Social media is still a relatively new marketing channel and continually evolves, with new networks, updates, and features. These constant developments challenge us to keep up with trends and use novel technology to capture the attention of audiences who are drawn to visually stimulating, thought-provoking, and easily digestible content.

We are excited to share with you the results from our annual State of Social Marketing Survey, which was expanded this year to include the global marketing community. Responses were collected from marketers around the world, including the United States, the United Kingdom, Australia, Canada, China, Denmark, France, India, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Malaysia, Mexico, Netherlands, Saudi Arabia, Singapore, South Africa, Sweden, Turkey, United Arab Emirates, Venezuela, Vietnam, and more.

This year’s report also provides insight from the varying perspectives of brands and agencies. In-house marketing teams experience unique challenges and are offered different opportunities from agency professionals working with numerous clients. We wanted this report to reflect both sides.

Whether brand or agency, social media is a foundational marketing strategy and—if properly tracked and analyzed—has the ability to impact the buyer’s journey at all stages in the funnel. However, marketers still find difficulty quantifying the impact of social media and are unsure of how to distribute resources to generate the most value from their social campaigns.

With currently 2.8 billion social media users globally, expected to rise to almost 3 billion users by 2020, social media’s influence has still not reached its peak.

The purpose of this report is to serve as a resource for marketing professionals that use, or plan to use, social media in their marketing strategies. Simply Measured shares data from our studies and surveys, in addition to other sources, to identify how marketers can fully leverage the power of social media.

You’ll learn:

- How the biggest social networks are evolving
- Which key trends in the social marketing industry you need to pay attention to
- Where social marketers struggle and where they thrive
- Which platforms your audience uses the most, and for which purpose
- How to inform and modify your social marketing plan
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In this 2017 State of Social Marketing Report, we share the survey results from 2,738 social media marketing professionals from 111 countries. This report shares insight and understanding of a dynamic industry where new networks emerge, old networks evolve, and user bases continue to rise at rapid rates. The report also exposes the contradictions at play in today’s social marketing landscape.

This year we compare the results of brands and agencies to gain perspective on the unique experiences of these two sectors. 64.8% of our respondents were brands and 35.2% of our respondents identified themselves as agencies.

Key Topics

• The challenges social marketers face and the metrics they use to determine campaign success
• Which networks marketers are investing in the most and the forecast for future marketing budgets
• The role of other marketing channels in relationship to social media marketing
• The rise of influencer marketing and its impact on strategy and budget
• Which changes and updates in the major social networks directly impact marketers in 2017

Key Findings

• Agencies are pushing for results from social more than brands: 73% of agencies set goals for either web traffic or conversion goals, while only 57% of brand marketers do. This indicates that social marketers at agencies have stronger goal-setting (and achieving) baselines than social marketers within the brand environment.

• Social ad spending is increasing, and 59% of social marketers consider ads "very important" to their strategy: But a mere 31.6% of marketers set web traffic and conversion goals to justify social's business value.

• Almost half of respondents reported analytics software as their most-needed resource: But less than a quarter claim they have the budget necessary for analytics software.

• More than half of brands say that influencers are vital to the success of their social programs, specifically for extending brand reach: But over 76% of brands say they have no dedicated budget for influencer marketing. Brands are saying one thing and doing the opposite in this category, whether due to unsubstantial resources, lack of expertise, or both. A potentially business-harming disconnect is happening here, as influencer relationships—when identified and grown properly—can provide great ROI for brands.

• Social is definitively a marketing function, and ROI is definitively our #1 challenge: The percentage of social media teams that live within the marketing organization has grown from 49% in 2015, to 63.2% in 2016, to remaining relatively stable at 64.7% in 2017. Meanwhile, 61% of social marketers grapple with determining ROI in 2017—the same percentage as 2016. The lack of major flux in either of these categories tells us that marketing departments own social media by and large, but are failing to understand how it contributes to the bottom line.
When social media platforms began to emerge, many were skeptical of their ability to cause business impact. Social media was simply a fad that would soon lose its appeal.

But forward-thinking businesses saw the opportunity to use social networks as a way to engage with their target markets, and soon started to adopt these new communication platforms. In late 2007, shortly after Facebook opened the network to the general public, only 100,000 business pages were created. Ten years later, in 2017, there are now more than 65 million business profiles.

Social media marketing has undeniably evolved into an integral marketing function for any business, from brand awareness, to direct conversions, to customer service, to brand advocacy. Social media marketing now touches every part of the marketing funnel.
The State of the Social Media Organization

Social media as an occupation is no longer limited to entry-level or mid-level employees, but has elevated into the offices of senior-level executives as a top marketing priority. Marketers from our survey have reported nearly 50 unique job titles related to social media, ranging from Social Media Strategist to Director of Social Media Marketing.

21.8% of respondents reported “Social Media Manager” as their job title, with 14.7% claiming “Marketing Manager” as their title. VPs and Directors make up 17.1% of respondents, an increase of 9.2% from 2016.

The 36.4% of those who reported “other” identified themselves as marketing coordinators, social media specialists, and independent business owners who run their own social accounts.

What Is Your Job Title?

- Social Media Manager: 21.8%
- Director of Social Media: 6.7%
- Analyst: 4.6%
- Community Manager: 4.6%
- VP or Director of Digital: 2.8%
- VP or Director of Marketing: 5.8%
- Marketing Manager: 14.7%
- CMO: 2%
- Other: 36.4%

There are currently 19,508,766 professionals on LinkedIn who list “social media” as a skill. Between LinkedIn and Indeed.com, there are over 120,000 specialized jobs in social media—a number expected only to rise as the impact of social continues to influence marketing strategies and increased social budgets.

The following section will explore marketers’ top priorities for social in 2017, how businesses structure and their social media teams, the challenges they face, and the needs they have.
Which Department Does Social Media Live in?

- 64.7% Marketing
- 17.1% Communications
- 4.7% Customer Service
- 1.4% Public Relations
- 12% Other

66.6% of social media teams live within the marketing organization, a 3% increase from 2016. It’s also important to recognize the increased movement of social media into communication teams. 19.3% of social media teams now exist within communication departments, showing a significant jump from 16.5% in 2016.

Only 4.7% of social media teams exist within public relations departments (+0.2% YOY), and only 1.4% are integrated into customer service.

How Many People Are On Your Social Team?

- 31.2% 1
- 27.8% 3-5
- 26.9% 2
- 6.6% 6-10
- 5% 11+

58.1% of respondents report that only 1 or 2 professionals are dedicated to their social media team, compared to 68.1% in 2016. Only 2.5% reported that they do not have a dedicated social media professional on their team (-1.2% YOY).

Generally, social media teams are growing. The number of teams consisting of 3-5 people has risen to 27.8%, an increase of 6.7% since 2016.
Social media is being integrated increasingly into other parts of the business, as businesses begin to understand that social influences buying decisions through many stages of the marketing funnel.

