



The State of  
**SOCIAL MEDIA FOR BUSINESS**  
**SELECT THEMES 2010**



## THE STATE OF SOCIAL MEDIA FOR BUSINESS – SELECT THEMES 2010

In June 2010, more than 6,000 SmartBrief readers participated in a benchmarking study of social-media usage by business. The results revealed a portrait of how these new tools and platforms are changing the way we do business – and how companies are integrating social media into their business models. The definitive **State of Social Media for Business 2010** shares some of the biggest trends in social media as well as the challenges that companies need to address as they move forward with their social-media strategies. The full **State of Social Media for Business 2010** is available for sale from SmartBrief.

The following document shares eight themes and data points from the State of Social Media for Business 2010:

1. Most companies surveyed have adopted social media in the past 18 months.
2. Companies are focusing their energies on Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, YouTube and blogs.
3. It takes time for companies to incorporate social media effectively.
4. Brand building is currently the primary purpose for business social-media usage.
5. Communications, advertising and marketing agencies are the leading adopters of social media.
6. Lack of management support and confidentiality concerns are atop the list of obstacles to social-media adoption.
7. Less than 15% of the businesses using social media are measuring return-on-investment.
8. While 60% of respondents say their companies are using social media, there is low confidence in their social-media strategies.

We invite you to blog, tweet and otherwise pass along these key themes. Our goal is to provide readers with valuable insights into what businesses are doing today to help you plan for a successful tomorrow.

### The State of Social Media for Business 2010 includes:



- 145 pages
- 213 charts and graphs
- 6 data cuts
- Key indicators of social-media integration
- Comparative data based on company size and industry focus
- Benchmarks to assess where your company is on the social-media adoption curve
- An introduction by social-media expert and SmartBrief on Social Media Advisory Board member, Olivier Blanchard



## WHY SOCIAL MEDIA?

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In the past 18 months, social media has evolved. Once just a way for individuals to connect and share with one another, social media has developed into a promising business tool. This transition, which has been fast and furious, has been closely followed by SmartBrief Inc. through its publication SmartBrief on Social Media since November 2008.

To date, the media have focused on getting started with social media, using it for marketing and sharing bellwether stories. However, very little has been written on how most businesses of all shapes and sizes are using and leveraging social media today.

### **About the survey**

SmartBrief and its research partner Summus, Limited decided to tackle these questions and more through an online survey of SmartBrief readers across a variety of industries. The survey was designed to benchmark and measure the state of social-media usage among business people in June 2010. SmartBrief and Summus will track the results of this benchmark on an annual or semi-annual basis, focusing on the following questions:

1. Who is using social media for business?
2. What social-media tools and channels are being used?
3. What goals are being pursued?
4. What tactics are being deployed?
5. What obstacles are standing in the way of adoption?
6. Has social media delivered measurable results for companies?
7. How are companies staffing social media and allocating resources?
8. How do companies assess their own social-media strategies?

10,641 individuals began the survey and 6,494 completed the survey. This 59.9% completion rate, which is high for a survey of this length and depth, indicates a high level of interest in the topic. The data is very reliable, with a .012 standard error at a 95% confidence interval and a standard deviation of 1.195.

**About the respondents:** SmartBrief's readership is made up of over 3.5 million subscribers from a large and diverse cross-section of industries. Individual business people with all levels of experience and responsibility are represented in the survey. The survey respondents primarily work at U.S. companies (92%) and represent a full range of business sizes – from fewer than 10 employees to more than 50,000.



## WHY SOCIAL MEDIA? (continued)

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More than 60% of the businesses in the sample are using social media. The sample as individuals identifies themselves as engaged in social media and proficient in its use. They have differing levels of involvement in their organization's social media, with some not directly involved.

