



# 2010 SOCIAL MEDIA MARKETING INDUSTRY REPORT

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

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APRIL 2010

BY MICHAEL A. STELZNER

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## Letter from the author...



Hello, fellow marketer;

Social media is hot. And for businesses it represents a marketing opportunity that transcends the traditional middleman and connects companies directly with customers. This is why nearly every business on the planet—from giants like Starbucks and IBM to the local ice cream shop—are exploring social media marketing initiatives.

A year ago, businesses were uncertain about social media. Now it's here to stay and companies are rapidly adopting social media marketing. Much like email and websites first empowered businesses, social media is the next marketing wave.

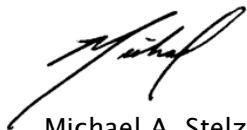
If you're in charge of marketing your business, you'll want to closely examine the following pages. My team turned over every rock, looking for the "not so obvious" findings among this content-rich data. We set out to uncover the "who, what, where, when and why" of social media marketing with this report. Nearly 1900 of your peers provided the kind of insight you won't find elsewhere.

If you're still unsure about social media marketing, I hope that these findings will help push you over the edge. If you're already on board, examine what your peers are doing (and use this study to persuade others).

I hope you enjoy the report! **If you find value here, please let your peers know about this report.** You can find the original page for the report here:

<http://www.socialmediaexaminer.com/social-media-marketing-industry-report-2010/>

All my best!



Michael A. Stelzner  
Founder, SocialMediaExaminer.com



Join the discussion on Facebook at <http://www.facebook.com/smexaminer>

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# Executive summary

This study set out to understand how marketers are using social media to grow and promote their businesses. On the following pages you will discover:

- **The top 10 social media questions marketers want answered:** We analyzed nearly 1356 open-ended responses and summarized all the major questions that marketing pros want answered.
- **The time commitment:** We examined the weekly hours marketers invest in their social media efforts. This analysis will be helpful for marketers just getting started or seeking support staff.
- **The benefits of social media marketing:** This rather beefy section reveals all the major advantages marketers are achieving with their social media efforts. We also look at how time invested and experience enhances the benefits.
- **Commonly used social media tools:** Wondering which social media tools marketers are using the most? Those questions are answered, along with an examination of which tools experienced folks are using.
- **Social media tools people want to learn more about:** In this section, we examine the up-and-coming tools that marketers are most interested in learning about.
- **Other analysis:** We also examine social media outsourcing and smartphone marketing. In addition, we take a look at how B2B (business to business) companies vary from B2C (business to consumer) companies and whether the size of a business has any bearing on results. We also highlight significant changes since our 2009 study.

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

If you've been at this for a while, compare yourself against other marketers, see what tools they're looking at next and see whether you're achieving the same benefits as your more experienced brethren.

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

## Major findings

Here's a quick summary of our primary findings:

- **Top three questions marketers want answered:** (1) How do I measure social media return on investment? (2) What are the social media best practices? and (3) How do I best manage my time with social media?
- **Marketers are mostly new to social media:** A significant 65% of marketers surveyed have only been involved with social media marketing for a few months or less.
- **How much time does this take?** The majority of marketers (56%) are using social media for 6 hours or more each week, and nearly one in three invest 11 or more hours weekly.
- **The top benefits of social media marketing:** The number-one advantage of social media marketing (by a long shot) is generating exposure for the business, indicated by 85% of all marketers, followed by increasing traffic (63%) and building new business partnerships (56%).
- **The top social media tools:** Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn and blogs were the top four social media tools used by marketers, in order.
- **Blogging on the rise and MySpace shrinking:** A significant 81% of marketers plan on increasing their use of blogs, while 72% have no plans to use MySpace and 9% will actually decrease their use of MySpace.
- **Social media tools marketers most want to learn about:** Social bookmarking, Twitter and Facebook were the networks and tools marketers most want to learn more about.
- **Social media outsourcing underemployed:** Only 14% of businesses are outsourcing any aspect of their social media marketing.

The above summary is merely a taste of what's in this report. On the following pages you'll find nearly 50 charts that visually convey some of the fascinating findings of this report. For example, we look at which tools are used by those who invest the most time in social media marketing and the benefits achieved by those who've been at this for years.



# Top 10 social media questions marketers want answered

We simply asked, "What question about marketing with social media do you most want answered?" A significant 1356 people provided their open-ended responses. We clustered them into groups and ranked them below.<sup>1</sup> These are the top questions marketing professionals want answered regarding social media marketing:

## #1: How do I measure social media return on investment?

The number-one question marketers most want answered is how to track to social media return on investment. A sampling of some of those questions include:

- How can I tell a convincing story to management about the return on investment for social media marketing?
- What are the key metrics to follow for measuring return on investment in terms of customer satisfaction, revenues and brand loyalty?
- How effective is social media versus the resources needed to maintain the effort?
- Are there any industry benchmarks that track the impact of social media marketing?

## #2: What are the social media marketing best practices?

The next biggest question on people's minds can be summarized as, "What works?" A sampling of questions in this category include:

- How can I make sure my message is noticed and not buried in all the other noise?
- How many social media channels do successful social media marketers use?
- What are the marketing DOs and DON'Ts for Twitter, Facebook and LinkedIn?
- What is the most effective way to drive business without "spamming"?
- How do I make a message go viral?

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<sup>1</sup> Please note that this question was designed to reveal the single most pressing concern people want answered. Because only a single answer was allowed, all of these marketing questions are critical and may represent issues that different businesses face as they grapple with social media marketing programs. In each case, between 47 and 288 different people asked one of these top ten questions.

### **#3: How do I best manage my time with social media?**

Many marketers recognize the enormous amount of time social media can consume. How to manage the time sink is a common concern.

- How much daily time do successful marketers spend on social media marketing?
- How do I overcome the objections of those who say they don't have time for social media marketing?
- How does an organization avoid becoming overwhelmed by the demands of social media?

### **#4: How do I reach my target markets with social media?**

It's no surprise that marketers want to know how to narrow their social media efforts to an audience that matches their desired demographics. Here are a few related questions:

- How do universities use social media marketing to attract and retain students?
- How do I use social media marketing to target geographic audiences?
- How does social media marketing help brick-and-mortar retail stores?
- How do I best use social media marketing to target small niche markets?
- How can nonprofits use social media to build awareness and raise funds for their missions?

### **#5: How do I generate traffic and leads using social media?**

Marketers want to understand how to drive traffic with social media and converting social media activities into sales leads. Here are a few sample questions from this cluster group:

- How do I obtain qualified subscribers to our blog, newsletter and/or Twitter feed?
- How do I reach a large audience, outside of my current contacts, and get them to respond?
- How do I drive more traffic to our website using social media marketing?

## **#6: How do I implement social media tactics?**

Many marketers are seeking step-by-step social media guidance and tactical advice. Here are some sample questions:

- Can you provide a comprehensive guide for how to use all the tools?
- How do I fully integrate mobile?
- How do I enhance our Facebook fan page?
- How do I put those handy social media icons at the bottom of my blog post?