Not surprisingly, 74.1% of respondents reported collaboration most often with marketing teams, and 63.1% said social media teams also work directly with creative departments. Social media teams collaborate often with communications (47.3%) and public relations (45.7%).

35% of respondents report working directly with sales, and a smaller percentage of respondents (19.8%) work directly with demand and lead generation teams.
Whether you’re a small business or a large, established corporation, social media marketing is a vital marketing function. This year, just over half (51.6%) of our survey respondents worked within smaller companies of 1-50 people. The other half of respondents worked in companies that ranged from 50 to more than 2,500 employees. Social is viewed by all as a best marketing practice and both large and small companies are noticing social media’s benefits.

Within the year, 35.9% of respondents said their company is expected to hire more people dedicated to social media - an increase of 8.4% since 2016. Last year, our survey revealed that 27.5% of marketing teams were expected to hire more personnel for their social media teams.

64.1% do not expect their social media teams to grow in 2017.
Social’s Potential Impact

Social Media Budgets Will Grow

It is becoming essential for businesses to integrate social media thinking into every marketing decision, due to its impact through all stages of the marketing funnel. The insight gained from the proper analysis of social campaigns is being used to better inform strategies in other marketing functions including website, email, demand and lead generation, sales, SEO, media buying, and customer service.

Decision makers are now allocating more funds to social. The need for specialized personnel dedicated to social continues to grow each year.

The 2017 CMO Survey reports that marketing budgets compose 12% of total company budgets. Social marketing budgets currently take 10% of the total marketing budget, but is expected to increase to 18.5% within the next 5 years.

eConsultancy and Adobe released a survey earlier this year gaging how many companies expect to see budget increases in 2017 based on various marketing channels. Social media marketing budgets are expected to increase in 56% of companies, and content marketing budgets will increase in 55% of companies. Marketing analytics will also see budget increases this year in 49% of companies.
Marketing budgets are adjusting to the rising impact of social on marketing strategies. By 2020, marketing budgets will have a huge allocation to digital, including paid search, social media (including video advertising), email, and display advertising.

Social media spending is expected to rise to 17.3 billion by 2019 (Statista).

The allocation of funds to marketing analytics is expected to see a massive increase within the next few years, according to the CMO Survey. In 2017, marketing analytics consumes just 4.6% of marketing budgets. This number could jump to almost 22% by 2020.

"The expected rise in social media budgets is based on bringing social more fully into the marketing mix. Today, too many companies view social media as a siloed activity. That view is dying. Social will get more budget as more companies realize that social signals have to be attended to during the customer lifecycle. Social activity has been too long ignored from an attribution standpoint. Social channels will soon be sales channels."

---

**Scott Fallon**

VP of Marketing, Simply Measured
How Is Social Media Success Measured?

Our survey revealed that engagement continues to be the standard metric when measuring the success of social media campaigns. In 2016, 56% of marketers reported engagement as the most-used metric. This year, engagement was listed as the most-used metric by 58.6%, an increase of 2.6% since 2016.

Which Metrics Do You Use Most Often to Measure the Success of Social?

21.1% of respondents reported conversion and revenue metrics as their standard metric, similar to the 20.7% in 2016. Amplification and brand awareness metrics were reported by 15.8% of respondents as their most-used success measurements.
The Challenges Social Marketers Face in 2017

We asked marketers from around the world to reveal their biggest social media challenges in 2017. Marketers are struggling to measure ROI and make the “big picture” connection to business and marketing goals.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Challenge</th>
<th>Combined</th>
<th>Agencies</th>
<th>Brands</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Measuring ROI</td>
<td>58.7%</td>
<td>61.4%</td>
<td>57.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Publishing Content</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>12.7%</td>
<td>16.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Developing Social Media Strategy</td>
<td>24.3%</td>
<td>15.7%</td>
<td>29%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tying Social to Business Goals</td>
<td>33.6%</td>
<td>35.5%</td>
<td>32.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tracking Results in a Centralized Dashboard</td>
<td>23.9%</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>24.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Understanding Performance Across Social Channels</td>
<td>17.6%</td>
<td>17.6%</td>
<td>17.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Securing Budget and Resources for Social</td>
<td>25.9%</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>23.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monitoring Competition</td>
<td>14.6%</td>
<td>16.7%</td>
<td>13.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Integrating Social Tools</td>
<td>8.6%</td>
<td>9.8%</td>
<td>7.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collecting Social Data</td>
<td>12.2%</td>
<td>12.2%</td>
<td>12.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Using Social Data to Inform Strategy</td>
<td>24.4%</td>
<td>20.8%</td>
<td>26.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aligning Strategy Across All Social Channels</td>
<td>17.3%</td>
<td>18.5%</td>
<td>16.6%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Measuring ROI was listed, again, as the biggest challenge to 58.7% of marketers in 2017, compared to 61.1% in 2016. 33.6% of respondents claimed that tying social to business goals is also a major challenge.

This year, the social media industry placed higher emphasis on collecting and analyzing social data, so we included two new categories to gauge whether they presented challenges to marketers.

In total, 12.2% of respondents said collecting social data was a major challenge, and an even higher 24.4% struggle to use social data to inform marketing strategies.

The challenges presented by both brands and agencies were very similar, but there were two noticeable differences. First, brands reported struggling more than agencies in developing a social strategy: 29% of brands versus 15.7% of agencies.

Second, agencies found it more difficult than brands to secure budgets and resources for social: 30% of agencies reported budget as a challenge, compared to 23.7% of brands.

**Quantifying Revenue from Social Is Difficult for Marketers**

Are You Able to Quantify the Revenue Driven by Social?

Measuring ROI is a constant challenge for marketers, year after year. The results of this year’s survey prove again that few marketers feel confident quantifying revenue driven by social media efforts. Between brands and agencies, only 14.8% claimed to be able to quantify the revenue gained from social media marketing.

However, this is a 5.4% increase from the 2016 survey, when only 9.4% of marketers reported they could quantify revenue generated from social. Only 13.6% of brands said they could quantify revenue, compared to the 17.4% of agencies.
Conversations About Social ROI

How Often Do You Have Conversations About Social ROI with Your Boss?

From the brand perspective, conversations regarding social ROI are happening quite often. 36.3% of brands say they are having frequent ROI conversations with their bosses.

18.5% of brands report never having conversations regarding social ROI. That’s nearly 1 in 5 of the brands surveyed. Considering marketers’ lack of confidence in quantifying revenue from social, this number is alarming.

48.8% of agencies report having frequent conversations with their clients regarding social ROI, with only 8.2% claiming to never have conversations about ROI with their clients.

The high number of conversations occurring between agencies and their clients, compared to the high number of brands reporting never talking to their bosses about ROI, raises concerns on the urgency placed on reporting out and not reporting up. Social media marketers that are able to convey to their executive teams the impact of social on business functions - from brand awareness to opportunity response rates to conversion rates throughout the entire funnel - can help establish social as a vital part of their company’s success.

