the same
- Decrease
- No plans to utilize

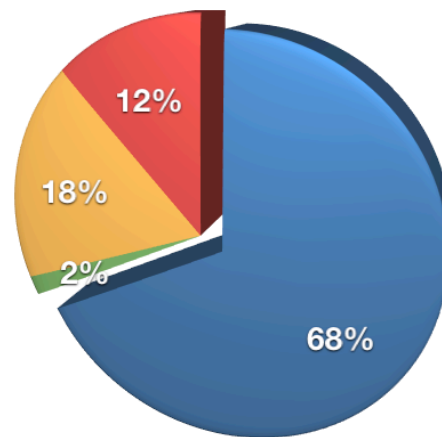
#4: Blogs

Blogs remain a strong area of focus for social media marketers, with 68% indicating they'll increase their blogging activities.

The self-employed are more likely to step up their blogging, with 76% reporting increased activity (down from 79% in 2011).

Of those who work 11 hours a week or more with social media, at least 73% of marketers plan to increase their blogging.

In 2010, 81% of marketers planned on increasing their blogging and 75% said the same in 2011.



- Increase
- Stay the same
- Decrease
- No plans to utilize

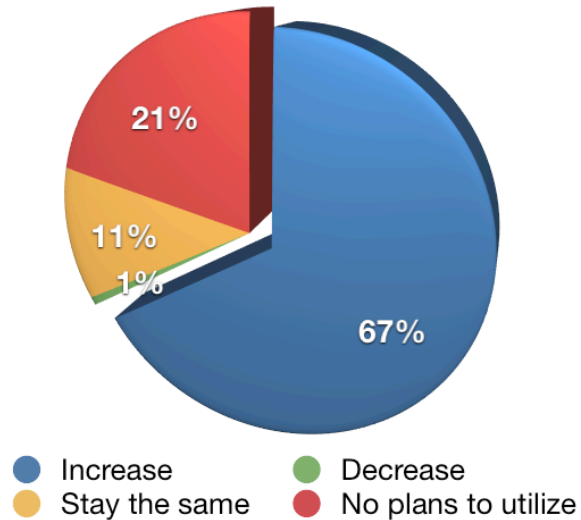


#5: Google+

Newcomer Google+ is on the radar for many marketers. Most businesses (67%) plan on increasing their Google+ activities, while more than 1 in 5 have no plans to use Google+.

Of those putting at least 11 hours per week into social media marketing, at least 73% plan to increase their use of Google+. Ninety-two percent of marketers working 30–35 hours a week with social media affirmed this.

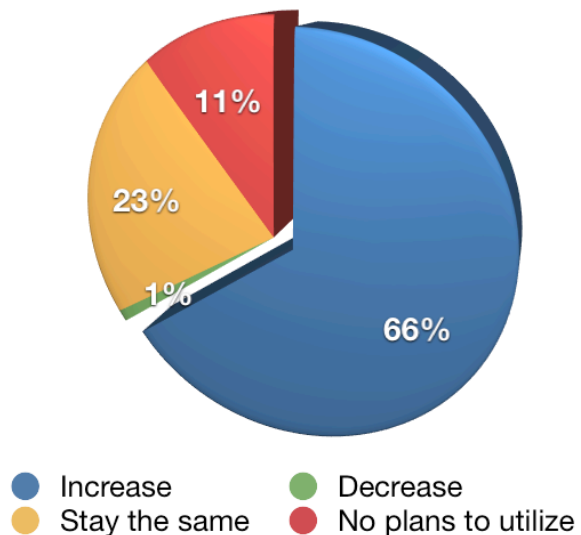
Male marketers (70%) are more likely to increase their Google+ use than female marketers (64.5%).



#6: LinkedIn

As expected, B2B companies are significantly more likely to plan on increasing their use of LinkedIn (76% of B2B versus 55% of B2C). Both are increases from 2011 levels (71% of B2B and 51% of B2C).

Social media newcomers (72%) were more likely to increase their use of LinkedIn. Enterprise-level businesses were least likely to increase their use (59%).



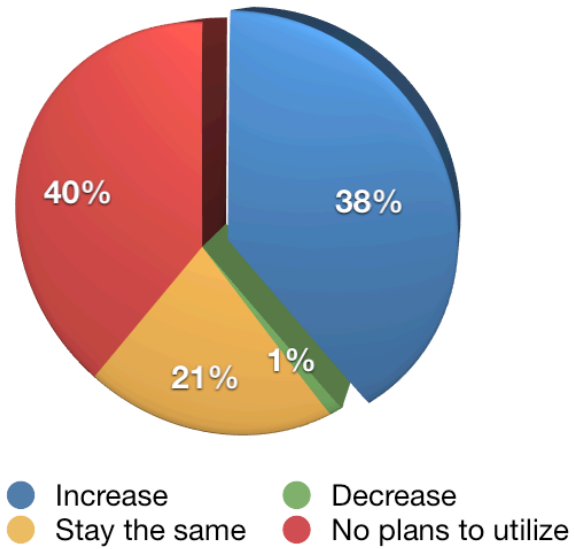


#7: Photo Sharing Sites

Thirty-eight percent of marketers planned to increase their use of sites like Pinterest, Instagram and Flickr.