## **#7: What are the latest social media trends?**

It seems marketers are looking for a crystal ball regarding the future of social media. Below are some questions asked by marketers:

- What can we expect in the next three years? Will social media converge or will there be more divergence?
- Is social media here to stay or is it just a fad?
- How do I stay current with all the changes?
- What's the next "big thing" in social media marketing?

## **#8: How do I get started?**

How to get started is still a major question in the minds of many marketers.

- What are the steps to building a strong social media platform for my business?
- How do I get it all set up if I'm not very tech-savvy?
- Is there a way to dabble with a blog without committing to one?
- What are the dos and don'ts when I'm first getting started?

## **#9: How do I integrate my social media activities?**

Can social media and traditional media work together? Is there a way to manage all the social media campaigns in one central location? These are the types of questions marketers are seeking answers to in this category. Here are a few more:

- How do I tie all the applications together to get the best results?
- How do I best keep my social media efforts organized and linked?
- What are the best tools to use to coordinate social media efforts while still being true to the social norms of each platform?
- Is there a program or system for pulling all these technologies into one platform?



## #10: How do I evaluate the advantages and disadvantages of each platform?

Given the choices available, marketers are looking for guidance before investing in specific social media networks.

- How do I evaluate which site will be most effective when marketing my business?
- How do I assess the value of the latest tools (social bookmarking, StumbleUpon, or whatever) and learn to use and integrate them with my existing strategies?
- What is Twitter and why should I use it?
- What are the social norms for using Facebook for marketing?

**5 Bonus Questions:** Here are a few more questions that didn't make our top 10 list. Each of these questions was asked by between 28 and 43 different people.

- How do I make money using social media sites?
- How do I develop a cohesive marketing strategy that includes social media?
- How do I convert my social media contacts into customers or clients?
- How do I use social media marketing in business-to-business marketing efforts?
- How do I overcome objections to using social media from management and customers?

**CHANGES SINCE LAST YEAR'S STUDY:** The number-one question marketers had in our 2009 study was related to tactics, followed by return on investment. Now tactics have moved down considerably and the return on investment question has moved up. The question of whether social media works has dropped off the charts completely. Most of the questions marketers wanted answered in 2009 remain the same in 2010.

**SUMMARY:** One in three marketers indicated measuring results and identifying the best practices were their top questions when marketing with social media. As you can see by examining the above list, marketers have asked some excellent questions. The remainder of this report will attempt to answer some of those questions, including the most commonly used social media tools, those that are on the growth path, the time commitment, and how social media marketing benefits businesses that have been doing this for a while.



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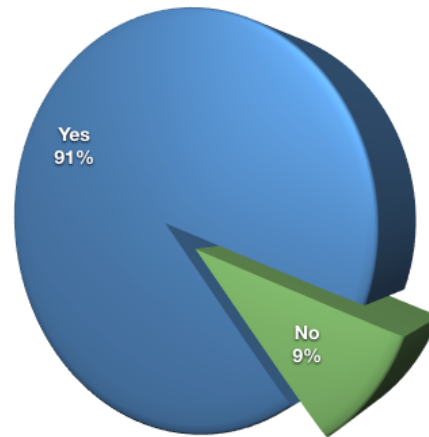
# The use of social media marketing

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

## Use of social media marketing

We began by simply asking marketers if they use social media to market their businesses. The overwhelming majority (91%) indicated they were employing social media for marketing purposes.

Small businesses were slightly more likely to be using social media.

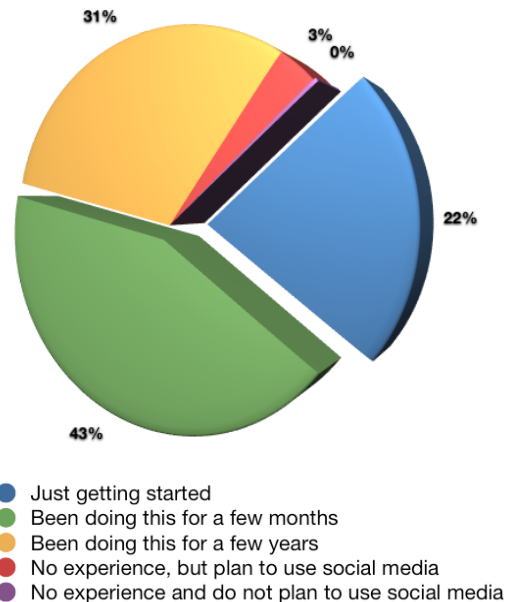


## Experience with social media marketing

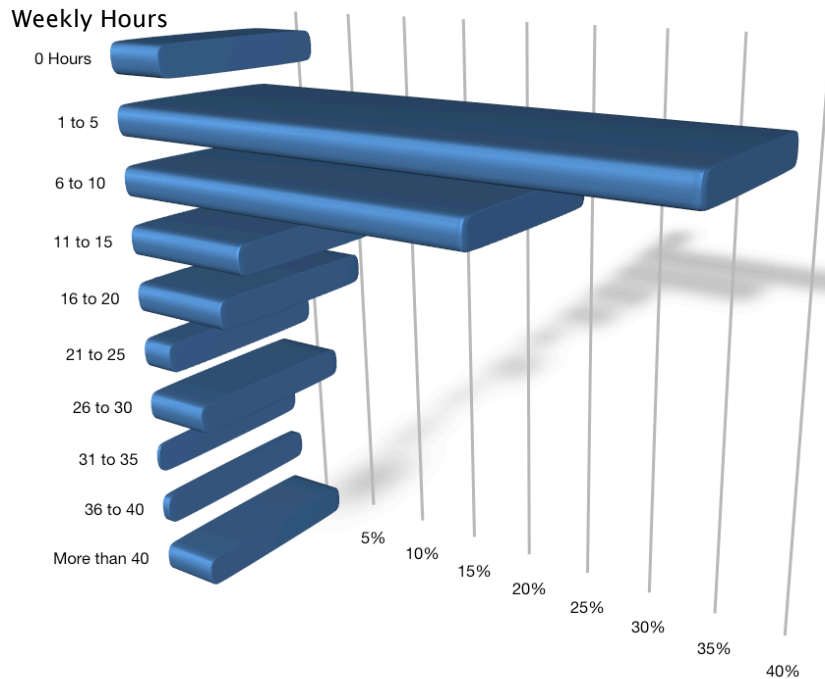
When asked to rate their experience using social media marketing, a significant 65% of marketers have either just started or have been using social media for only a few months.

More B2B companies have been using social media longer (79.5% reported months or more) than their B2C counterparts (68.7% indicated months or longer).

In 2009, only 23% of marketers were using social media for years. Now that number has grown to 31%.