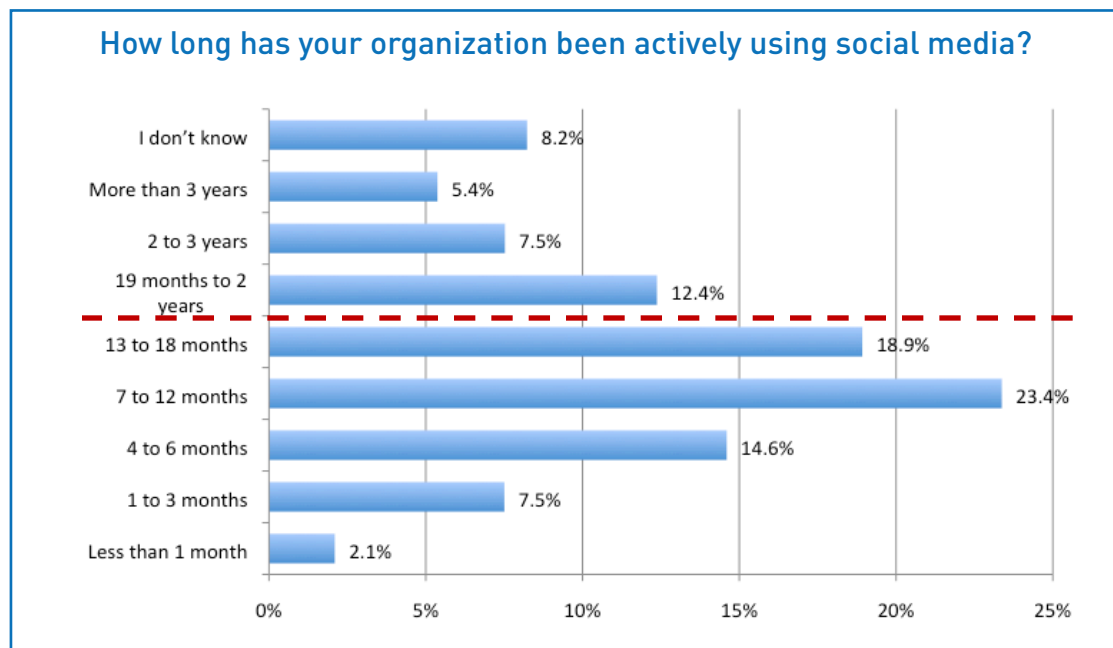
This survey does not reflect a random sample of business people. The sample is a self-selecting group of individuals. As such, it may be assumed that the sample is somewhat:

- More familiar with social media than a random sample.
- More interested and engaged with social media than a random sample.
- More proficient with social media than a random sample.



1

66.5% OF COMPANIES SURVEYED HAVE ADOPTED SOCIAL MEDIA IN THE PAST 18 MONTHS 



About half of the companies in the sample have been using social media for only the past year, with nearly 20% starting in the past 13 to 18 months.

While the recent surge in adoption is not surprising, the data in the full [State of Social Media for Business](#) report provides a fuller picture of how companies approach the adoption of social media.

IN THE FULL REPORT 



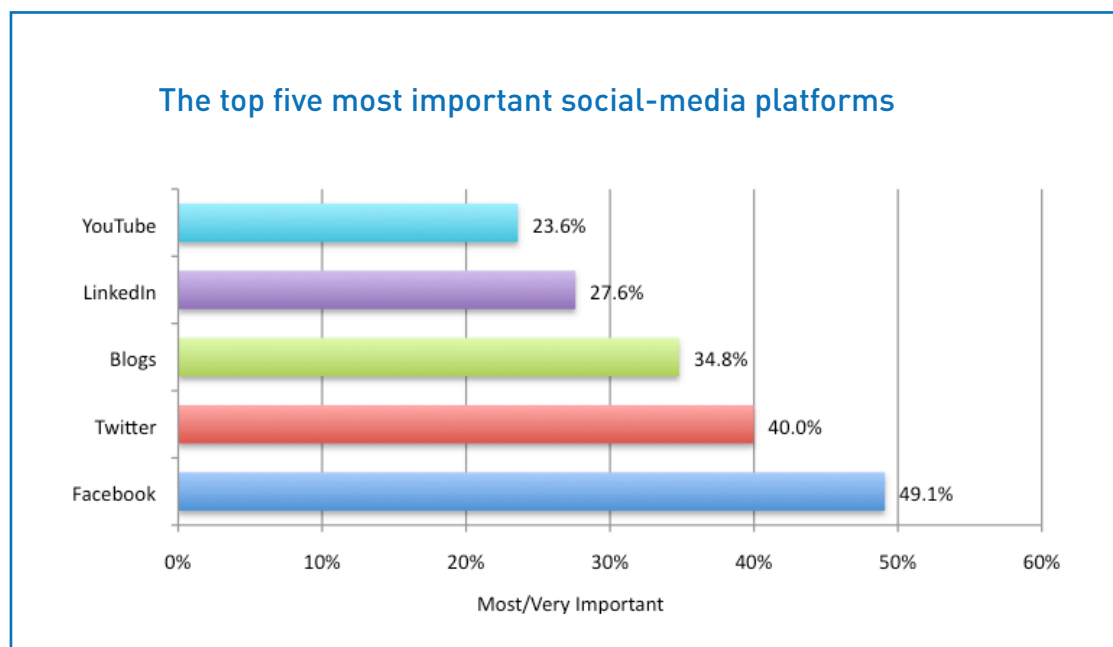
**Want to know how more experienced companies are using social media to get results?** The full [State of Social Media for Business](#) report provides in depth data on how usage of social media evolves over time.