These numbers rise significantly for those working 11 hours or more with social media, 50% or more for most of those putting in 21 hours or more.

Female marketers (40%) are also more likely to increase their use than male marketers (35%).



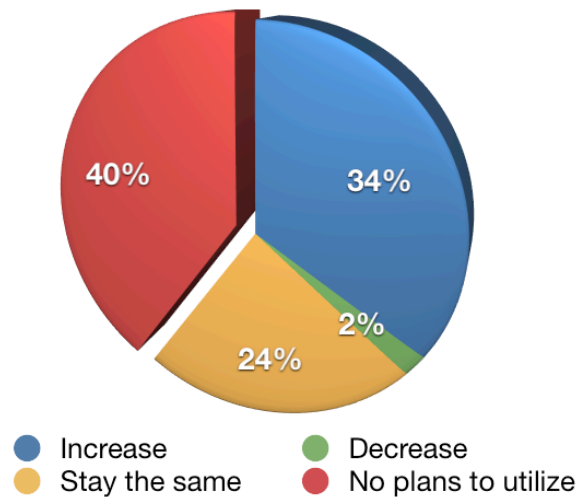
#8: Forums

Only 34% of businesses will increase their forum activities, while 2 out of 5 marketers have no plans to use forums.

In 2011, 35% of marketers had no plans for using forums. Now that number has jumped to 40%.

Thirty-eight percent of B2B marketers plan on increasing their forum use (versus 30% of B2C).

Forty-seven percent of those working 26–30 hours weekly on social media plan to increase their use of forums.

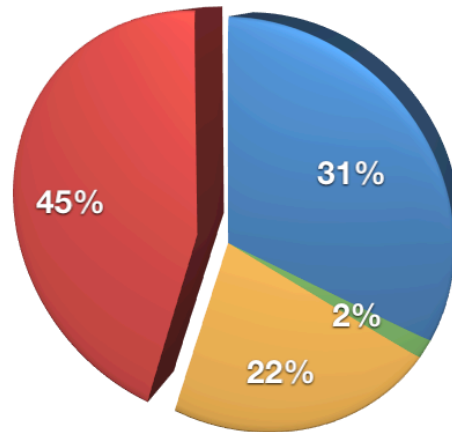




#9: Social Bookmarking

A mere 31% of businesses plan on increasing their social bookmarking activities (down from 40% in 2011), while 45% have no plans to use social bookmarking.

Of those who work 26 or more hours in social media marketing, 42% plan to increase their use of this tool.



- Increase
- Decrease
- Stay the same
- No plans to utilize

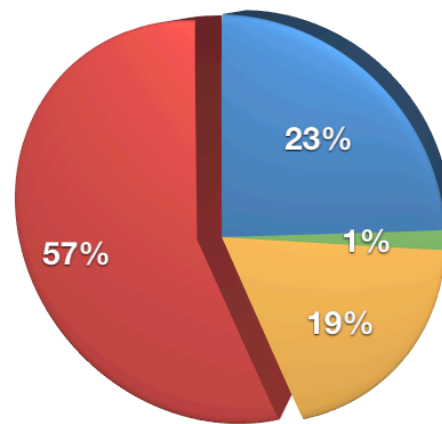
#10: Geo-location

Only 23% of marketers plan on increasing their use of geo-location services like Foursquare, down from 30% in 2011.

Mid-sized businesses are more likely to employ geo-location.

Thirty-one percent of businesses with 250 to 499 employees plan to increase use of geo-location. This is down from 38% in 2011.

Marketers with 3 or more years experience are 50% more likely to increase their use of geo-location services than beginners.



- Increase
- Decrease
- Stay the same
- No plans to utilize

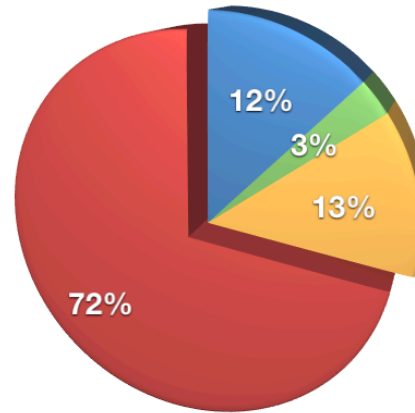


#11: Daily Deals

More than 72% of marketers have *no* plans to use daily deals.

Only 12% of marketers plan on increasing their use of Groupon, LivingSocial or a similar daily deal site.