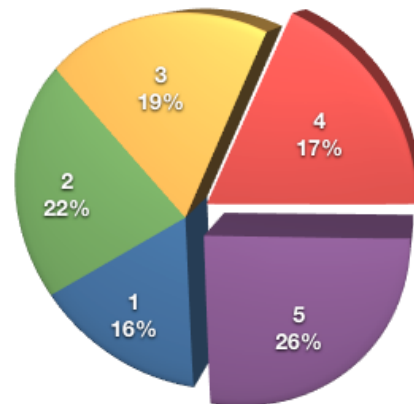


# Time commitment for social media marketing



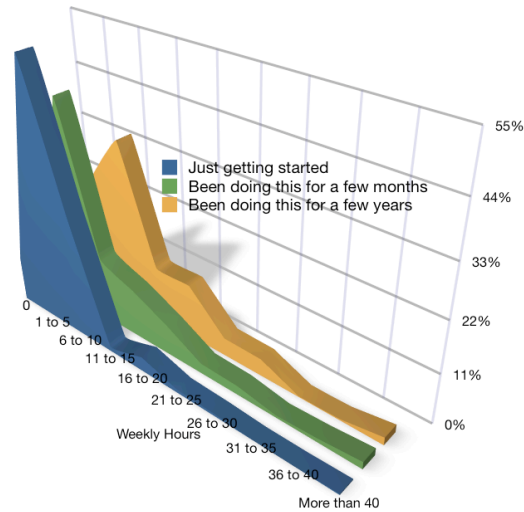
A significant 56% of marketers are using social media for 6 hours or more each week and 30% for 11 or more hours weekly. It's interesting to note that 12.5% of marketers spend more than 20 hours each week on social media.

The largest group was 1 to 5 hours per week. The chart to the right shows that 43% of people in this group are spending 4 or 5 hours per week on social media activities. 76% of marketers are spending at least 4 hours each week on their social media marketing efforts.



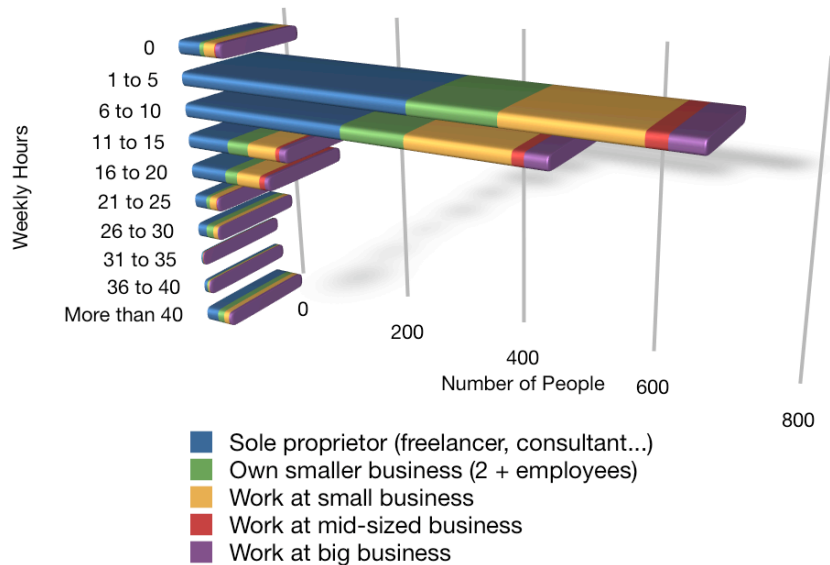
## The experience factor

There is a direct relationship between how long marketers have been using social media and their weekly time commitment. For people **just beginning** with social media, the median weekly time commitment was **one hour per week**. However, for folks who have been **doing this for a few months or longer**, the median jumps to **10 hours per week**.



## How business types vary the time commitment

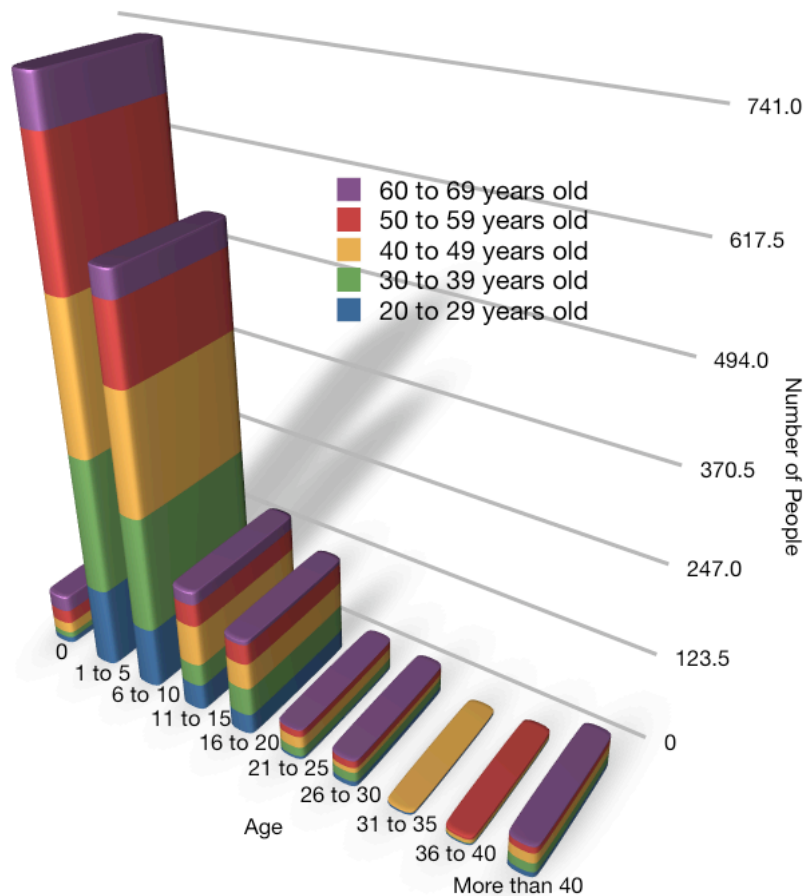
This chart shows how different-sized businesses invest their time with social media activities. 16.7% of all businesses invest 10 hours per week in social media efforts.



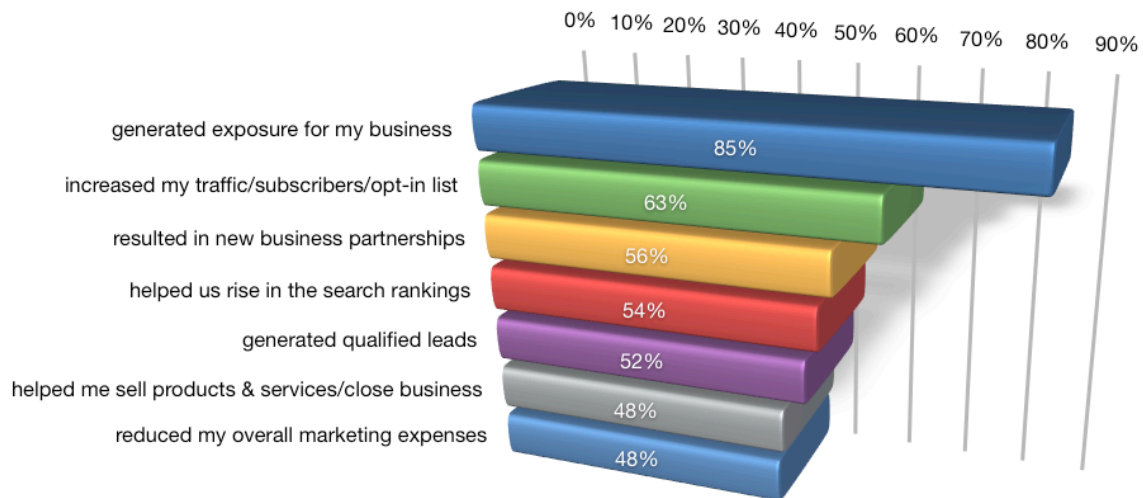
## Age factor

The median time for all groups (except the 60- to 69-year-olds) was 10 hours per week.