33.6% of this year’s respondents claimed that tying social to business goals is a major challenge, yet brands are straying away from internal conversations regarding social’s impact on revenue.
Measuring ROI was the number one challenge for social marketers, with 61.1% citing this as their top challenge. This is up slightly from 60% in 2015.

In fact, only 9.4% of marketers say they’re able to quantify the revenue driven by social media.

The following section highlights social media marketing practices. We asked marketers to identify focus areas in 2017, explain the relevance of paid advertising in their overall social strategy, and describe how social data is collected, analyzed, and utilized.

**Areas of Focus in 2017**

This year, we wanted to highlight where marketers expend the most effort. This section separates the brand perspective from the agency perspective, but a common priority for both agency and brand marketers in 2017 is aligning social strategy with business objectives.

**What Are Your Focus Areas in 2017 Re: Social Media Marketing for Clients?**

Brands were asked to rank their 2017 focus areas from highest priority to lowest priority. This year, brands identified their most pressing priority as developing content for social, followed by aligning social strategy with business objectives.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Focus Area</th>
<th>Overall Rank</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Developing content for social</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aligning social strategy with business objectives</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Building a new social strategy</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collecting and analyzing social data</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Integrating social into other marketing strategies</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finding resources to support social</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
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</table>
Our survey found that one of the greatest challenges agency marketers face in 2017 is tying social back to broader business objectives. 65.7% of agencies reported that aligning social strategy with business objectives is their main area of focus for their clients this year. Agencies also identified building new social strategies (62.6%) and developing content for social (62.3%) as high priorities in 2017.

Both brands and agencies identified “finding resources to support social” as the lowest priority of 2017. While there is good evidence of social being allocated more marketing budget, marketers reveal that additional resources are still needed to optimize social performance.
Analytics software was selected as the most-needed resource for marketers in 2017 to do their best work, by both brands and agencies.

Brands reported almost evenly that analytics software (44.8%) and the need for more personnel specifically focused on social media (44.2%) are what marketers need most.

Nearly half of agencies (49.5%) reported the need for analytics software to optimize social strategies, and 34.1% identified human resources as their greatest need. 11.4% of brands and agencies said publishing software would help them do their best work.

Despite the great need for analytics software, marketers are having trouble finding the funds needed to acquire all of the software they need.

**Marketers Struggle to Fund Social Analytics Software**

Social analytics is a critical social media practice. The data gathered can be used to inform future business decisions and identify which social investments lead to higher revenue, as well as where (and to what extent) your audience is engaging, sharing, and converting.
Without proper software, marketers can only make guesses at the success of their social marketing efforts.

Despite identifying analytics software as the most-needed resource to elevate their work, only a limited number of brands and agencies have the funding needed to acquire the right analytics software. Only 24.1% of brands report having the funds for much-needed social analytics software. This is compared to only 16.3% of agencies. Combined, this equates to only 21.5% of marketers having the budget they need for analytics software.

In 2016, 45.5% of marketers reported having the funds needed to fuel their social analytics software—a decrease of 24% within the past year.

This could be because marketers are developing the need for more than publishing capabilities, and seeking out advanced analytics software for deeper insights and conversion tracking. Despite the growing need for more advanced analytics and reporting software, 40.5% of brands and 34.1% of agencies claim to have no budget set aside for social analytics software. Collectively, this means four out of every ten social teams do not have the appropriate software needed to gain valuable data and insight into their social strategies.
Paid Social

With the amount of noise and competitive voices on social media platforms, organic social is just not as effective as it used to be. Through paid social, marketers can boost the reach of posts, display ads and videos, and sponsored messaging.

The simple acts of publishing and sharing posts and engaging in conversations are vital when building and managing communities. Paid social can help you amplify organic content to a targeted audience, usually leading to higher conversion rates.

Within the first quarter of 2017, Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, LinkedIn, Snapchat, and Pinterest saw a 61.5% increase in paid media spend, according to new research from 4C Insights.

**How Important Is Paid Advertising in Your Overall Social Strategy?**

<table>
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<th>Combined</th>
<th>Agencies</th>
<th>Brands</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Very Important</td>
<td>59.1%</td>
<td>45.3%</td>
<td>38.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Somewhat Important</td>
<td>38.8%</td>
<td>32.1%</td>
<td>36.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not Important</td>
<td>22.6%</td>
<td>8.7%</td>
<td>18.1%</td>
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</table>

38.6% of brands said paid advertising plays a very important role in their overall social strategy, and 22.6% reported that paid advertising holds no importance.

Our survey revealed that agencies place higher value on paid advertising in their social media strategies, as 59.1% of agencies reported that paid advertising is very important. Only 8.7% of agencies said paid social is not important to their overall social strategy.

Overall, 45.3% of marketers said paid social is a very important part of their social strategy, yet there seems to be a large number of marketers who aren’t connecting back to web traffic or conversion goals.
Marketers are spending record amounts of money on social advertising. By the end of 2017, social network ad spending could reach $35.98 billion, representing 16% of all digital ad spending globally, according to eMarketer.

However, there is a large disconnect between dollars spent and how those dollars are supporting strategic traffic and conversion goals. Only 31.6% of all marketers claim to have both web traffic and conversion goals for social. This means 68.4% of marketers are not establishing deliberate goals for both traffic and conversion, or are completely avoiding setting goals altogether.

26.9% of brands said they have both web traffic and conversion goals for social. 22.1% of brands reported having only web traffic goals, and 8.1% that said they only have conversion goals. A majority of brands do not have any goals set for either web traffic or conversion: 42.8% reported having neither.

Goal-setting seems to be a higher priority in agencies, taking into account client expectations that agencies consistently set and surpass stated goals. Only 27.4% of agencies, in comparison to 42.8% of brands, reported having neither web traffic nor conversion goals. This is 15.4% less than what brands reported.

41% of agencies are actively setting both traffic and conversion goals. A combined 31.6% have set goals for either traffic or conversion.
On Which Social Channels Do You Spend the Most Advertising Dollars?

Although our survey shows a large number of brands and agencies are not creating strategic web traffic and conversion goals for social, marketers are still pouring money into social advertising.

In 2017, analysts predict a 26.3% global increase on spending for social media ads, according to eMarketer.

Our survey shows that 90.3% of marketers are spending the most money on Facebook advertising, followed by 33.6% spending money on Instagram ads. Twitter ads are used by 16.5% of marketers, and 14.5% are spending money on LinkedIn advertising.

Brands and agencies are almost aligned on where they spend their advertising dollars, however there was large difference between these two sectors when it came to Instagram ads. 28.3% of brands spend ad dollars on Instagram, but 44.4% of agencies are investing in Instagram advertising.

According to eMarketer, Snapchat’s ad revenue is expected to grow to nearly 1 billion in 2017. Surprisingly, very few marketers reported spending ad dollars on Snapchat. Only 1.4% of brands and 2.3% of agencies are utilizing Snapchat in their ad plans.
Social Ads can do a lot to enhance your overall social strategy, leading to increased brand awareness, reaching new (and highly targeted) audiences, and generating better cross-channel performance. We asked marketers to tell us which types of paid ads made the biggest impact on their social strategies.

