



OPPORTUNITIES AND THREATS

The future of social media as
viewed by senior UK marketers
May 2010

OPPORTUNITY

for small business it's the opportunity to reach a wider audience and to be seen as an expert in their field. To be on a more level playing field with the big boys, and perhaps get ahead of them.

**DEBORAH
ROWE**

Consultant
Sheba Marketing

THREAT

having the time to make the most of it and to keep up with what's going, whether in terms of the technology or news or opportunities on offer.

OPPORTUNITY

Social Media for the first time is providing marketers with true real-time intelligence into individual's interests, wants, opinions and sentiments. Never before has this level of rich, personal data been so readily available.

THREAT

The challenge is how to decipher the important actionable nuggets from the noise and to effectively integrate this into marketing activities to drive optimal business results.

**DEBBIE
WILLIAMS**

B2B Marketing Consultant
and Chair of the IDM B2B
Marketing Council

OPPORTUNITY

The potential to engage a much larger audience in an interactive environment.

**JEFF
BLAKEWAY**

LexisNexis

THREAT

The greatest obstacle would have to be measuring ROI and justifying efforts and resources when investing in social media.

OPPORTUNITY

Deliver a less "threatening" (assumption: marketing = sales = "threat" = avoidance behaviour reactions engaged by prospective customers) way to help connect with businesses/people who are actively interested/ would benefit from but don't know about... the business services we are selling, and to use these friendlier channels as a way of getting potential customers to start to discuss and buy into the services we are selling, such that our more traditional sales tactics succeed more often and with greater results

THREAT

Buy in from senior managers/ board that this (social media) is a "legitimate" marketing channel - esp in a B2B environment

**JASON
CROSS**

MD
Incentivated

**LYNETTE
HAVENGA
STOKES**

Head of marketing
Make It Cheaper

OPPORTUNITY

Brand introduction
and eventually
brand recognition.

OPPORTUNITY

Ability to build
credibility as a
subject matter
expert

THREAT

Our SME target sector
of 5-10 employees,
people are too busy
with their businesses
to use social media

**SIMON
DANIELS**

Director
Percassity Marketing
Data Solutions

THREAT

Time, ability to
source content
and cut-through

OPPORTUNITY

It's a great way to get people talking about your brand cost-effectively. Word of mouth recommendations are by far the best marketing tools you can get

**HELEN
COOPER**

Marketing Manager
Travis Perkins

THREAT

Managing it internally - you need someone to be monitoring the social media sites who can address any negative comments and turn them into a positive message. How do you keep on top of it once it starts as I imagine it's like a snowball!

OPPORTUNITY

To increase sales of product through word of mouth recommendation

**GAIL
VAN DIJK**

Campaign Manager
RS UK

THREAT

Lack of control over the messages exchanged

OPPORTUNITY

To convey messages for free to a targeted audience

**MATT
ECCLES**

Director
Elemental Brands

OPPORTUNITY

The ability to influence our market and create a dialogue with clients on areas of concern. By providing a forum for views we hope to shape the way key issues are resolved

**ROSALIND
PEARSON**

Marketing Manager
Munich Re Uk

THREAT

Resistance from colleagues to buy-in due to a continued and deliberate lack of understanding/interest.

THREAT

Our parent company and their views on social media plus the age demographic financial services in general which tends to be adverse to this kind of communications style

OPPORTUNITY

Increased awareness, reputation and general buzz about my agency from a relevant audience.

**SAM
RUDLAND**

MD
Essential
Communications

THREAT

Lack of resource to focus on creating a regular flow of great content that my target audience wants to read and share.

OPPORTUNITY

another channel to communicate through

**LINDA
HARRIS**
Communications
Manager
UK Easynet Connect

THREAT

Less control over what you are saying

OPPORTUNITY

Awareness, word of mouth

THREAT

Time resource

**RICHARD
HILL**

Relationship Manager
Nectar

OPPORTUNITY

Awareness
and reach

**CHARLOTTE
GODWIN**

Acting Marketing
Comms Manager
BSI

THREAT

Resource to do
it properly

OPPORTUNITY

An understanding of our customers' and prospects' biggest issues, build relationships with them so that we gain mutual trust. If our targets are turning to social media for referrals and recommendations, we need to be creating conversations with them away from the more traditional locations such as our website and email. Where are they looking for information. What are they interested in? It's not enough just to provide what we want to talk about on our website and hope they find it there. Conversations need to be social, not always business-driven. Reputation, trust - both are rewards for not solely focusing on ROI.