People age 20 to 29 spend the most time using social media marketing (59.1% spending 6+ hours weekly), followed by 40- to 49-year-olds (58.3% spending 6+ hours weekly) and then 30- to 39-year-olds (58% spending 6+ hours weekly).



# The benefits of social media marketing



The number-one benefit of social media marketing is gaining the all-important eyeball. A significant 85% of all marketers indicated that their social media efforts have generated exposure for their businesses. Improving traffic was the second major benefit, followed by building new partnerships.

More than half of marketers indicated a rise in search engine rankings was a benefit of social media marketing. As search engine rankings improve, so will business exposure, lead generation efforts and a reduction in overall marketing expenses. More than half of marketers found social media generated qualified leads.

**Changes since our 2009 study:** Every category saw an increase in benefits, except new partnerships remained exactly the same at 56%. In 2009, only 35% of marketers felt social media reduced their overall marketing expenses. That number has jumped to 48%.

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

The following charts address these questions.

## Helped me close business

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

For example, 73.8% of marketers who have been using social media for years report it has helped them close business (a 12% increase from 2009). More than half who spend 11 or more hours per week find the same results.

Marketers selling to other businesses were more likely to achieve this benefit (51.3%) than those selling to consumers (44.9%).

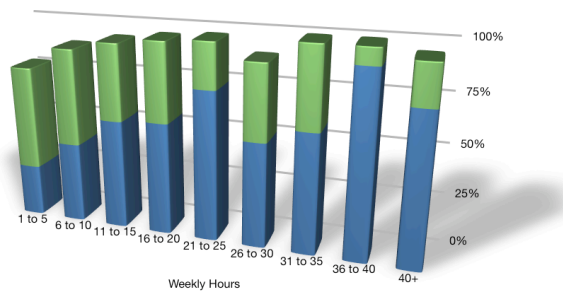
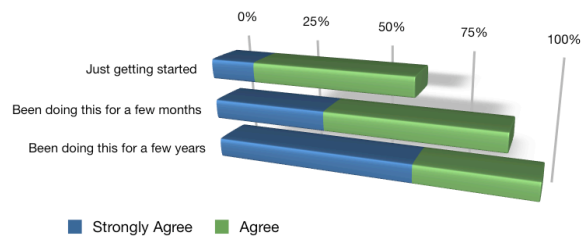
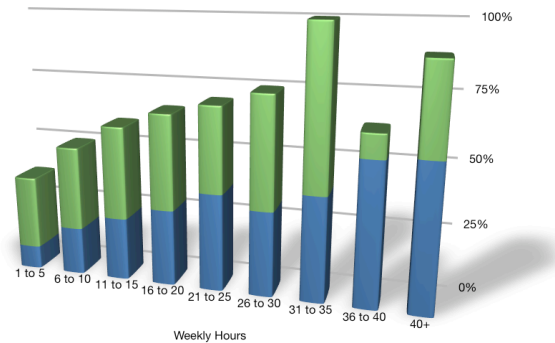
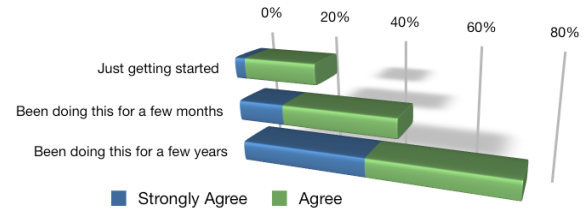
Small business owners with two or more employees most achieved this benefit (57.8%).

## Generated exposure for my business

Even with a minimal time investment, the vast majority of marketers (78% or higher) indicated their social media efforts increased exposure for their business.

Owners of small businesses (2 to 100 employees) were more likely than others to report greater exposure (89.2% reporting benefits).

Nearly all marketers who've been employing social media marketing for years report it generates exposure for their business and a significant 62.4% strongly agree.





## Resulted in new business partnerships

Those who invest the most time in social media marketing gain the most business partnerships. However, 53.1% of people who've only invested a few months with social media marketing report new partnerships were gained.

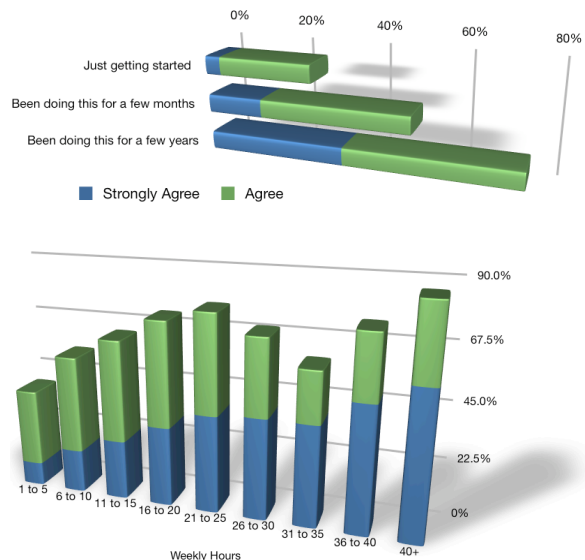
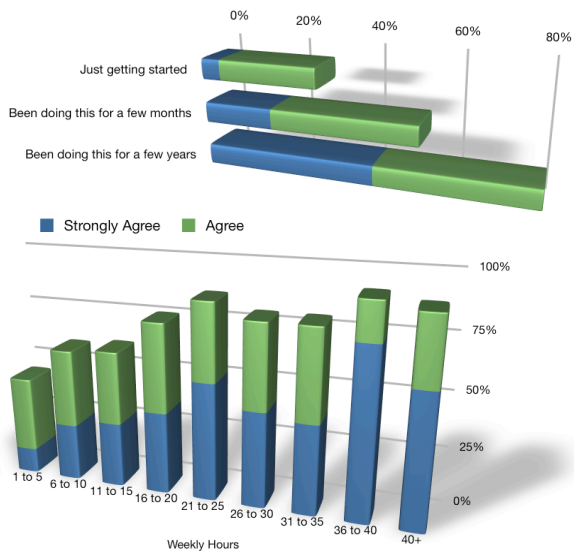
Even the majority of those investing 6 to 10 hours per week in social media were able to build new partnerships.