- How and where companies get started
- How companies either internally or externally support their social-media efforts
- What the distinct phases of social-media integration are
- How companies develop and alter their social-media strategies over time
- Where more experienced companies have shifted their efforts
- How companies new to social media judge their own efforts



## 2

COMPANIES ARE FOCUSING THEIR ENERGIES ON 5 PLATFORMS



The concentration on “the big 5” hints at companies being able to find their customers on these sites. With lower awareness and/or usage of other sites, including platforms such as Flickr with large numbers of users, companies might be missing out on more niche groups.

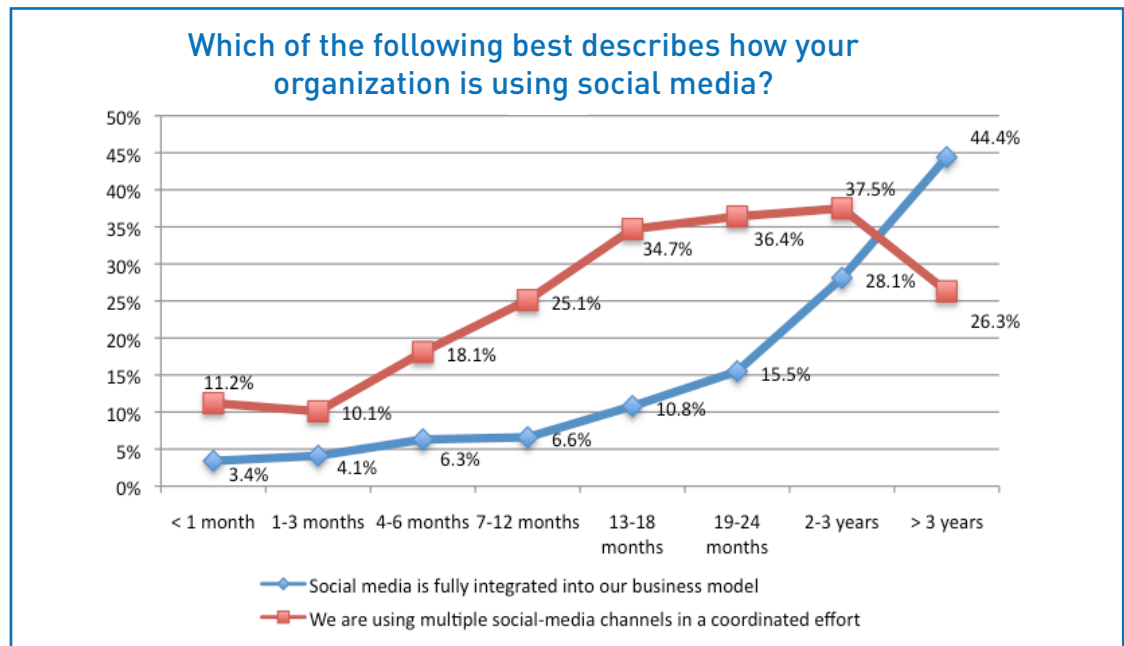
IN THE FULL REPORT



Do you want facts and figures on what companies are actually doing with social media? [The State of Social Media for Business](#) answers critical questions on:

- The significance of different social-media platforms
- How usage of different channels changes over time
- Which platforms have high familiarity but low adoption
- Which platforms provide the best opportunities for companies to differentiate themselves

### 3 IT TAKES TIME FOR COMPANIES TO INCORPORATE SOCIAL MEDIA EFFECTIVELY [Tweet](#)



The survey data indicate that at the two-year mark, companies begin to confidently and purposefully use social media for specific business objectives.