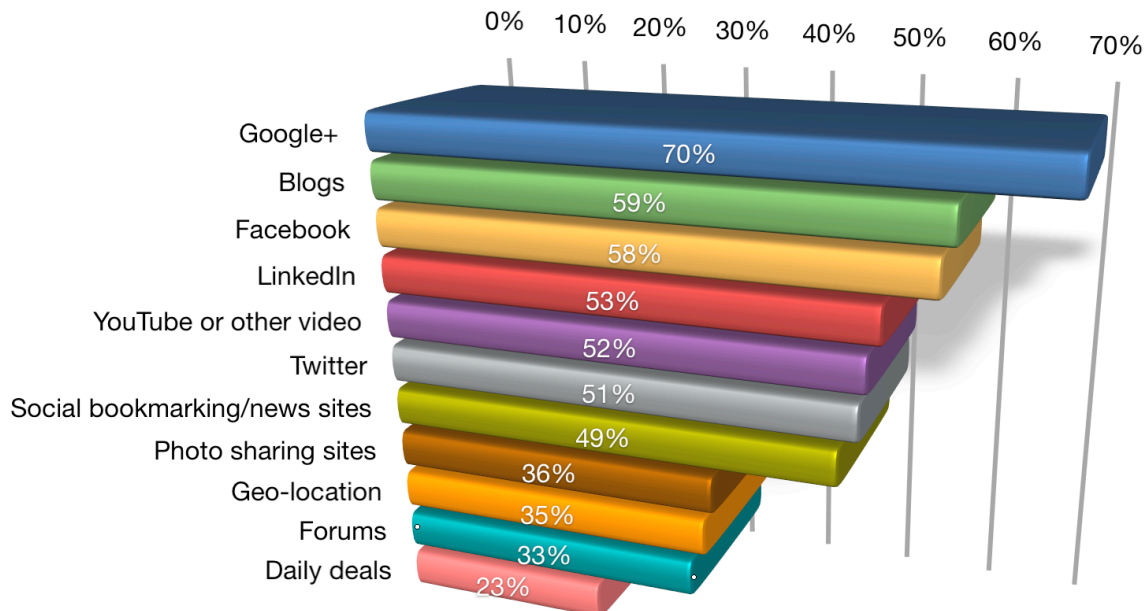
Marketers with 3 or more years of social media experience plan to increase daily deal activities (27%, up from 25% in 2011).



- Increase
- Decrease
- Stay the same
- No plans to utilize



Social media tools marketers want to learn more about



We asked marketers which social media tools they most want to learn more about. **Google+ stormed into first place as the social network marketers most want to learn about, replacing Facebook as the leader from the 2011 report.** Blogging was second and Facebook followed at a close third.

Recognizing Google's staying power, marketers are clamoring to better understand the possibilities of Google+ (70% affirming this). In 2011, 70% of marketers wanted to learn more about Facebook. This year, that number has dropped to 58%. Likewise, 69% of marketers wanted to learn about blogging in 2011, but that has dropped to 59% in 2012.

Businesses with 500 or more employees were significantly more interested in learning more about geo-location (40-44%+) than others, down from 58% in 2011. In addition, those marketers aged 60 and older were much more interested in learning about Facebook (65%, down from 78% in 2011) and their younger marketing cohorts prefer to learn more about photo sites (42% vs. 29% of 60+).

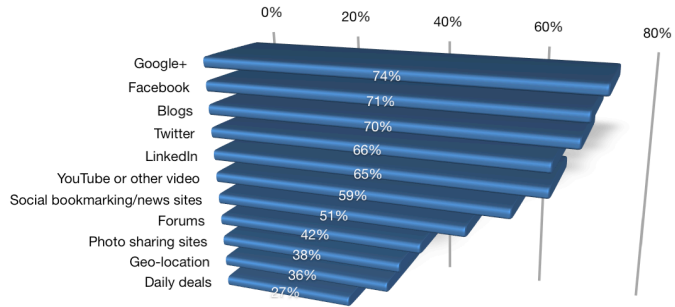
B2C businesses are more interested in learning about Facebook (63%), Twitter (53%) and video (53%) while B2B companies prefer to learn about LinkedIn (56%).



What follows are tools marketers are interested in based on how long they've been using social media marketing.

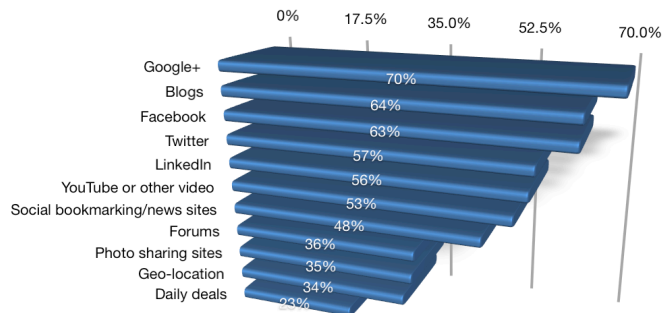
Marketers with less than 6 months social media experience:

The top tools marketers with this level of experience want to learn about are Google+ (74%), Facebook (71%) and blogs (70%).



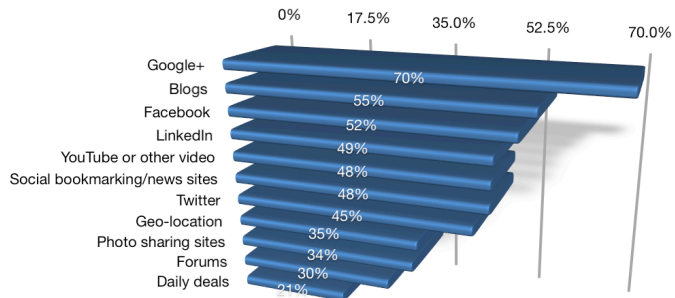
Marketers with 6 to than 12 months social media experience:

Marketers in this category most want to learn about Google+ and blogs.



