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Socialitics

Introduction

It's not enough these days to simply count the number of Twitter followers or Facebook friends you have. Most people who use a social network have at some point connected with someone else once, and then never visited their Facebook page or paid attention to their Twitter posts again. Lots of people may have hundreds, if not thousands, of connections on a social network. But does quantity trump quality?

The answer is no. There is a growing body of anecdotal evidence showing that true social mavens are not those with massive networks, but are instead the folks who actively produce great content that is forwarded and reposted via their connections (and *their* connections) across other networks. S/he may not have thousands of followers, but it doesn't matter. A person in this position is eventually seen as a digital sage. Posts and updates will spread virally throughout global social networks even if 10,000 people aren't connected to him/her.

At Webbmedia Group, we define *socialitics* as the act of analyzing a person's or message's scope throughout social networks, in an attempt to discover its true reach and impact. To be sure, many people use the term "engagement" to describe in general how engaged your site's visitors are with your content. (Are they clicking on your links? Are they staying on your site to read?). *Socialitics* is instead a measurement of what's happening throughout the vast number of social networks on the web.

What is your company website/ mobile tool's socialitics?

It's important to monitor traffic, to determine how and where visitors are finding your content, how much time they spend with it, and what they're clicking on. You advertisers (or funders/ investors) will want this data - and you'll need to know about how you fare within your own competitive landscape.

But standard analytic tools, such as Omniture SiteCatalyst, Tacoda and Google Analytics, aren't able to capture data on the discussion about your site (or you, personally), references to content that's been posted or even instances of your content that has been reposted elsewhere.



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What's your personal social network's socialitic score?

Let's say that you now have 27,000 Twitter followers and that you typically post 20 tweets on an average day. Doing simple math, that means your message is heard 540,000 times every single day - and that would just be within your own personal network.

The problem is that the numbers don't really add up quite so nicely. While there is no concrete, official data released from any of the social networks, those who study them agree that only 20-40% of users participate - that means post and read posts - with any regularity.

A recent study by Bernardo Huberman, Daniel Romero and Fang Wu, researchers at Hewlett-Packard's Social Computing Lab, looked at 309,740 Twitter users who had an average of 255 posts (in total), 85 followers and followed 80 other users. Of the 309,740 users, 32% posted only one time and then didn't use the service again. (See: <http://www.hpl.hp.com/research/scl/papers/twitter/>)

Rather than counting friends or followers, a more accurate representation of reach is to follow reposts, retweets and mentions of your content across other social networks.

Your *socialitic* score, therefore, measures how effective you are at contributing to conversations and compelling others to share your wisdom/ questions/ content.



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Determining Site Socialitics/ Personal Socialitic Score

New social networks are sprouting every day around the world. People are creating widgets, mobile applications and various other tools for communication. Therefore, we have created a set of questions to help you determine your own site socialitics/ personal socialitic score. Use the questions as a constant framework for analysis. While we've offered specific measurement sites to try, please be aware that as networks evolve and grow, so too will the tools necessary to measure them.

This initial set of questions will provide the basis for your site socialitics/ personal socialitic score. We suggest working more extensively to reach a more comprehensive conclusion about your reach. Unless noted, all services and websites listed are free.

In general, are people in social networks referencing your website or blog?

- You can use Quarkbase (<http://www.quarkbase.com>) to scrape the web for references and links across many social networks: bookmarks at Delicious, pages on Reddit, inbound links from Wikipedia, comments on StumbleUpon, blog reactions from Technorati, and even how many pages ascended to the front door of Digg.
- Try Everyzing's search engine(<http://search.everyzing.com>) to look for instances of people mentioning your company or name during a speech, over-the-air or cable broadcast, podcast or web video. Look through video sharing sites such as YouTube (<http://www.youtube.com>), Qik (<http://qik.com>) and Kyte (<http://www.kyte.tv>) to see who's talking about you and what the subsequent commentary is on those sites. If you're someone working in music or audio production, don't forget to search through the newer social music sites such Blip (<http://www.blip.fm>) to see who is listening to and commenting on you.



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What is your retweet/ repost rate?

- Sites such as Twitority (<http://www.twitority.com>) and Most ReTweeted (<http://danzarrella.com>) attempt to measure the users who are being retweeted and referenced most. By simply entering a user's name into the search field, you can see instances of references throughout Twitter.
- LinkedIn (<http://www.linkedin.com>), another social networking site, offers several powerful search tools allowing you to see where you/ your company is referenced, how many times you show up in searches and who is recommending/ commenting on someone's work. You also can learn if content you post is reposted elsewhere.

Where are you tagged?

- Photo sharing sites such as Picasa (<http://picasa.google.com>) and Flickr (<http://www.flickr.com>) allow users tag photos, or identify people/ items within them to share with other users. Facebook offers this feature as well. You can search through these networks to see who is posting photo or video content with you/ your company logo in it. Additionally, you can follow the comments attached to those photos. Often, someone may post a photo within a social network with you identified - an old picture from high school, for example. Dozens of people may be having a conversation about you and that photo that may even spill over into another social network, such as Twitter or StumbleUpon.
- Is your company listed on the many new location-aware mobile applications available for the newer BlackBerry, iPhone, Palm and Nokia phones? Looking through databases such as Yelp! (<http://www.yelp.com>), Citysearch (<http://www.citysearch.com>), Urbanspoon (<http://www.urbanspoon.com>), and those offered via WHERE (<http://www.where.com>) will help you find recommendations and comments about your business, restaurant, publication and more.

For Additional Information:

Webbmedia Group, LLC
2336 Cambridge Walk
Suite 400
Baltimore, MD 21224
tel: 267.342.4300
info@webbmediagroup.com
<http://www.webbmediagroup.com>