Marketers selling to other businesses were more likely to achieve this benefit (60.8%) than those selling to consumers (49.4%).

## Generated qualified leads

Many businesses are hoping that social media will be the Holy Grail for lead generation. Indeed after only a few months and with as few as 6 hours per week, half of marketers have generated qualified leads with social media marketing.

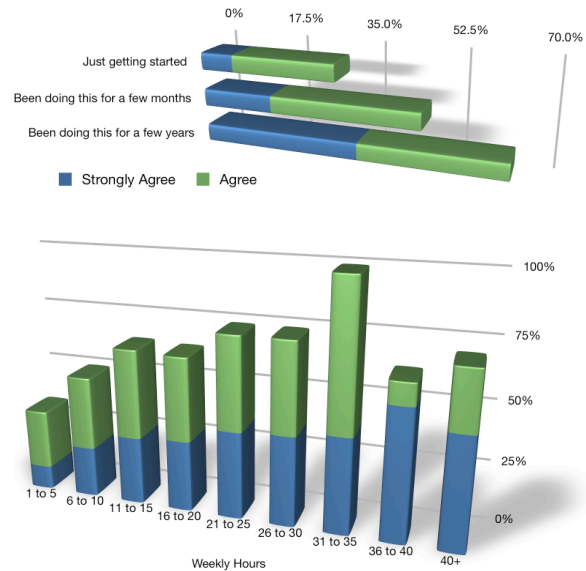
Sole proprietors were more likely than others to see benefits.



## Reduced my overall marketing expenses

The main financial cost of social media marketing is the time it takes to gain success. However, a significant percentage of participants strongly agreed that overall marketing costs dropped when social media marketing was implemented.

Sole proprietors were more likely than others to see reductions in marketing costs when using social media marketing.

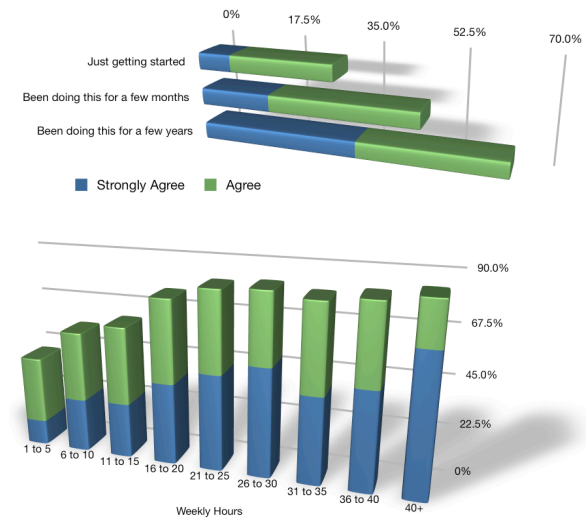


## Helped us rise in the search rankings

Improved search engine rankings were most prevalent among those who've been using social media for years, with nearly 73% reporting a rise (a slight drop from 2009).

More than half of those investing at least 6 hours per week in social media marketing saw improvements in search engine rankings.

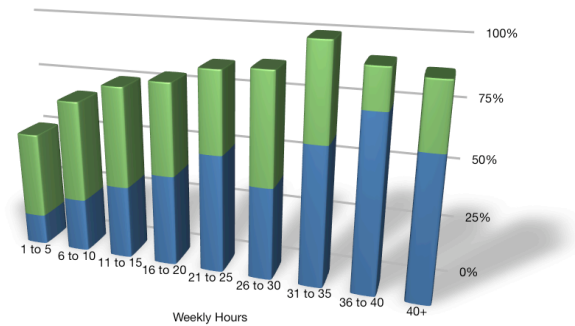
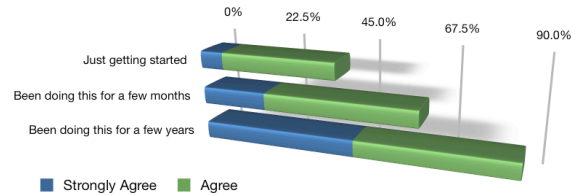
Marketers selling to other businesses were more likely to achieve this benefit (57.8%) than those selling to consumers (48.4%).



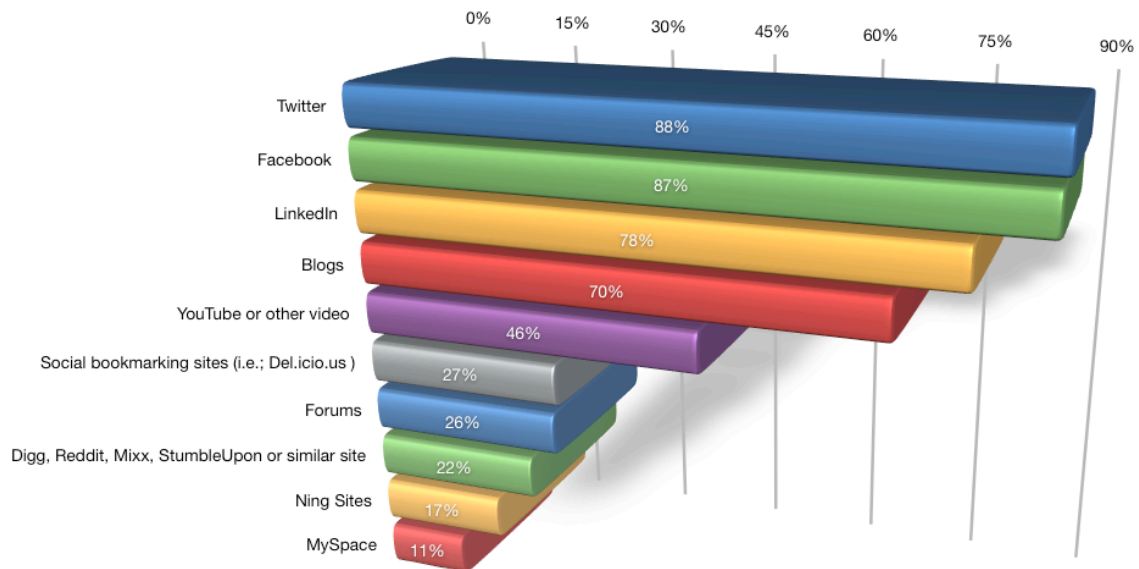
## Increased my traffic/subscribers/opt-in list

At least 2 out of 3 participants found that increased traffic occurred with as little as 6 hours per week invested in social media marketing. And those who've been doing this for years reported substantially better results.

Owners of small businesses (2 to 100 employees) were more likely than others to report benefits.



## Commonly used social media tools



By a long shot, Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn and blogs were the top four social media tools used by marketers, with Twitter leading the pack by only a hair. All of the other social media tools paled in comparison to these top four.