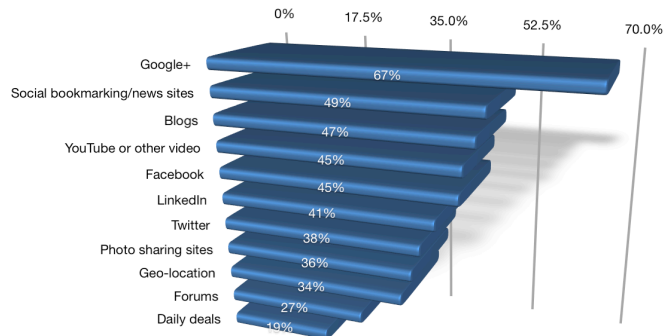
Marketers with 1 to 3 years social media experience:

Google+ (70%) by a long shot and then blogs (55%) are what most interest marketers in this category.



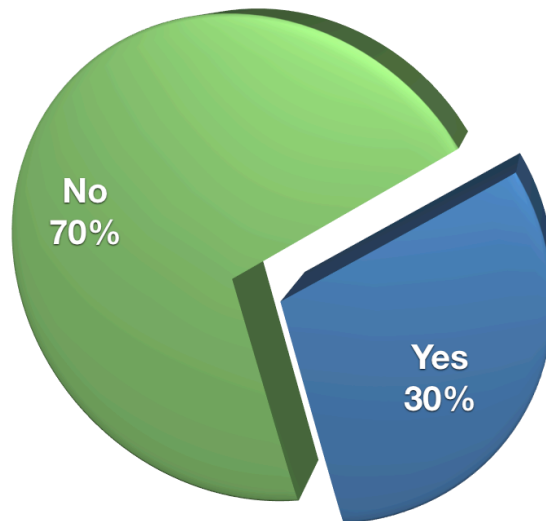
Marketers with 3+ years social media experience:

For these experienced pros, Google+ (67%) wins by a landslide, followed by social bookmarking (49%) as top of their list to learn more about.



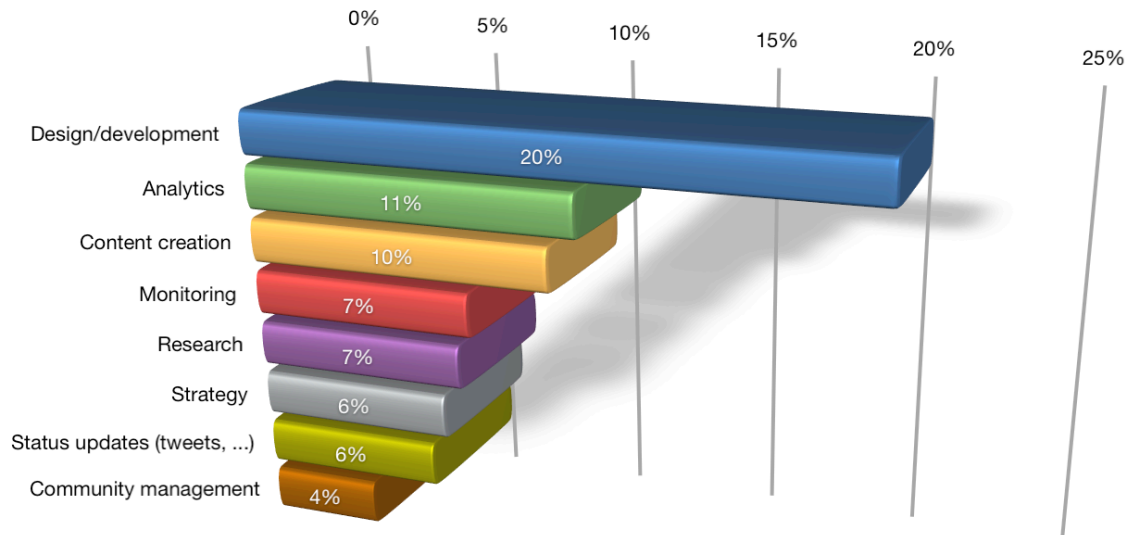


Social media outsourcing



We asked marketers if they were outsourcing any of their social media marketing efforts. The overwhelming majority said no. In 2011, the number of **those who were outsourcing doubled since our 2010 report, from 14% to 28%**. In 2012, the number increased slightly to 30%.