More than 25% of companies with two-plus years of social-media activity state that those tools and platforms have been fully integrated into their companies' business models. In addition, more than 50% have a well-developed or fully developed social-media strategy, which is further evidenced by the use of multiple platforms.

#### IN THE FULL REPORT [↗](#)



#### Do you need benchmarks and milestones on the social media adoption curve? [The State of Social Media for Business 2010](#)

report provides a comprehensive analysis of the adoption curve for social media. For instance, almost 30% of "experienced" companies dedicate at least one person to social media full time.

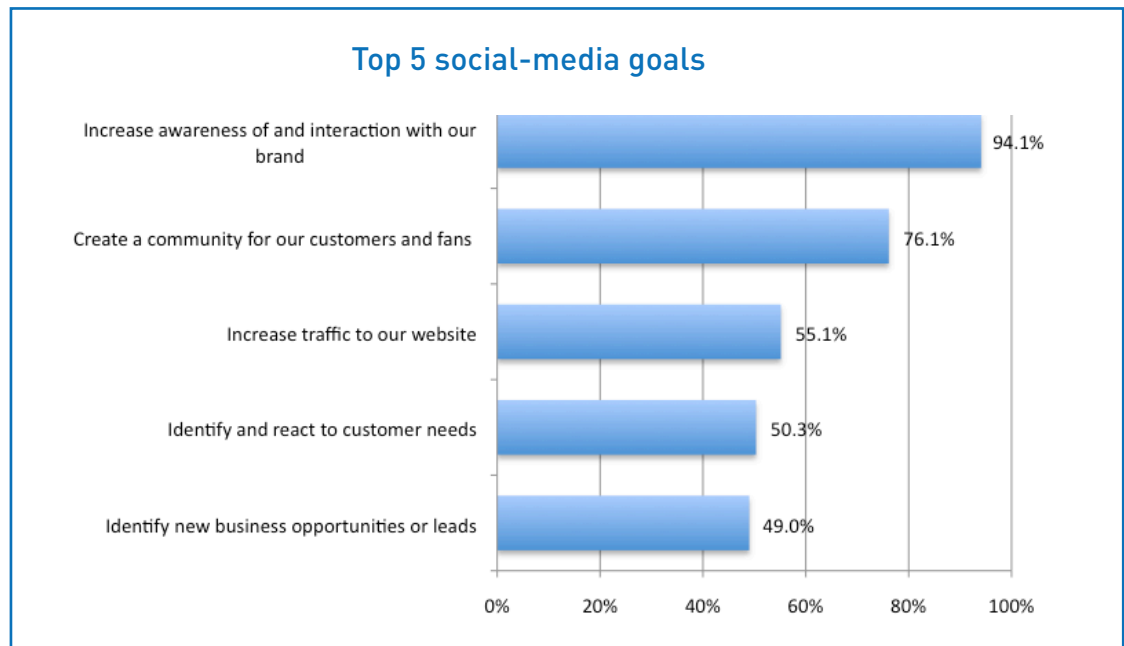
The report fully details social-media adoption and its dividends over time, such as:

- How the impact/implementation of different channels shifts
- How staffing and resource allocation adapts
- When and where confidence in social-media strategies grow
- How a company's social-media tactics expand



4

BRAND BUILDING IS CURRENTLY THE PRIMARY PURPOSE FOR BUSINESS SOCIAL-MEDIA USAGE



Despite the primary goals of increasing brand awareness and building communities for customers and fans, the majority of companies surveyed use social media to broadcast information instead of creating two-way conversations.