THREAT

Internal buy-in. With worn down sales people used to the traditional way of communicating, who think Twitter is about celebrity gossip and Facebook for families, photos and games, it's hard to convince my internal audience that giving me ideas and content for social media campaigns will help win business in the long run. It's more persuasive if I tell them it helps with SEO - they just about get that, but finding willing people to contribute to regular social media campaigns is hard going. Without being able to directly measure it, that's also hard to prove its worth but the day we get a lead from someone who found our Facebook page or saw one of our tweets, then they might sit up and listen!

**KATE
BURGE**

Head of marketing
Kronos

OPPORTUNITY

Connecting direct, data and digital practitioners to share real-time ideas and emerging best practice

THREAT

Resource
(or proof/business case to achieve it)

**CAROLINE
ROBERTSON**

Membership Director
IDM

OPPORTUNITY
More customer reach

THREAT
Making it happen /
unable to control

**LYN
MACLEAY**

Marketing
Communications
Manager
Scottish Life

OPPORTUNITY
Gain visibility and
positioning within
the industry and
wider audiences

THREAT
Relevant and
quality content

**ZOE
HALLAM**

Sales & Marketing
Executive
BI Worldwide

**SIMON
LEWIS**

Editor
Onlymarketingjobs.com

OPPORTUNITY

In an age of community-building social media adds an invaluable channel to the talent-attraction mix. Today's by-word is 'content' and by using social media to stream content, it is possible to not only attract passive jobseekers, but ensure they stay with you.

THREAT

The biggest obstacle is knowing how to harness social media to ensure the most quantifiable ROI possible.

**ALEXANDRA
ENGLISH**

Marketing Manager
LBM Direct Marketing Ltd

OPPORTUNITY

Building our brand reputation. Our business has changed dramatically in the past 5 years and this needs to be communicated to the wider market place, which social media is great for. I'm looking to give a bit of humanity and personality to the brand, as well as establish ourselves as a thought leader and knowledge base for data, analytics and contact.

THREAT

Ensuring the right people are reading your tweets. We deal with senior decision makers and it is unclear whether or not they engage with social media, or if it is a junior. Getting my tweets to be read by the right people from the right POV (that being someone in need of our services, rather than someone keen to supply to us) is a big obstacle.

OPPORTUNITY

Access to professional influencers through increasing prominence of networks such as LinkedIn

THREAT

Finding people within a traditional organisation to adopt the required style, relax control and make the time to make regular contributions

**ANNETTE
HOLMES**

Change Programme
Manager
Energy

**REBECCA
TERRY**

Sales & Marketing
Manager
Centrica Storage

OPPORTUNITY

To allow your company to be perceived as technically and socially up to date - A method of cost-effective marketing - a way to reach a wider range of audiences. Benefit = Increasing my company's online presence and getting feedback

THREAT

When is it a fad and when is it worth investing in? Too many people flooding social media with advertising and reducing its effectiveness. Privacy issues/big brother approach. Control over content can be difficult unless you have a dedicated team monitoring it. Getting internal buy in/persuading budget holders that it can be effective

OPPORTUNITY

Genuine, constant feedback from real buyers.

**GIFFORD
MORLEY-
FLETCHER**

Head of Inbound
Marketing
Base One

THREAT

Time. To use social media well, you have to do it full time. People don't write comments according to a timetable, and you have to be ready to react quickly.

OPPORTUNITY

Getting to talk to and influence your customers, long before they are a customer or before they even know you exist

**STEVE
KERMISH**

Director
Cyance

THREAT

Corporate apathy or arrogance. Organisations who dismiss social media as a fad or too risky because of losing control, will simply be left behind