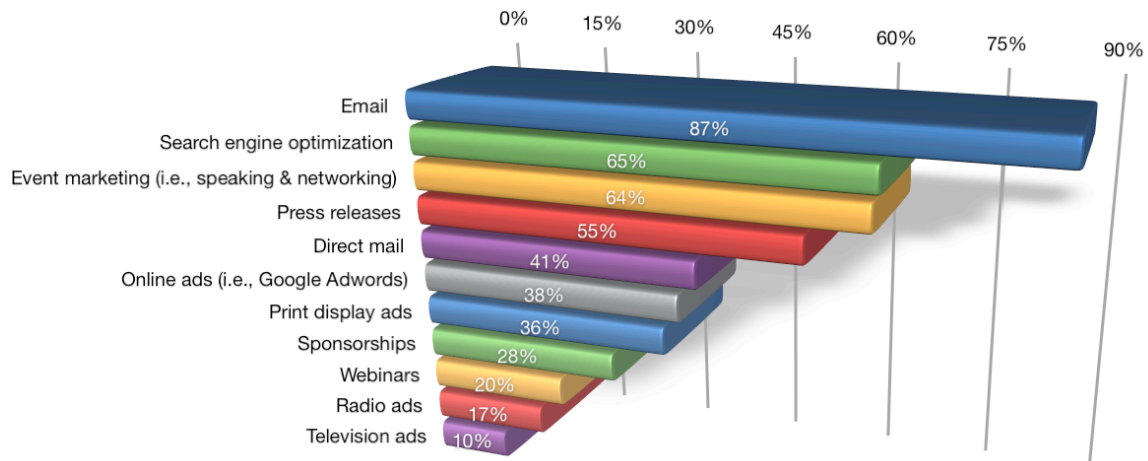
These are the tasks that marketers are outsourcing to third parties:



Design and development, analytics and content creation are the top three areas that social media marketers are outsourcing. Those with 3 or more years experience are slightly more likely to outsource design and development tasks (23%) than beginners.



Use of other forms of marketing



We asked social media marketers what other types of marketing they were participating in. **The top three included email marketing, search engine optimization and event marketing**—the same top three as 2011.

B2B marketers were significantly more likely to employ search engine optimization (67% B2B vs. 62% B2C) and event marketing (68% B2B vs. 58% B2C). Organizations with 26 or more employees were significantly more likely to participate in event marketing than small-businesses with 1–10 employees (71% or more vs. 59% or less).

Social media marketers with 3 or more years of experience were more likely to participate in search engine optimization (74%) and event marketing (76%) than others.

Women (67%) are more likely to use event marketing than men (59%).

Young marketers are almost twice as likely to use online ads than marketers over the age of 50 (52% of 20–somethings vs. 27% of older marketers).

A close examination of how social media marketers will change their non-social media activities in the near future provides further insight.

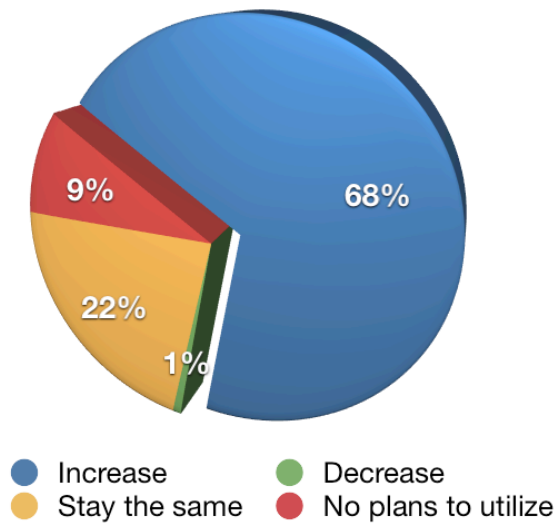


How will marketers change non-social marketing in the future?

We asked social media marketers to indicate how they will change their use of non-social media activities in the near future. Survey-takers were asked to indicate whether they would increase, decrease, remain the same or not utilize various marketing methods. Here is a breakdown by marketing channel:

#1: Search engine optimization

Most marketers (68%) indicated they were planning on increasing their search engine optimization efforts. However, this is down from 71% in 2011.

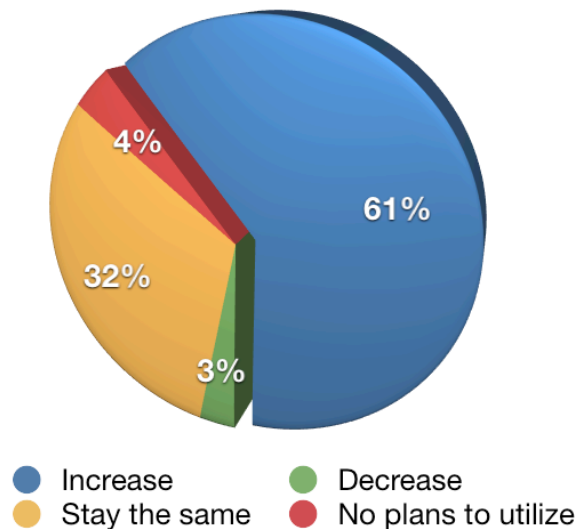


#2: Email marketing

More than 3 in 5 marketers (61%) plan on increasing their email marketing efforts in the near future.

The self-employed (67%) and mid-sized businesses (68%) were far more likely to increase email marketing than large brands (51%).

Social media newcomers (64%) are more likely than long-term marketers (57%) to increase email in 2012.