Sponsored ads were selected by 50.8% of marketers as the most useful type of social advertisement, showing the increased importance of utilizing social media influencers to boost social campaigns and achieve better results. More insight on influencer marketing is included in later sections of this report.

Display ads follows closely behind sponsored ads with 39.1% of marketers reporting that display ads are an important part of their overall social strategy. Banner ads are used the least: only 17.4% of marketers said banner ads are a useful form of social advertising.

A large number of marketers who reported “other” advertising strategies listed boosted posts and video ads as important advertising strategies.

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The Rise of Influencer Marketing

Influencer marketing is one of the hottest social marketing topics this year. In fact, 84% of marketers are planning to launch at least one influencer campaign in 2017, according to eMarketer. This section of our report is dedicated to the rise of influencer marketing as it quickly becomes a favorite marketing strategy.

Using Simply Measured Listening, we discovered that the topic of influencer marketing is trending on Twitter. Between May 28 and June 25, 2017, #Influencer was used a total of 87,694 times.

Influencer marketing is enabling social media’s favorite personalities to shape opinions by telling fans and followers what and when to buy. Influencers are able to reach potential customers that historically may have been difficult for marketers to reach on their own. Micro-influencers, if identified correctly, can target those niche communities with high potential to convert.

In this section, we will highlight the characteristics that marketers look for in effective influencers, how influencers are best utilized, and whether or not budgets have been dedicated solely to influencer marketing strategies.
Both brands and agencies identified two distinctive qualities they look for when searching for their ideal influencer: reach and expertise. As noted earlier, influencers are able to expand markets through and give marketing messages greater reach by sharing those messages with their own social networks.

Reach was identified by 47.9% of brands as the most valued quality of an influencer. 49.3% of agencies agreed with brands and determined that reach made the biggest impact on their influencer decisions.

Expertise in a field or industry was listed as the second most valuable quality marketers seek out in influencers. 46.7% of brands and 48.2% of agencies said expertise impacted their definition of an ideal influencer. Total number of followers plays a limited role in determining an ideal influencer. 22.4% of marketers reported that an influencer’s following impacts their decision when identifying potential influencers.

Micro-influencers with smaller, highly targeted niche followings may prove to be more beneficial to marketers than recruiting influencers with large followings.
As influencer marketing continues to rise as a leading marketing strategy, we asked marketers to share how important influencers were to their overall social strategies.

Nearly 1 in 5 brands (19.9%) strongly agree that influencers play a vital role in their social strategy. Over half (52.7%) of brands say that they either agree or strongly agree that influencers are vital to the success of social.

8.4% of brands strongly disagree that influencers are essential to their social strategy, with a combined 23.4% of brands either reporting they disagree or strongly disagree. 23.2% of brands remain neutral on the role of influencers in their social marketing efforts.

Influencers Play a Vital Role in Our Social Strategy

Agencies closely align with brands and 18.7% strongly agree that influencers play a vital role in their social strategy. 54.9% of all agencies either agree or strongly agree.

Only 4.6% of agencies say they strongly disagree that influencers play an important role in their social strategies 15.7% report they disagree and 24.7% of agencies remain neutral. We expect to see influencers continuing to play greater roles in social strategies as influencer budgets are growing.

According to a poll from Linquia, 48% of marketers said they will boost their influencer marketing budget in the new year.

The next section reveals the number of marketers who have working budgets specifically for influencer marketing.
Brands are using influencers to accomplish a variety of marketing tasks, but mainly utilize influencers to extend reach and share content. 55.2% of brands said that influencers are used most often to extend reach and 47.3% said influencers share content on behalf of the brand.

How Influencers Are Utilized the Most: **The Brand Perspective**

43.1% of brands also find influencers useful for promoting products and services. Because brands recruit influencers based on expertise, as mentioned earlier in this report, it comes as no surprise that nearly a third (31.5%) of brands are asking influencers to create unique content.

The 10.6% of brands who selected “other” mostly mentioned having no influencer program put into place.
Agencies closely aligned with brands in this category, with 59.2% of agencies reporting they utilize influencers most often to extend their clients’ reach, compared to the 55.2% of brands. Sharing content and promoting products were also identified as influencer priorities, with 51.6% and 51.1% of agencies reporting these as primary tasks for influencers.

43.6% of agencies said influencers are used often to create unique content. 22.1% said influencers help by bringing in new perspective.

Both agencies and brands reported that, when they identify ideal influencers, the number of followers a potential influencer has played a limited role in determining an influencer as a good fit. However, a large percentage of marketers identified extending reach as the primary use of influencers.

At first glance there seems to be a disconnect between these two statistics, but it is more effective to identify and work with influencers who have smaller, highly engaged followings that match your target audience than work with influencers who have large followings, but don’t necessarily fit your target audience profile and drive the results you want.
Earlier in this section we revealed that 52.7% of brands and 54.9% of agencies either agreed or strongly agreed that influencer marketing plays a vital role in their overall social marketing strategy. While more and more marketers are acknowledging the value of influencers, budgets aren’t reflecting the importance marketers place on such a vital aspect of their marketing strategies.

73.1% of marketers claim to have no budget specific for their influencer marketing program, meaning just 26.9% have budgets to grow their influencer marketing efforts.

Between brands and agencies, brands are more limited with budget constraints compared to agencies. 34% of agencies reported having a budget specific to influencer marketing, compared to just 23.7% of brands.
This section focuses on the eight networks currently dominating the social sphere. Marketers from across the globe identified Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, YouTube, LinkedIn, Pinterest, Tumblr, and Snapchat as the most-used social networks in their marketing strategies.

The total number of social media users across all networks grew by 20% within the last year—an increase of 482 million users. Facebook, already a social media giant, saw even more growth this past year, jumping up to 2 billion monthly active users.

In the U.S. alone, social media users report spending over two hours each day on social media. The substantial growth of users—coupled with the increased time users spend indulging in social content—provides marketers the perfect opportunity to engage with active, growing audiences.

**Active Users Across the Globe**

Much of what marketers do requires hyper-focused, region-specific social targeting. Unless you are a national or international company, proximity plays a large role in who we can offer products and services to. Additionally, we may not have the capabilities or desire to take our business outside of our immediate geographic areas.
However, more national and global brands are shifting their focus to local targeting in order to create marketing campaigns that resonate with audiences on a personal level.

Social media builds vast connections and opens the door to new opportunities on a large scale. By finding the right connections in our social networks, we can start making connections with their connections and soon develop a large following, which means an increased number of potential customers.

There are nearly 2.8 billion active social media users across the globe, and delivering the right content on social—at the right time, to the right people—can have a dramatic impact on your conversion rates, whether that means web traffic, product purchases, or form fills.