IN THE FULL REPORT



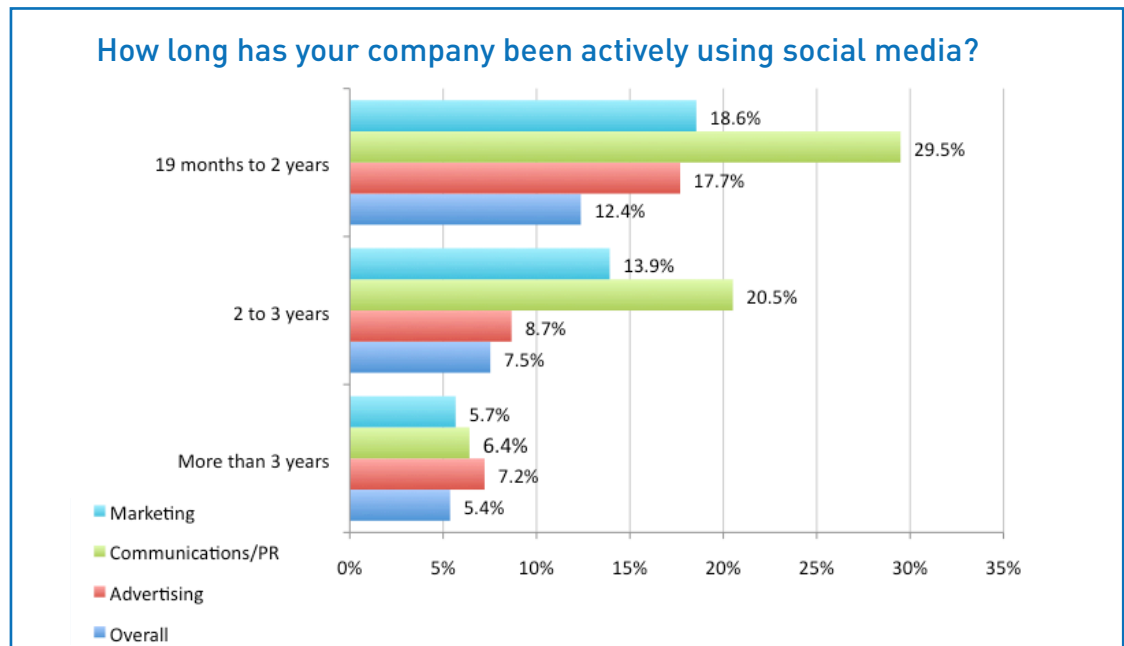
In the full [State of Social Media for Business](#) report you will find the answers to practical, real-world questions like, **where should we house our social-media activities?** (hint:

The majority of companies house social-media activities in their marketing and communications departments.) The report delves into practical social-media management issues such as:

- How companies are staffing their social-media efforts
- Where and how companies allocate resources to social media
- What companies hope to achieve through social media
- What they are doing to achieve those goals
- What specific tactics companies employ through various social-media channels



## 5 COMMUNICATIONS COMPANIES HAVE GRABBED THE SOCIAL-MEDIA REINS



Communications and PR agencies recognized the potential behind social media earlier than most industries. Likewise, advertising and marketing firms have realized the potential of identifying and reaching target audiences relatively early as compared with other industries.

Despite their early presence in social media, communications and PR firms are not the chosen source of advice or consultation on social media for companies. Instead, the majority of companies are using internal resources for developing and implementing their social-media strategies.

IN THE FULL REPORT 



**Where does your industry stand versus others?** What can your company do to stand out? [The State of Social Media for Business](#) report illuminates how 20 different industries stack up when it comes to social media adoption and usage.