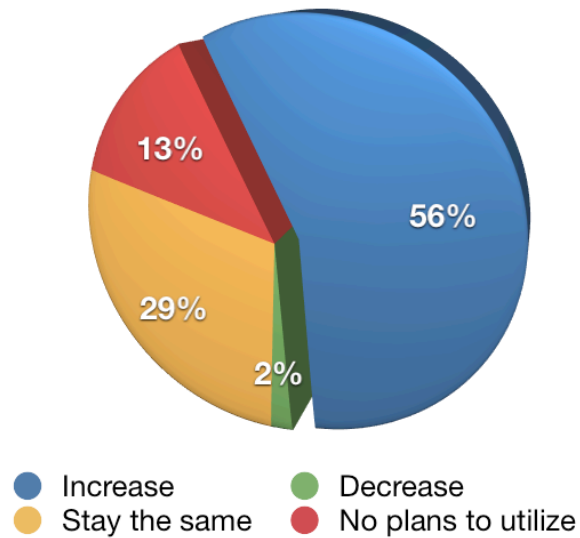




#3: Event marketing

56% of marketers plan on increasing their event marketing and speaking engagements, down from 61% in 2011.

B2B marketers are more likely (61%) to increase event marketing than B2C (51%). The self-employed (65%) and small business owners (64%) are significantly more likely to use event marketing than corporate employees (44%).

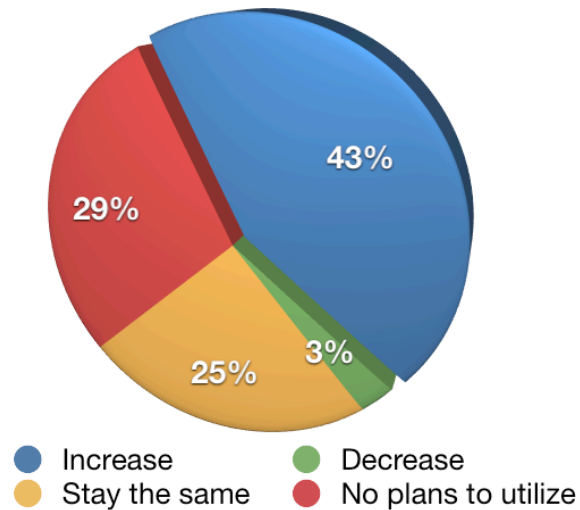


#4: Online advertising

Less than half (43%) of marketers plan on increasing their online advertising efforts, which includes pay-per-click ads.

Mid-sized businesses (250-999 employees) were most likely to increase online advertising (51%).

B2C companies were slightly more likely (45%) than B2B (42%) to increase their use of online ads. The B2C figure is down from 50% in 2011.

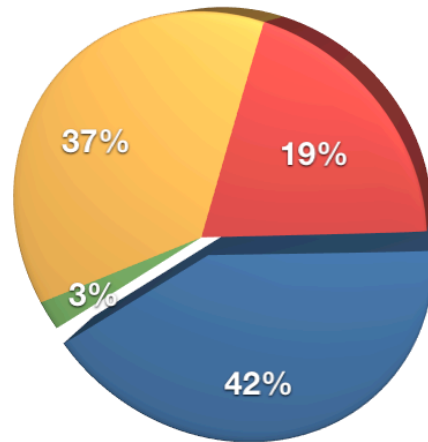




#5: Press releases

Surprisingly, 79% of marketers plan on either keeping the same levels or increasing their use of press releases, with 42% planning an increase.

Small businesses were significantly more likely to increase their press releases than larger ones (45% vs. 37%). But large firms are much more likely to use press releases (nearly 90% vs. 67%).



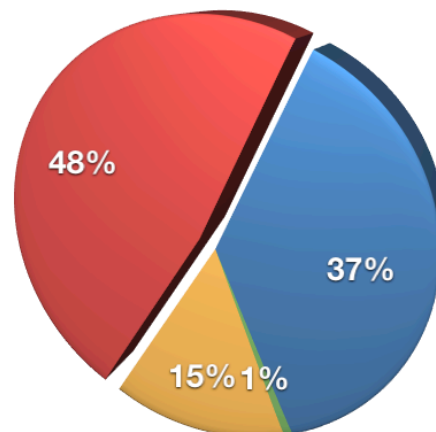
- Increase
- Stay the same
- Decrease
- No plans to utilize

#6: Webinars

Another surprising finding is that 48% of businesses have no plans to use webinars. This is up from 42% in 2011. When this is contrasted with the large percentage that employ event marketing (see #3 above), it would seem that many businesses are not yet sold on the idea of virtual events.

Of the self-employed and small business owners, 44% are planning an increase, compared to just 32% of businesses with 1,000 or more employees.

B2B companies (47%) were significantly more likely than B2C (26%) to use webinars.