Here’s the regional breakdown of active social media users around the world to put into perspective how many people use social media:

**Regional Breakdown of Active Social Media Users**

- **North America**: 223M
- **South America**: 251M
- **Central America**: 112M
- **Western Europe**: 223M
- **Africa**: 167M
- **Eastern Europe**: 195M
- **Middle East**: 84M
- **Asia Pacific**: 1.5B
- **Australia**: 27.8M

37% of the world’s population is active on social media.

Across the board, Facebook dominates in each of these regions as the most-used social network. YouTube also attracts a large global audience of over 1 billion monthly active users - a number we expect to see grow as YouTube builds original programming and has created an ad-free subscription service, YouTube Red. Instagram, Twitter, and Tumblr trail closely behind Facebook and YouTube as the globe’s most popular social networks.
Social Is Ever-Evolving

Since the release of our 2016 State of Social Marketing Report, major changes have taken place in the social networking sphere. Here are some notable updates to the biggest networks within the past year:

- Instagram has grown to over 600 million monthly active users—a 50% increase from last year’s 400 million.
- Facebook integrated a new algorithm to penalize clickbait titles and improve user experiences on the network in 10 languages: German, Arabic, Spanish, French, Portuguese, Italian, Thai, Vietnamese, Chinese, and English.
- Snapchat released Spectacles, giving users the opportunity to share experiences from a new perspective. Snapchat sold 61,500 Spectacles within the first quarter of its release. A social network evolving into a hardware provider!
- Leading social networks like Facebook, Pinterest, and Instagram now enable users to make purchases as social commerce continues to grow.
  - Facebook Marketplace enables peer-to-peer buying and selling.
  - Pinterest introduced ways to seamlessly facilitate in-platform purchases.
  - Instagram now has shoppable photos to buy products easily as you scroll.

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<td>Pinterest acquires Math Camp</td>
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<td>Twitter announces it will shut down the Twitter dashboard</td>
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<td>Snapchat rebranded to Snap Inc. and releases Spectacles</td>
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<td>Instagram reaches 600 million monthly active users</td>
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<td>Instagram launches Lens, Instant Ideas, and Shop the Look</td>
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Facebook has evolved from a place to connect with friends and families into a place where people discover and share news, plan and promote events, buy and sell items, and live-broadcast.

With the number of active Facebook users quickly approaching 2 billion, there’s no mystery as to why marketers are investing in Facebook more than any other social network. Our survey revealed that 90.3% of marketers are spending the most social advertising dollars on Facebook, and with the recent updates Facebook has implemented—like Messenger, Reactions and extended marketing abilities—this number is only expected to rise.

In 2017, Facebook has a long list of priorities that will directly affect marketers.

Facebook announced new capabilities designed to help marketers understand and optimize their customers’ complete journey across their app and website, from interactions on brands’ Facebook Pages to website purchases. Messenger bots can provide seamless and prompt customer service 24/7. Virtual and augmented reality are also focus areas for Facebook, which will enable marketers to enhance and customize user experiences and interactions with your brand.

Marketers will be able to create custom audiences based on user behavior across all online brand channels. Small businesses and entrepreneurs can now extend their reach and grow their customer base through Facebook’s Marketplace. Marketers can also be more strategic with ad placements within the network, now having the ability to advertise in places other than newsfeeds.

**Facebook's Audience**

- **2 BILLION TOTAL ACTIVE USERS**
- **1.32 BILLION DAILY ACTIVE USERS**
- **1.74 BILLION ACTIVE MOBILE USERS**
- **1.94 BILLION MONTHLY VISITORS**
- **1.2 BILLION FACEBOOK MESSENGER USERS**
Facebook Network Updates

Since our last report, Facebook has gone through some major changes:

**Extended Marketing Abilities**

Facebook has empowered marketers to extend their campaigns by enabling ad placements outside of just newsfeeds. According to a blog post from Facebook,

“These placements also introduce an element of content adjacency. Due to their tight integration with content, they require their own unique set of controls that allow brands to make decisions about what type of content their ads appear next to.”

**Enhanced Clickbait Filtering**

A recent area of focus for Facebook is to strengthen their clickbait filters to allow users to see content most relevant to them and increase the authenticity of communication on their platform. This update will force marketers to crack down on their content guidelines and produce genuine, brand-enhancing content.

**Facebook Messenger Reactions**

Marketers can better track audience sentiment through Messenger Reactions. Reactions give the ability for users to react to individual messages with specific emotions, quickly showing acknowledgment or expressing how they feel. As dark social continues to rise, this is especially important for marketers tracking private social channels for better insights.

**Facebook Marketplace**

Social commerce is quickly infiltrating the social media sphere. Facebook’s Marketplace enables users to discover and sell items easily through this social channel. Although Marketplace does not support content from businesses as a P2P e-commerce channel, small businesses and entrepreneurs can utilize the Marketplace to extend reach and increase sales.
Facebook's Timeline

Facebook updates their clickbait algorithm to filter out fake news

Oculus Rift from Facebook launches, giving users a VR experience

Facebook’s Trending feature is updated for easier discovery

Facebook Messenger introduces instant video

Facebook enables more people to connect with Messenger Lite - an Android app with basic Messenger

Workplace by Facebook connects coworkers in a play to compete against tools like Slack and Skype

Events App is released so users can keep up with nearby events

Marketplace launches as a way for users to sell and buy items on Facebook

Facebook announces increased research with artificial intelligence

Facebook updates metrics and reporting for enhanced insights

Instant Games on Messenger allows users to game with friends

Oculus touch becomes available, for immersive, hands-on VR

Native Facebook camera takes faster pictures, adds unique art and 3D special effects

Facebook announces changes to video rankings in newsfeeds and video completion rates

Facebook begins building advanced measurement tools focused on reach and attribution

Facebook Live extends to desktop and laptop computers and enables in-app, live location sharing

Facebook reactions and mentions are officially on Messenger

Facebook announces group payments in Messenger

Messenger games go global

Facebook enables live video captions, and group admins gain more capabilities to manage their groups
Twitter’s focus coming in 2017 has been repositioning the network towards what it was originally intended to be: a place to “see what’s happening.” The goal of Twitter’s rebrand back in 2016 was to re-establish Twitter as a place for users to report in real-time and to find up-to-date information and news.

Our survey revealed that Twitter ranked third when it came to social media ad spending: 16.5% of marketers report spending money on Twitter ads, with good reason. Twitter users are mobile, international, and highly engaged with brands.

According to Adweek, 85% of users feel more connected to businesses after following them on Twitter, while 84% of users who interact with a brand share their positive experiences and 72% of brand followers are likely to purchase in the future.
Twitter Network Updates

Since our last report, Twitter has gone through some major changes:

Live 360 Periscope

User-driven, interactive marketing is not a new concept, but Twitter has changed the marketing game by allowing users to explore 360 degree virtual environments on their own, on live streams. Interacting with 3D environments in real-time is a rare type of marketing that could have great influence on users who are eager to engage with brands as if they were there with them.