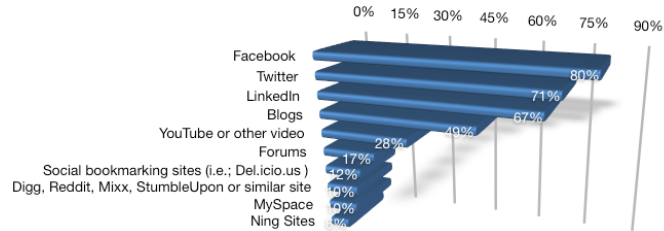
It should be noted that in 2009, Facebook was in fourth place at 77% and blogs were in second place at 79%. It would appear that blogs, while still popular, are used less and Facebook is clearly growing.

Owners of small businesses were more likely to use LinkedIn than employees working for a corporation. Another interesting finding was that men were significantly more likely to use YouTube or other video marketing than women (51.2% of all men compared to only 42.6% of women).

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

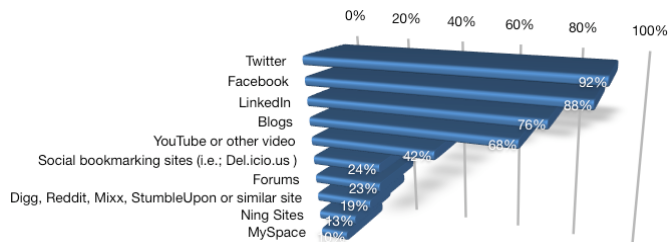
### Tools used by those just getting started

For those just getting underway with social media marketing, Facebook is ranked as their number-one choice, followed by Twitter and LinkedIn.



### Tools used by those using social media for a few months

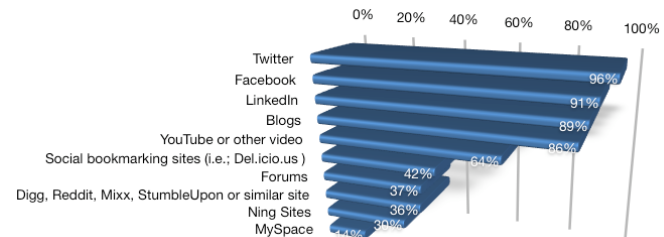
For marketers who have been employing social media marketing for a few months, Twitter and Facebook stand out even more than the averages.



### Tools used by those using social media for years

Twitter is used by 96% of marketers who have been employing social media for years, followed closely by Facebook.

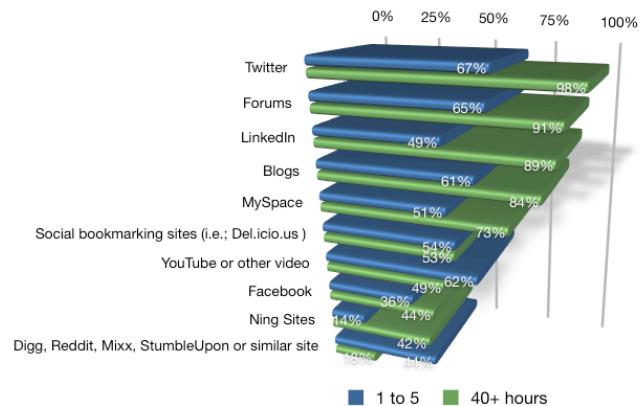
This group is also a major proponent of video, significantly more so than others.



### Tools used by those who commit small versus large amounts of time

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

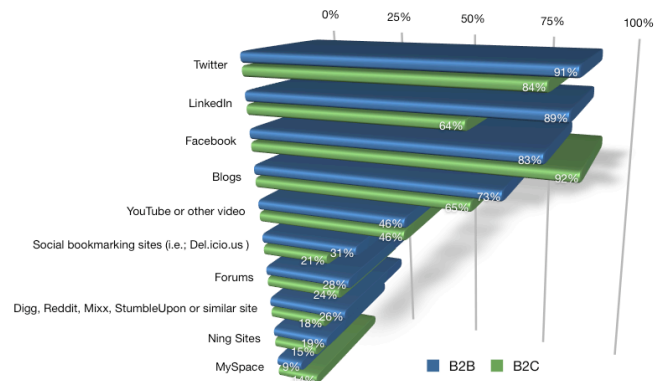
There are a few interesting findings here. Marketers investing only a few hours per week are much more focused on video than those working full-time with social media. In addition, MySpace is used by 73% of those investing more than 40 hours per week.



### Tools used by B2B versus B2C

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

B2C are much more focused on Facebook and B2B are much more focused on LinkedIn. Also note that B2B companies are utilizing blogs more.



## How will marketers change their social media activities in the future?

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

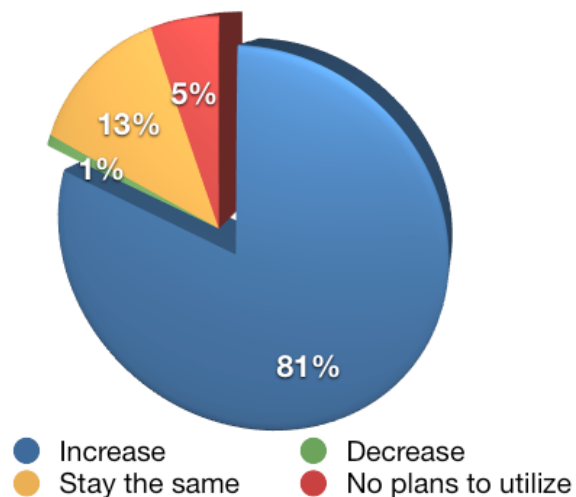
At least 67% of marketers plan on increasing their use of blogs, Facebook, video/YouTube, Twitter and LinkedIn. A significant 80% said they have no plans to utilize MySpace or will reduce their efforts, fueling the rumors that MySpace is a shrinking network.

Here is a breakdown by social media channel:

### Blogs

Surprisingly, marketers indicated that blogs were the top area in which they planned on increasing their social media efforts.

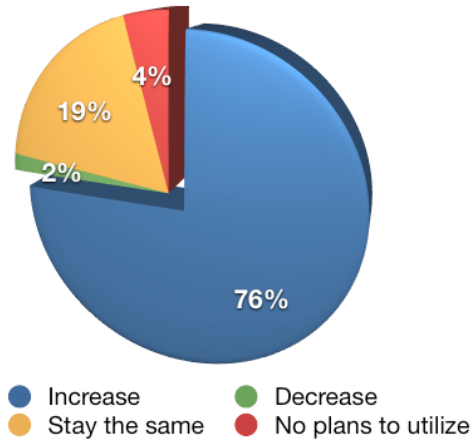
Small businesses were much more likely to be increasing their blogging activities.



## Facebook

Facebook is clearly a top winner. Only 4% of marketers surveyed do not plan to utilize Facebook. Second only to blogs, Facebook is an area where marketers feel they can achieve substantial results.