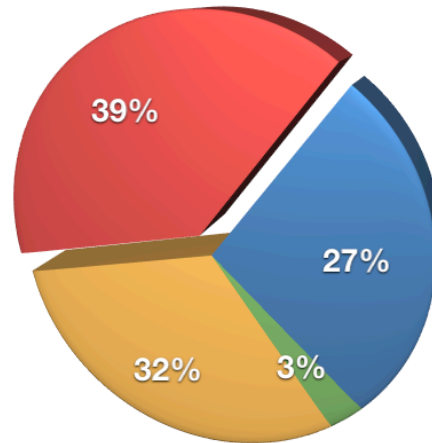


- Increase
- Stay the same
- Decrease
- No plans to utilize



#7: Sponsorships

Many marketers (39%) have no plans to utilize sponsorships, though 27% do plan an increase for 2012.



- Increase
- Stay the same
- Decrease
- No plans to utilize

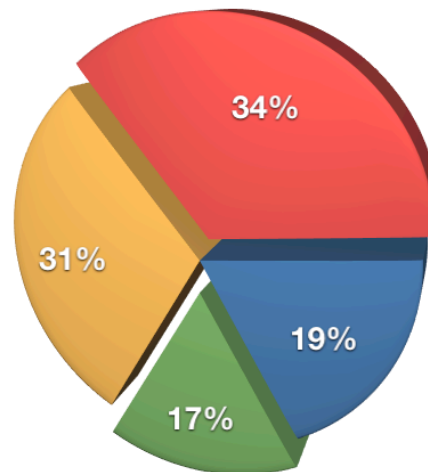
#8: Direct mail

Marketers are more likely to decrease their use of direct mail than any other marketing channel (17% planning to decrease).

Only 19% plan on increasing their use of direct mail—a slight increase from 2011 (17%).

Of those planning on increasing direct mail, the self-employed (22%) and small businesses (20%) were most likely.

Only 14% of large businesses with 1,000 or more employees plan on increasing use of direct mail. Of those large businesses, 31% will decrease their use of direct mail and 20% won't even use it.

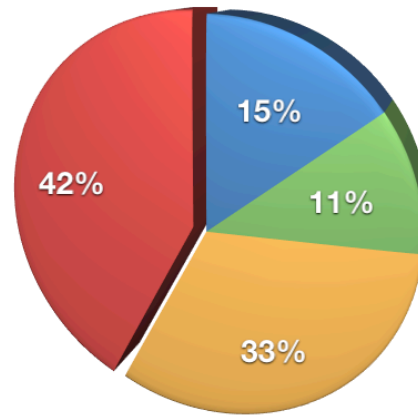


- Increase
- Stay the same
- Decrease
- No plans to utilize



#9: Print ads

A significant 53% of marketers either have no plans to use or will decrease their use of print ads. B2C (12%) were more likely to reduce their use of print advertising compared to B2B (9%).

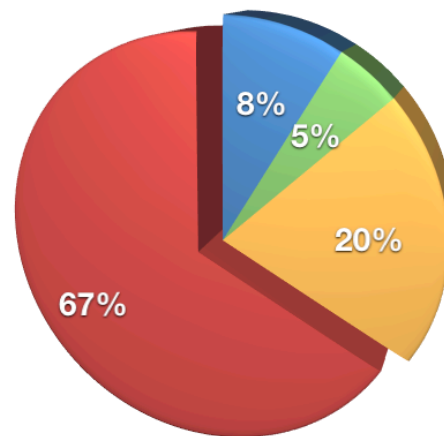


- Increase
- Decrease
- Stay the same
- No plans to utilize

#10: Radio ads

Most marketers (67%) have no plans to use radio ads.

B2C marketers are twice as likely (12%) to increase their use of radio ads than B2B (5.4%).

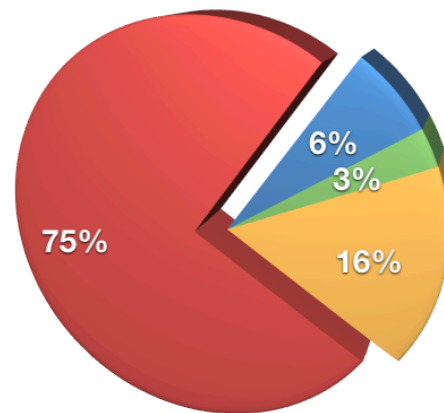


- Increase
- Decrease
- Stay the same
- No plans to utilize

#11: Television ads

Only 6% of marketers plan on increasing television ads.

Of businesses with 100-499 employees or more, 11% plan on increasing their use of television ads.