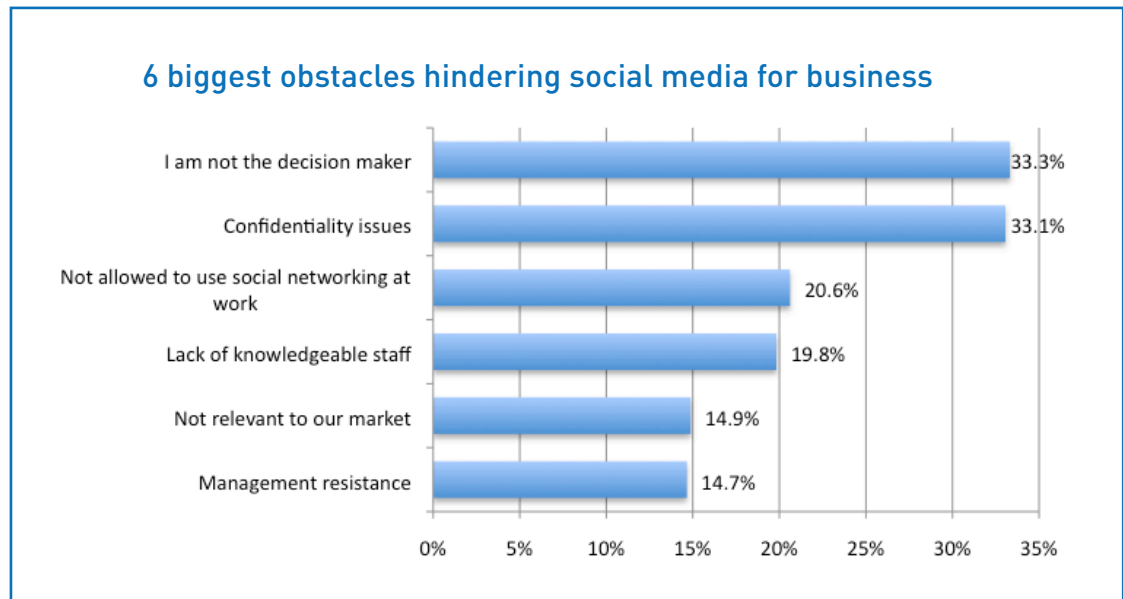
- How communications has pulled ahead of other industries
- Which industries have distinguished themselves in the social-media arena
- Which industries are behind the curve on social media

How does your industry compare? Are there opportunities for your organization to distinguish itself among its peers?



# 6

## LACK OF MANAGEMENT SUPPORT AND CONFIDENTIALITY CONCERNS TOP THE LIST OF OBSTACLES TO SOCIAL-MEDIA ADOPTION



Taking a closer look at the one-third of businesses in the sample that have not adopted social media, we see that confidentiality concerns and lack of management support are among the top reasons.

One-third of the respondents note they are not decision makers. Combined with the 14.7% citing management resistance, this indicates an overall lack of management support. In addition, 33.1% cite confidentiality issues as a primary obstacle. Taken together with the prohibition of social-network use at work, the data show that many companies are concerned about how their staff would use these sites.