Twitter Dashboard Shuts Down

Earlier in 2017, Twitter decided to shut down the Twitter dashboard that allowed businesses to track tweets, schedule posts, access analytics, and monitor tweets through a suite of business tools. With this capability now gone, gaining insight into your Twitter performance is a bit more difficult, but brands can still use Twitter’s native analytics to track tweet impressions, profile visits, the number of mentions, and new followers.

Goodbye to the Twitter Buy Button

Twitter decided to phase out its buy button, ending partnerships with businesses who were able to use the feature to increase sales through the network. Twitter will still keep its donations capabilities where users can donate to causes they care about.

Customer Feedback Tools

With Twitter’s new update, brands can privately request feedback from customers. Using traditional NPS (Net Promoter Score) and CSAT (Customer Satisfaction) methods, companies can request customers to participate in surveys housed within Twitter - and the results can be easily stored on Twitter. Customer service representatives can even reply with customized replies to thank users for their participation.
Twitter's Timeline

- **OCT 2016**: Twitter announces it will discontinue Vine, the 6-second video app
- **DEC 2016**: Twitter enables select partners to go live in 360 Periscope
- **JAN 2017**: Twitter announces it will shut down the Twitter dashboard for business analytics
- **JAN 2017**: Twitter sells Fabric, its developer platform, to Google
- **JAN 2017**: Twitter no longer has a “buy button”
- **JAN 2017**: Twitter replaces its “Explore” tab with “Moments” which bundles together moments, trends, live video streams, and search
- **MAR 2017**: Twitter launches Periscope Producer, enabling videographers to connect external devices with Periscope
- **MAR 2017**: Twitter updates safety measures to easily report abusive tweets and to make search results safer
- **MAR 2017**: Usernames no longer count toward your 140 character replies
- **APR 2017**: Live 360 Periscope is now available to everyone
- **APR 2017**: Twitter Lite is launched which minimizes data usage, loads quickly on slower connections, is resilient on unreliable mobile networks
- **MAY 2017**: NeighborNest, Twitter’s family-friendly community learning center, turns 2
- **JUN 2017**: Twitter re-design includes new profile photos and new typography
As a platform for photo and video sharing, Instagram allows marketers to utilize user-generated content (UGC) more than ever, and will only increase the amount of content shared from user accounts, according to Social Media Examiner.

By the end of 2017, the number of brands on Instagram is expected to rise to 70%, compared to 48% of brands in 2016. Instagram reported 8 million businesses are using business profiles, with the greatest adoption coming from the United States, Brazil, Indonesia, Russia and the United Kingdom.

Instagram also reported that the network now has over 1 million advertisers, an increase of 800,000 advertisers within the past year.

Marketers are increasingly using Instagram in their marketing strategies. In fact, our survey revealed that 33.6% of marketers are now spending advertising dollars on Instagram.

**Instagram's Audience**

- **700 MILLION**
  - Total active users
- **400 MILLION**
  - Daily active users
- **700 MILLION**
  - Monthly visitors
- **200 MILLION**
  - Instagram Stories daily users
Since our last report, a lot has changed on Instagram:

### Instagram Insights and Increased Ad Capabilities

Instagram reports that 70% of users follow a business and a third of Instagram’s most-viewed videos come from businesses, meaning users are highly engaged with brands on Instagram. Businesses can now see the reach, impressions, replies, and exits for each individual story within the business tools feature of the platform.

Business can also run immersive, full-screen ads in their stories now. We predict an increase in the amount of businesses integrating Instagram into their marketing strategies.

### Shopping on Instagram

Instagram has introduced a seamless way for users to shop while using Instagram. Instagrammers just press a tap-to-view button located at the bottom of posts and various, clickable tags will appear on the post, showcasing up to five products, and their prices.

These tags open up detailed views of the product with the option to “Show Now” if a user is ready to purchase. This means marketers who use Instagram will have an easy way to connect users to their products.

### Instagram Stories Mentions

This new feature allows users to share who they’re with. Businesses can share who is visiting by mentioning them in their stories. Mentioning people in Stories functions the same as mentioning others in captions and comments. Users just add text to their stories using the “@” symbol to tag other users.

Clicking on a mention within a Story directs users to that tagged user’s profile. This also creates a seamless connection between users, which marketers can utilize to connect users to partners, product pages, and other business profiles.
Instagram's Timeline

- **AUG 2016**: Slideshow video ads enable advertisers to create ad videos with still photos
- **SEP 2016**: Instagram announces 500,000 advertisers are now using Instagram
- **NOV 2016**: Instagram introduces Boomerang, mentions, and links
- **NOV 2016**: Instagram introduces in-app shopping capabilities for its users
- **NOV 2016**: Vertical ad format is now available on Instagram
- **NOV 2016**: Instagram introduces live video to Stories with disappearing messages
- **DEC 2016**: Instagram reaches 600 million users
- **JAN 2017**: Instagram introduces Business Insights to help businesses gain access to brand-based user data
- **FEB 2017**: Users can now upload up to 10 photos on a single post
- **MAR 2017**: Stories ads are now available to businesses worldwide
- **MAR 2017**: Instagram welcomes 1 million advertisers
- **APR 2017**: 200 million users now use the Stories feature
- **APR 2017**: Instagram reaches 700 million users
- **MAY 2017**: Instagram introduces Location and Hashtag Stories on Explore
- **JUN 2017**: Instagram gives users the capability of live video replays
In April 2005, the very first YouTube video was uploaded. Now, twelve years later, users upload 500 hours of video every minute and consume 3.25 billion hours of content each month.

In our 2016 State of Social report, we mentioned that video was going to continue receiving increased investment from marketers. Within the past year, YouTube ad spending increased by 50%, and total “watch time” per user increased by 60% year over year, according to YouTube.

**YouTube's Audience**

- **1.3 BILLION** 
  **ACTIVE USERS**

- **1 BILLION** 
  **HOURS OF UPLOADED VIDEOS**

- **1.5 BILLION** 
  **MONTHLY VISITORS**

- **30 MILLION** 
  **VISITS PER DAY**
YouTube Network Updates

Since our last report, a lot has changed on Instagram:

**YouTube VR180**

YouTube VR180 enables users to engage with video content in a more immersive way. Using a VR180 headset, users are transported into a 180-degree video that allows users to live inside a virtual world—well, half of one.

Creators are able to create these VR videos without having to change their production techniques. For marketers, it creates a new way to engage audiences, without having to spend additional funds on new software or equipment.

**Mobile Live Streaming**

Live streaming is not a new feature to YouTube, but opening the capabilities up to mobile users now empowers this large mobile audience to engage more and share more. This is a good sign for marketers who are continuing to invest marketing resources into YouTube advertising and video content. Live-streamed videos can be searched for, found via recommendations or playlists, and are protected from unauthorized use.

**YouTube Red**

YouTube Red is a subscription-based service that enables users to watch TV and listen to music without any ad interruptions. YouTube Red users can watch videos offline and listen to videos with screens off.

Less than three million users are subscribed to Youtube Red of the total 1.3 billion users across the globe - meaning marketers still have capabilities to reach a large audience with their advertising. YouTube’s ad-supported content attracts over 1 billion users. The ad-free YouTube Red subscription is still in its early stages and has seen limited growth since its conception.