- Increase
- Decrease
- Stay the same
- No plans to utilize



Survey participant demographics

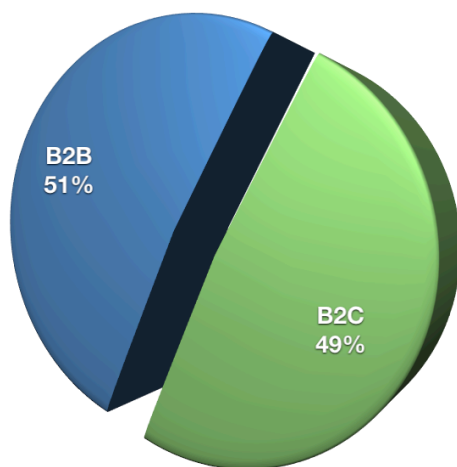
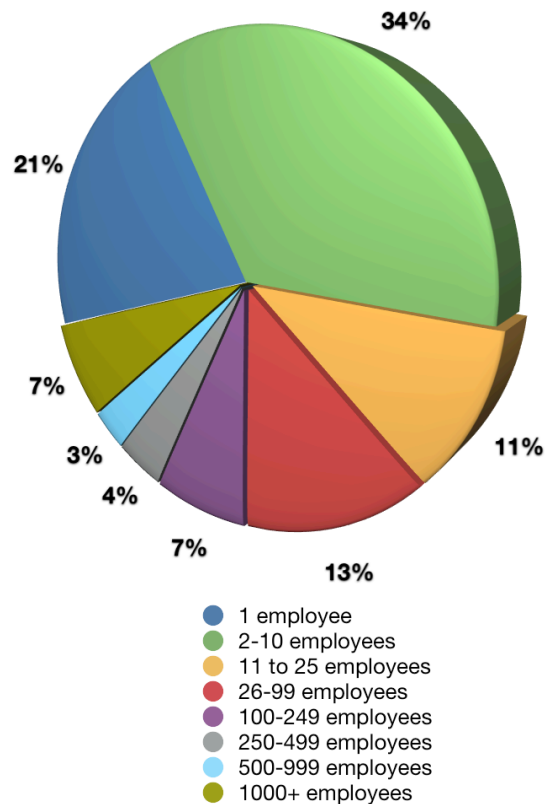
We leveraged social media and email to find participants for our survey. We started with a post on Twitter in January 2012. It simply said, "Take the 2012 Social Media Marketing Industry Survey. Participants get free copy" and included a link to the survey. The message was retweeted hundreds of times by other marketers. In addition, many people posted links to the survey on social media sites. We asked survey participants to help spread the word about our study. Finally, we emailed a list of 120,000 marketers and asked them to take the survey. After 14 days, we closed the survey with **3,813 participants**.

Here are the demographic breakdowns:

Survey participants

The largest group who took the survey work for small businesses of 2-10 employees (34%) followed by the self-employed (21%). Twenty percent of people taking the survey work for businesses with 100 or more employees.

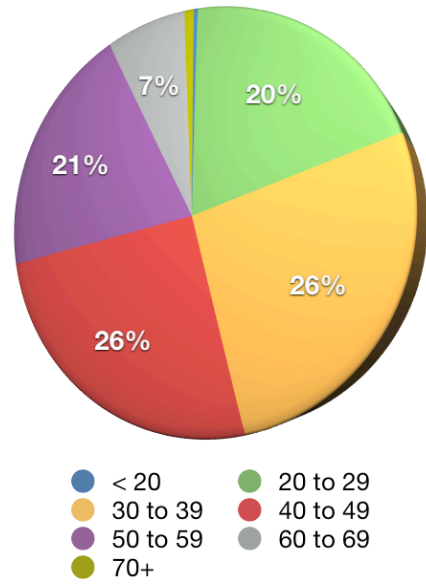
Slightly more than half (51%) of survey participants focus primarily on attracting businesses (B2B) and the other 49% primarily target consumers (B2C).





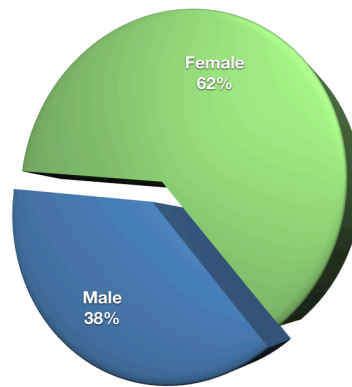
Age of participants

Most survey participants (72%) were between the ages of 30 and 59. The median age was 30 to 39.



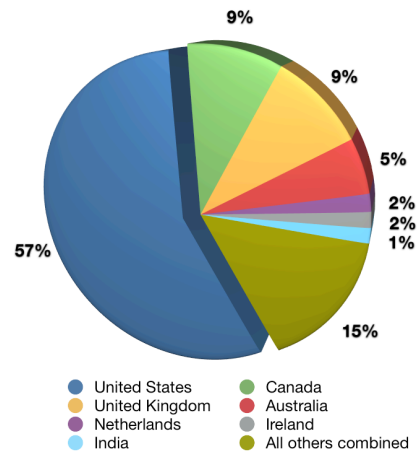
Gender

Females edged out males, representing 62% of all participants.



Country

Most participants (57%) were based in the United States. Followed by Canada (9%), United Kingdom (9%) and Australia (5%).





About Michael A. Stelzner

MarketingSherpa calls Michael the "grandfather of white papers." He's author of the books, *Launch* and *Writing White Papers*.

Michael is also the **founder of Social Media Examiner**, the world's largest online social media marketing magazine, with more than 600,000 monthly readers. Technorati ranks Social Media Examiner as one of the top 10 business blogs in the world. Michael is also the man behind large online professional development conferences, such as Social Media Success Summit.

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