IN THE FULL REPORT 

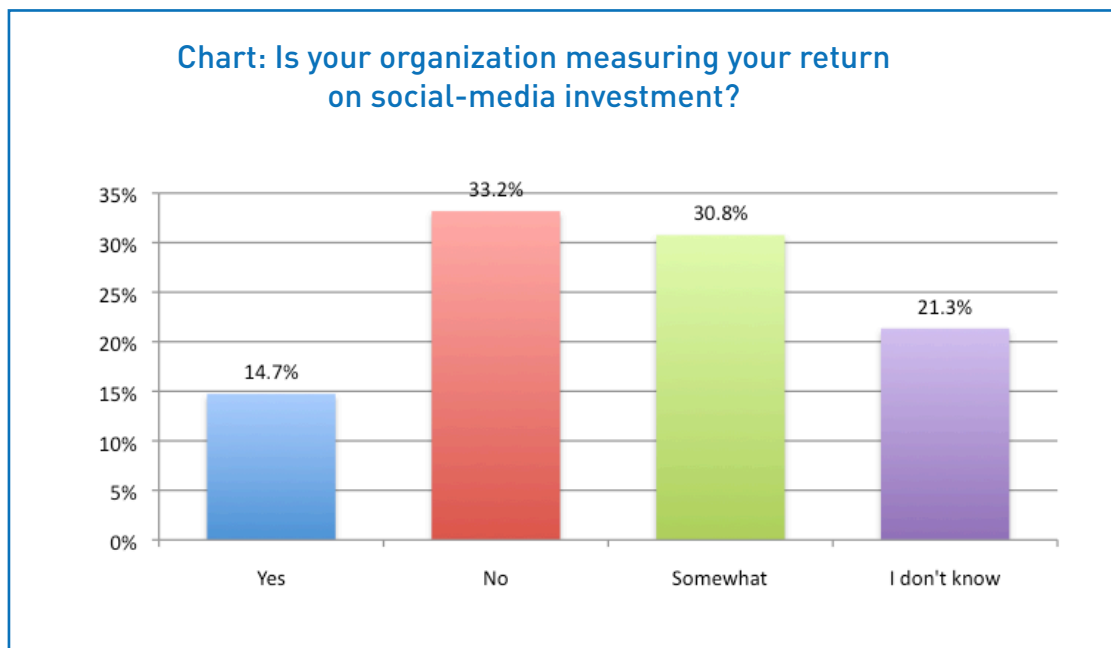


What other factors keep businesses from moving forward with social media? Check the full [State of Social Media for Business](#) report for the full list of obstacles that companies face.



# 7

LESS THAN 15% OF THE BUSINESSES USING SOCIAL MEDIA ARE MEASURING RETURN ON INVESTMENT



Connecting social media efforts to bottom-line results is a skill that escapes most businesses that are using social media. Less than 15% of the businesses in the sample using social media reported that they are measuring their return on investment while over 33% are not measuring return on investment at all.

Among those innovators who are measuring social media, most focus on usage and incoming traffic but not traditional business metrics.

[IN THE FULL REPORT](#)



**Need direction on how to measure your social media ROI?**

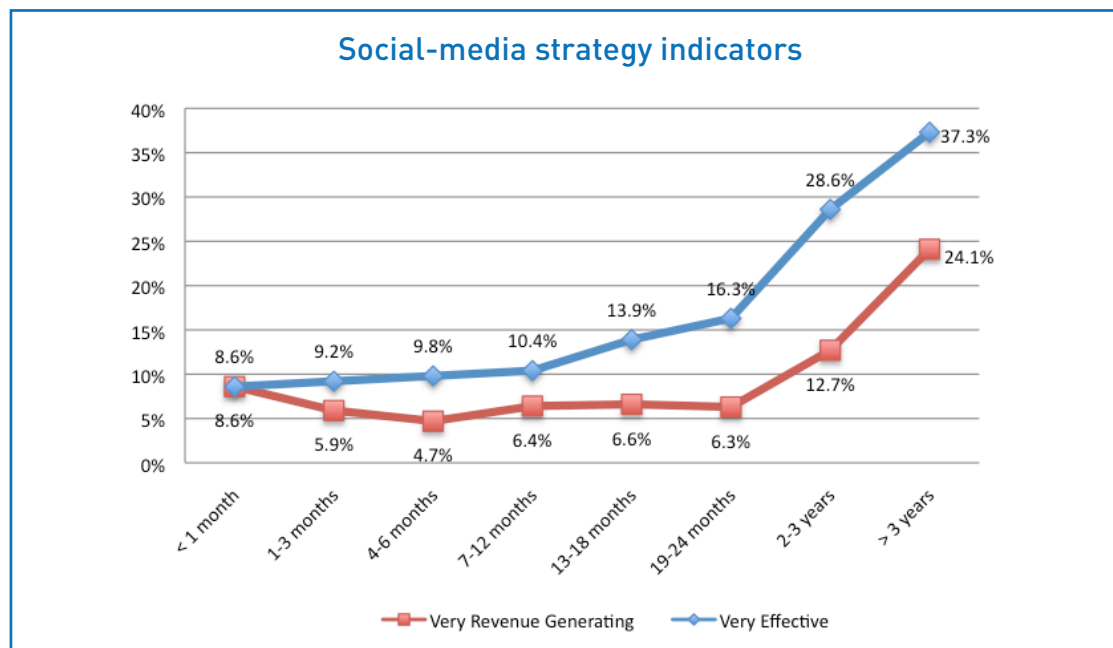
[The State of Social Media for Business 2010](#) answers pressing questions and provides baselines for companies that are considering social-media measurement.