YouTube Red also launched its first original TV shows and videos in February of 2016, producing 27 films and series. YouTube reported plans to produce more than 40 originals, spending hundreds of millions of dollars on the effort.
YouTube's Timeline

- **AUG 2016**: YouTube Red enhances YouTube kids with uninterrupted, ad-free, offline videos and music streaming
- **SEP 2016**: YouTube Go launches as an app for offline viewing and sharing
- **SEP 2016**: YouTube starts the YouTube Heroes program to expand on the Trusted Flagger Program
- **NOV 2016**: YouTube launches 4K live streaming for both 360-degree videos and standard videos
- **NOV 2016**: YouTube VR launches for Daydream
- **NOV 2016**: YouTube now supports High Dynamic Range (HDR) videos for high quality streaming
- **FEB 2017**: YouTube reached 1 billion hours of uploaded video
- **MAR 2017**: Users can now livestream, in VR, concerts and music performances
- **APR 2017**: YouTube TV launches and allows users to livestream TV
- **JUN 2017**: VR180 launches making it easier for users to create VR videos
Snapchat reported that a majority of its users are between 18 and 34 years old, and mentioned their core audience is “fickle” and could move on. Their most engaged audience consists of this younger generation, but this user base is extremely active on the network. This demographic of users visit the app 20 times per day on average, and spend an average of 30 minutes there a day.

Snapchat, as one of the newer social networks, is slowly being integrated into marketing strategies. From our survey, we found that only 1.7% of marketers invest in Snapchat marketing. This number has the potential to increase as Snapchat rolls out its new features, like New World Lenses, Spectacles, and custom Stories.

**Snapchat's Audience**

- **300 MILLION**
  - TOTAL ACTIVE USERS
- **158 MILLION**
  - DAILY ACTIVE USERS
- **41% OF USERS IN U.S. ARE BETWEEN 18-24**
- **30 MINUTES PER DAY**
  - TIME USERS SPEND ON SNAPCHAT
THE STATE OF SNAPCHAT

Snapchat Network Updates

Since our last report, Snapchat has gone through some major changes:

**Spectacles**

Snapchat released Spectacles in September 2016: a $130 pair of sunglasses with an integrated video camera that enables users to share memories through the eyes of the person living that experience. Spectacles videos can be played on any device, in any orientation, which captures the human experience as users navigate the world around them. With Snapchat Spectacles, marketers can engage followers in new ways, sharing meaningful, first-hand experiences with customers. Imagine using Spectacles to demo a product first-hand or broadcasting at live events, creating an “as if i was there” experience for your following.

**Sponsored Lenses**

Augmented reality is becoming increasingly integrated into marketing strategies and enables people to alter and influence the world around them. Snapchat’s New World Lens allows users to add interactive 3D objects to their stories. Users can watch these objects change as they move the direction of their cameras. Marketers can now create sponsored World Lenses that brands can use to engage customers by giving them brand-specific lenses that give users a new way to interact with brands. As Snapchat continues to grow its user base, features like this can be used to increase brand awareness as your sponsored World Lenses get shared over and over again.

**Custom Stories**

Custom Stories is a feature that enables users to contribute their own experience to a larger, group conversation. When users enable the custom Stories feature to their accounts, they can create global and geofenced stories. Users can decide who contributes to these Stories, so custom Stories can include experiences from across the globe, within a specified location, or among selected friends. Brands can use this feature to start conversations regarding their products and services, or they can allow users to share their own experiences as they attend brand events or visit their brick-and-mortar locations.
Snapchat's Timeline

- **July 2016**: Snapchat introduces Memories, giving users the ability to save snaps.

- **July 2016**: Bitmojis made their appearance, enabling users to transform their lives into comic strips.

- **August 2016**: Snapchat releases GeoStickers that users can add to their snaps in big cities.

- **September 2016**: Snapchat officially changes the company name to Snap Inc.

- **September 2016**: Snapchat introduces Spectacles and users can now film experiences through their own eyes.

- **October 2016**: Snapchat says goodbye to their auto-advance feature so users can scroll through stories that most interest them.

- **December 2016**: Snapchat introduces group chat so users can snap in groups.

- **February 2017**: Snapchat went public.

- **March 2017**: Snapchat now lets users search through stories to engage with topics and events of special interest.

- **March 2017**: Snapchat introduces custom stories, so users can geofence areas or add specific users to create stories together.

- **April 2017**: Snapchat introduces New World Lenses that adds a 3D experience to user snaps.

- **May 2017**: Snapchat enables Sponsored World Lenses.

- **June 2017**: Snapchat introduces Snap Maps so users can share their location and see where their friends are snapping from around the world.
LinkedIn is the network for professionals, giving users the ability to network with other professionals, share content, interact with influencers, and navigate the job market with ease. LinkedIn is most useful for B2B companies looking to engage with other businesses, but B2C marketers are still able to target ideal customers through LinkedIn, with the ability to segment their audience based on industry, location, job title, or salary.

Our survey revealed that 14.7% of all marketers invest in LinkedIn paid advertising.

LinkedIn's Audience

- **467 MILLION**
  - TOTAL ACTIVE USERS
- **106 MILLION**
  - MONTHLY ACTIVE USERS
- 2 PEOPLE JOIN LINKEDIN EVERY SECOND
- **1.5 MILLION**
  - LINKEDIN GROUPS
LinkedIn Network Updates

Since our last report, LinkedIn has gone through a couple major changes:

LinkedIn Influencers

Influencer marketing is quickly becoming a vital channel for marketers to extend reach and interact with new audiences. LinkedIn utilizes influencers to engage audiences by having industry leaders discuss topics and share insight about their specific industries. Users can learn from influencers, comment on influencer content, and respond to other professionals also engaged in the conversation. The influencer program LinkedIn has launched gives professionals the opportunity to engage more deeply with people and topics that matter the most in their industry.

Trending Storylines

LinkedIn has found a new way to get its users the most relevant content with the new Trending Storylines feature. This feature is a daily curated interest-based feed that helps it users discover and discuss topics that are specific to their interests and industries. The Storylines feature users personalized algorithms to determine the content that shows up on user feeds. For marketers, it emphasizes the need to strategically categorize content so that it can be easily found and included on individual feeds.
LinkedIn's Timeline

- **AUG 2016**: LinkedIn adds 30-second influencer videos to their content
- **AUG 2016**: LinkedIn enables its content search feature, giving users the ability to easily navigate content
- **OCT 2016**: LinkedIn updates its endorsements features to highlight user’s best endorsements
- **NOV 2016**: LinkedIn mobile users gain access to audience insight
- **DEC 2016**: Users can now break the ice with other professionals using LinkedIn’s conversation starters feature
- **JAN 2017**: LinkedIn redesigns the desktop experience with new search and messaging features
- **FEB 2017**: LinkedIn initiated their Workforce Report - a monthly publication on hiring behaviors across various industries
- **MAR 2017**: LinkedIn allows users to edit their profile pictures with filters and editing capabilities
- **MAR 2017**: LinkedIn launches Trending Storylines, which are curated interest-based feeds users can use to know what’s trending in their industries
- **MAY 2017**: LinkedIn introduces new analytics for publishing, with more insights into who has interacted with users’ content
Pinterest may have worked the hardest of all networks to strengthen their user’s social commerce experience in 2017. Within the year, Pinterest has given businesses the ability to showcase products that lead users directly to products. Users can make purchases from within the app—a game changer in the social media world.