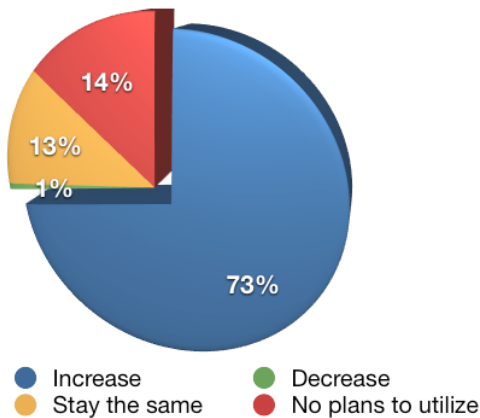
80.1% of B2C plan on increasing Facebook efforts. 85.4% of large businesses will also increase their Facebook activities.



## YouTube/Video

A significant 73% of marketers plan on increasing their YouTube and/or video marketing.

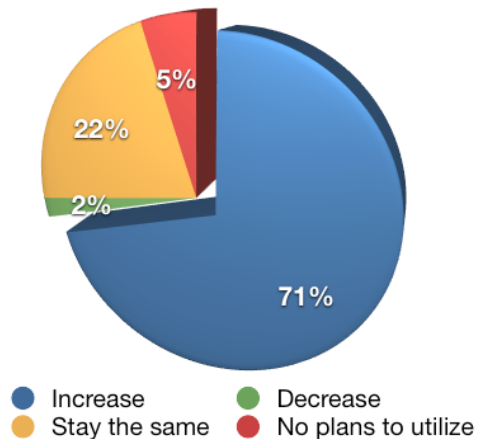
B2C are more likely to employ video (75.6%) than B2B (70.8%). Those who've been using social media for years picked this as the top area in which they will be increasing their efforts, with 81% responding affirmatively.



## Twitter

93% of marketers are using Twitter and 71% plan on increasing their use of the network to further their marketing objectives.

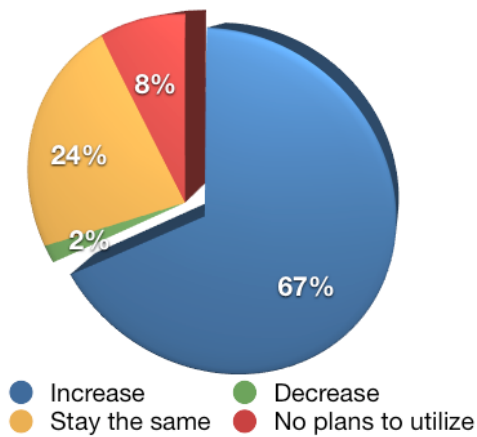
85% of large businesses will be increasing their Twitter activities.





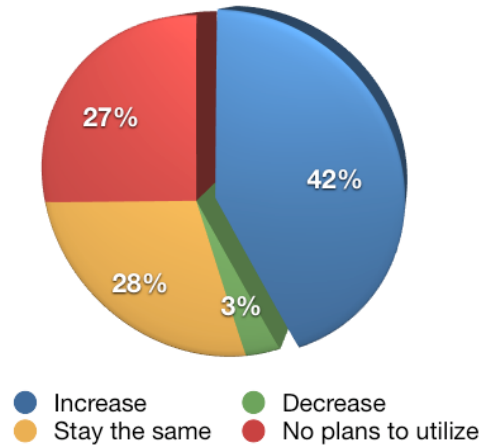
## LinkedIn

B2B are significantly more likely to plan on increasing their use LinkedIn (72.1% of B2B versus 59.1% of B2C).



## Forums

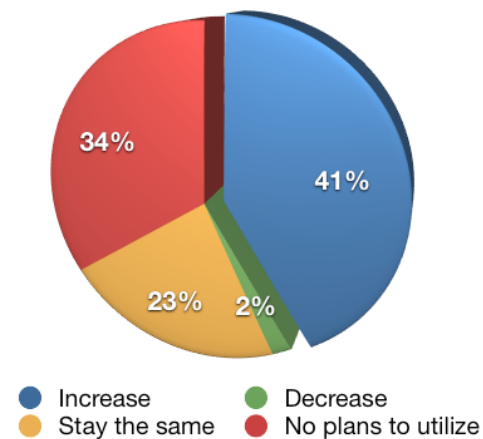
Only 42% of businesses will increase their forum activities, while 27% have no plans to use forums.



## Social Bookmarking

A mere 41% of businesses plan on increasing their social bookmarking activities while one in three have no plans to use social bookmarking.

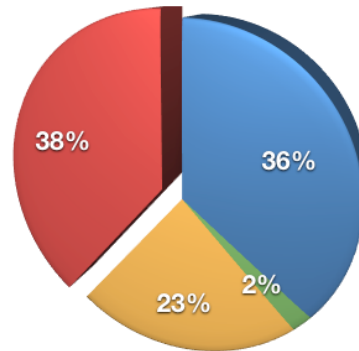
44.6% of B2B plan on increasing their social bookmarking use (versus just 36.7% of B2C).



### Digg, Reddit, Mixx, StumbleUpon or similar site

More people have no plans to use social news sites than plan on increasing usage.

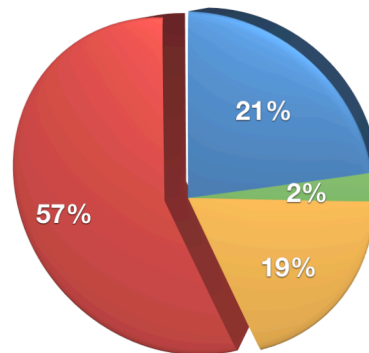
39% of B2B plan on increasing their social news site use (versus just 32.9% of B2C).



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

### Ning sites

Only 21% of marketers plan on increasing their use of Ning sites. Small businesses are more likely to plan on using Ning sites.