- See how other companies are measuring ROI
- Find out the most common metrics for evaluating your social-media strategy
- Learn how companies are using third-party analytics tools



8

COMPANIES HAVE LITTLE CONFIDENCE IN THEIR SOCIAL-MEDIA STRATEGIES



Companies are critical of their social-media strategies, with only 14.2% describing their strategies as “very effective” and only 7.3% describing them as “very revenue generating” on average.

This low level of confidence in social-media strategies indicates that companies are not confident that social media is useful in meeting business goals. In time, confidence in their social-media strategies rises. As with other measures, we see the biggest jump at the two-year mark.

IN THE FULL REPORT



**How would your organization stack up?** The full [State of Social Media](#) for Business report paints a somewhat critical picture of how respondents rate their companies’ social-media strategies on:

- Creative/original
- Fun/engaging
- Buzzworthy
- Thought provoking
- Community building
- Brand enhancing
- Cost effective
- Targeted/niche



## THE STATE OF SOCIAL MEDIA FOR BUSINESS – SELECT THEMES 2010

These select trends and data points provide a snapshot of where businesses are in their social-media usage, confidence and measurement. The full **State of Social Media for Business 2010** report provides a deep and authoritative look at how businesses of different sizes, industries and foci are using social media.

**The State of Social Media for Business 2010** provides information not available anywhere else.

Take advantage of this data and, set baselines and position your business on the most productive path for social-media success.

### **The State of Social Media for Business 2010 includes:**

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- Key indicators of social-media integration
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  - VII. How Business Professionals Use Social Media
- Appendix 1: Analysis by Business Focus



## IN THE FULL REPORT

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<b>INFORMATION OF SPECIAL INTEREST TO:</b>	<b>WHAT YOU'LL FIND:</b>
<b>Agencies and consultants</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ How businesses are using social media</li><li>▪ Where they could use help in strategy and execution</li><li>▪ What are the top-of-mind questions about social media for companies</li></ul>
<b>CEOs</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ The context needed to create an effective social-media strategy</li><li>▪ How are other companies in your industry using social media?</li><li>▪ How can social media help differentiate your company?</li></ul>
<b>Brand managers</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ What tools and tactics are under-utilized?</li><li>▪ How to make your brand stand out from the crowd</li></ul>
<b>Social-media managers</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ How are other companies of your size staffing social media and allocating resources?</li><li>▪ What are the emerging social-media platforms?</li></ul>
<b>HR/Careerists</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ How are companies using social media for staffing and training?</li><li>▪ What are the biggest platforms for professional development?</li><li>▪ What are the biggest opportunities for professional development via social media?</li></ul>



## SOCIAL MEDIA FOR BUSINESS – SELECT THEMES 2010

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### **About Summus Limited:**

Summus is a unique information-based consulting firm that specializes in business-to-business and executive research. Using qualitative and quantitative techniques, we help companies better understand the complex environments in which business decisions must be made. With a focus on strategy, positioning and organizational behavioral alignment, Summus has worked with many top tier companies in a number of industries, including financial and professional services, food and consumer products, media and communications, restaurants and retail and business services. Our proprietary research methods have been used to assess corporate culture and align large multi-unit businesses; map the customer experience; assess new customer needs and product/service gaps; refine branding and positioning; identify new opportunities for growth and/or efficiencies. To learn more about Summus, please visit our website [www.summuslimited.com](http://www.summuslimited.com).

### **About SmartBrief:**

SmartBrief is a media company on a mission to save you time and keep you smart. The premise behind SmartBrief is simple: there's too much information out there and too little time in the day to read it all. Our editors hand-pick the most relevant and important news from all over, summarize it, link to the original sources and deliver it – for FREE – in one-stop-shop e-newsletters. Nearly 3.5 million business decision makers count on SmartBrief each day to provide “must-read” news in 25 key industries. Subscriptions are free of charge, offered in partnership with more than 100 leading trade associations, professional societies, non-profits and corporations. In addition to the industry-focused briefs, SmartBrief offers a suite of best practices newsletters to keep busy professionals smart about their jobs – including SmartBrief on Social Media. As a trusted, targeted vehicle for reaching influential business professionals on a daily basis, B2B advertisers depend on SmartBrief to reach their target audiences and produce measurable results. To learn more about SmartBrief, please visit our website [www.smartbrief.com](http://www.smartbrief.com).