Pinterest has set a high standard for other networks who are dabbling in the world of social commerce. However with the new marketing capabilities for businesses and the buying abilities for consumers, only 2.5% of our survey respondents are investing in Pinterest advertising. We expect that number to rise within the next year.

**Pinterest's Audience**

- **150 MILLION** TOTAL ACTIVE USERS
- **OVER 75 BILLION** IDEAS ON PINTEREST
- **35% OF USERS** EARN $75K PER YEAR
- **80% OF TRAFFIC** COMES FROM MOBILE
Pinterest Network Updates

Within the past year, Pinterest has experienced a couple of major changes:

**Auto-Play Promoted Video**

Pinterest reported that 75% of its most-liked content was produced by businesses. Pinterest then made a seamless connection between social and commerce by allowing customers to easily go from their product searches directly into making purchases, all inside the app. Promoted videos with the auto-play feature are automatically played as users scroll through content.

Pinterest gave businesses the ability to promote products with related pins with buyable options, meaning as users explore “how-to” content and DIY projects and feel inspired to try them out, they can easily move right into purchase.

**Discovery Tools**

Pinterest has made it easier for customers to search for products. Pinterest’s LensBETA, a product recognition tool, enables users to utilize anything they see (whether within the app or out in the real world) to guide their search for products and ideas. Users can also Shop the Look, a feature that gives recommendations for similar items for sale either on Pinterest or from a brand.
Pinterest's Timeline

- **August 2016**: Pinterest allows businesses to use promoted video on their profiles
- **November 2016**: Pinterest gives marketers the option to make their promoted videos auto-play in user feeds
- **November 2016**: Users can now showcase their best ideas and products on their profiles
- **November 2016**: Pinterest introduces ad groups for marketers to align budgets with specific targets
- **February 2017**: Pinterest launches discovery tools to allow users to use the world around them to search through content
- **February 2017**: Pinterest releases their LensBETA, making it possible for users to take photos of items they like in the real world to search within the app
- **January 2017**: Pinterest introduces search ads, making it easier for users to find business content
Tumblr has been a creative platform for its users since its origin back in 2006. As an image-based, visual platform, Tumblr hosts blogs to millions of users who use Tumblr as a creative outlet.

Tumblr is owned by Yahoo, which was acquired by Verizon in June of this year. Verizon plans to utilize Yahoo’s billion users to build an online advertising powerhouse. As a leading mobile network, Verizon acquiring Yahoo (and Tumblr) should provoke marketers to build stronger mobile marketing strategies, as content will now be backed by a mobile platform that potentially could increase reach and engagement.

Tumblr reports that there are over 200 million blogs publishing 80 million posts per day. Tumblr users are active on the network and are eagerly willing to share and consume creative content. Businesses can create sponsored posts and videos to promote content, with the option to buy sponsored days and take over the top spots on the Tumblr dashboard.

**Tumblr's Audience**

- **334 MILLION**
  - TOTAL BLOGS
- **145 BILLION**
  - TOTAL POSTS
- **550 MILLION**
  - ACTIVE USERS
- **1.3 BILLION**
  - POSTS PER MONTH
Tumblr Network Updates

Since our last report, a lot has changed on Tumblr:

**Live Photos**

In September 2016, Tumblr became the first website to host live photos. Live photos are a hybrid between pictures and videos. When users press down on a photo, a couple of seconds of automatically recorded footage plays like a GIF with sound. According to Brightcove, social video generates 1200% more shares than text and images combined. Animated images and GIFs are one of Tumblr’s most-shared content type, and now live photos presents even more opportunities for users to share.

**Safe Mode**

Tumblr, with its younger demographic, is making dashboards safe for all viewers, of any age. The new Safe Mode feature protects sensitive content with a screen overlay and will filter out that same content from search results. Tumblr defines sensitive content as anything that may not be suitable for some members of the Tumblr community. Now, when users encounter sensitive posts with Safe Mode enabled, a new overlay will appear that reads: “This post may contain sensitive media. Safe mode is on.”

**Cabana**

In April of 2017, Tumblr launched Cabana, a new app where users can chat while watching videos with their friends in real time. The inspiration for Cabana came from the social phenomenon of dragging your friends over to watch viral videos you found on the internet. While live-watching videos with friends is not a new experience for users, Cabana stresses the idea of the app being used with actual friends, not with strangers. For marketers, this presents an opportunity to use video content to engage users who will share content with their closest friends.
Tumblr's Timeline

- **JULY 2016**: Users can now send pictures and GIFs to other users through Tumblr’s messaging feature.
- **SEP 2016**: Tumblr becomes the first website to integrate live photos - a hybrid of pictures and video.
- **SEP 2016**: Tumblr now has an Explore tab, so users can discover new content.
- **OCT 2016**: iMessage users can now create and send GIFs using Tumblr’s GIF creator.
- **JAN 2017**: Tumblr now enables users to add stickers and filters to photos and GIFs.
- **APR 2017**: Tumblr launches Cabana, an app for watching videos with your friends.
- **JUN 2017**: Tumblr launches their Safe Mode feature allowing users to filter out sensitive content from their dashboards.
CONCLUSION

As the social media industry continues to evolve and new networks emerge, marketers will be forever faced with the challenge of adapting their marketing strategies to meet the needs of a growing audience. In a fast-paced, technological race between networks to be the most innovative and engaging network available, social marketers will need to put in their best efforts to keep up.

In this report, we revealed that the biggest challenge to marketers is still measuring and reporting ROI. Social analytics software is seen as a huge need for marketers to optimize their social strategies, but budgets are not allowing marketers access to all their software needs. The major networks are introducing some exciting changes to their platforms, and marketing through these enhanced channels will present new opportunities for marketers to engage with their customers in a more meaningful way.
The Importance of Social Analytics

47.2% of marketers cited analytics software as a needed resource to do their best work—an increase from only 43% last year. Social analytics should fuel two major marketing components:

**To be a steward of the brand:** Creating brand awareness and protecting the brand’s reputation

**To drive demand:** Generating revenue opportunities and retention of current customers

With the right software, marketers are able to prove value and improve performance in both areas.
About Simply Measured

Simply Measured is the world’s leading full-funnel social analytics provider. We support and enable data-driven social marketers.

**Our Passion?** Exposing social media’s total impact, from conversations to conversions.

**Our Mission?** Helping you generate actionable insights from social data—so you can do your job better, faster.

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