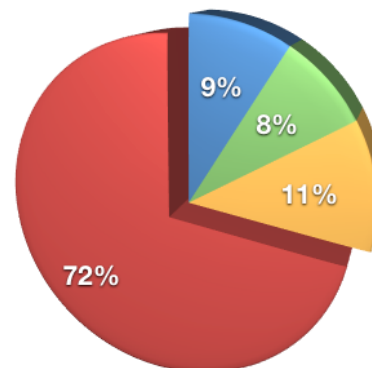


● Increase ● Decrease  
● Stay the same ● No plans to utilize

### MySpace

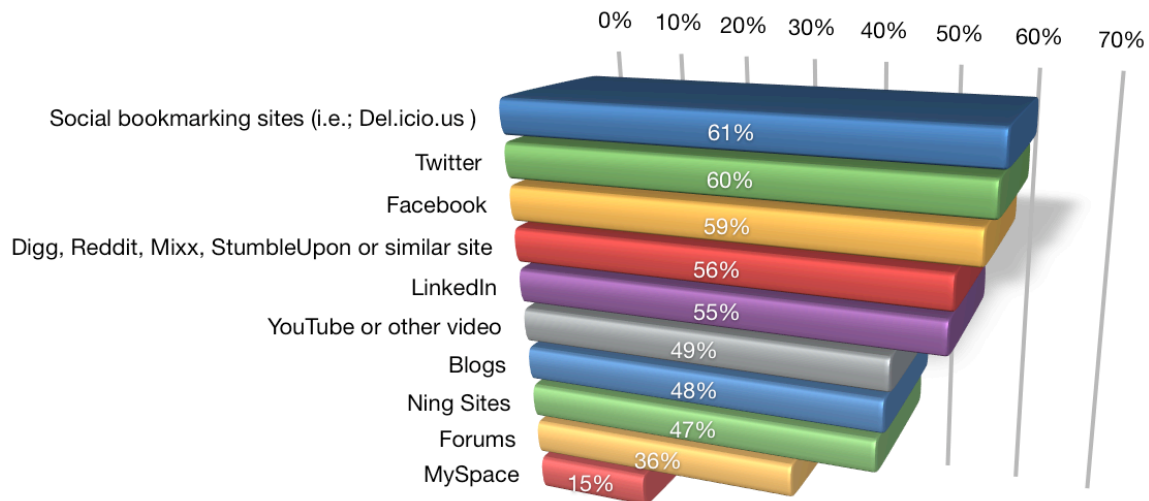
Most businesses (72%) have no plans to use MySpace and only 9% will increase their MySpace activities.

11.1% of B2C businesses are planning on increasing their MySpace activities.



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

## Social media tools people want to learn more about



We asked marketers which social media tools they most want to learn more about. **Social bookmarking sites slightly edged out Twitter for the number-one slot.** Facebook came in third, followed closely by Digg/Reddit/Mixx/StumbleUpon and then LinkedIn.

In 2009, only 50% of marketers wanted to learn more about Facebook. This year that number has jumped up to 59%.

Small businesses owners were more interested in understanding social bookmarking sites than other groups. In addition, those over age 50 were much more interested in learning about Twitter than their younger marketing cohorts.

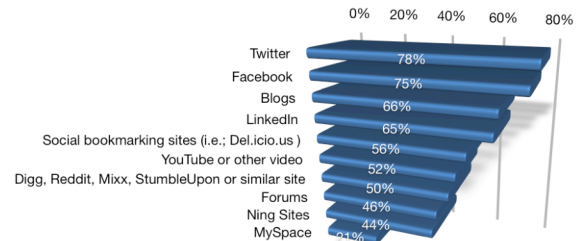
Males were most interested in learning how to use Facebook and females were most interested in learning about social bookmarking.

B2C most want to learn about Twitter. B2B are most interested in social bookmarking.

Clearly a lot of people want to learn how to use the many social media tools available. What follows are tools marketers are interested in based on how long they've been using social media marketing.

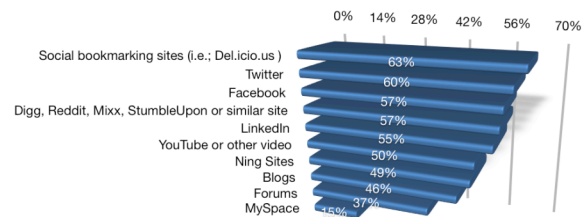
### Tools marketers want to learn more about for those just getting started

For those just getting underway, understanding Twitter tops the list, followed by Facebook, blogs and LinkedIn.



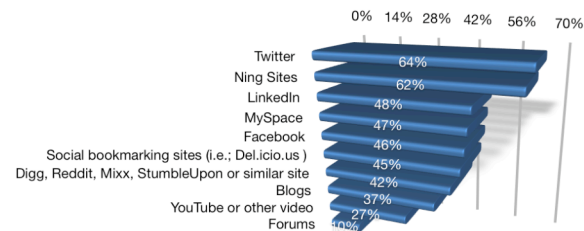
### Tools marketers want to learn more about for those who've been using social media for a few months

Social bookmarking sites top the interest list for these professionals. Mastering Twitter also remains important for marketers who've been doing social media marketing for a few months.

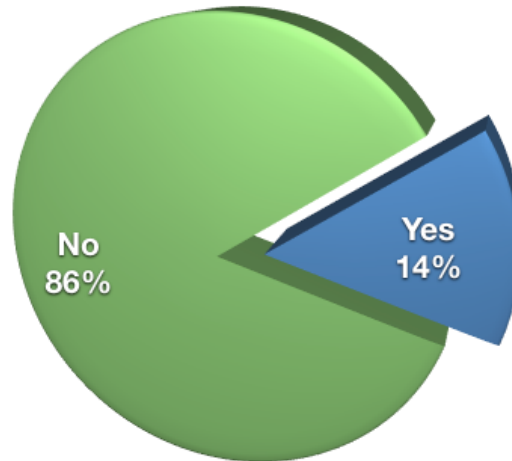


### Tools marketers want to learn more about for those who've been using social media for years

These pros are most interested in understanding Twitter and Ning sites.



## Social media outsourcing



We asked marketers if they were outsourcing any of their social media marketing efforts. The overwhelming majority was not.

The concept of social media outsourcing is relatively new. In addition, because so many marketers are new to social media marketing, it may be another year before many warm to the idea of seeking outside assistance.

However, **the larger the organization, the more likely outsourcing is taking place.** For example, 25.7% of large businesses and 25% of mid-sized businesses are currently outsourcing, compared to only 10.6% of sole proprietors.

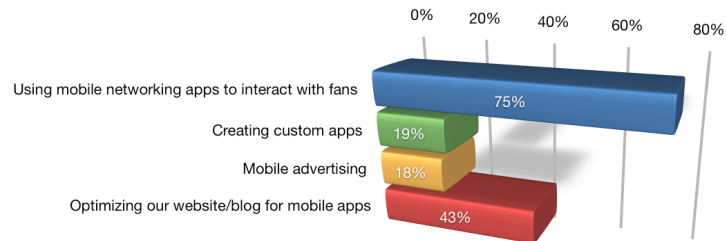
# Mobile smartphone marketing

The mobile smartphone marketplace has exploded. Along with it come marketing opportunities. We surveyed marketers to determine what they are currently doing with mobile marketing and where they would like to learn more.

## Current activity

Surprisingly, most marketers indicated they were using mobile networking apps (like Facebook on an iPhone) to interact with their fans.

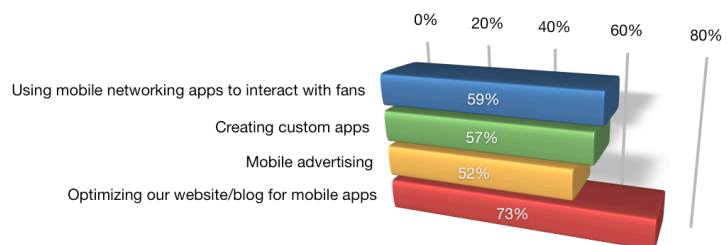
However, most are not involved with creating custom mobile apps, mobile advertising or optimizing their websites for mobile smartphones. **Bigger businesses were more likely to optimize their websites and leverage mobile advertising.**



## Areas of interest

Most marketers were interested in learning more about mobile smartphone opportunities. The biggest percentage (73%) were seeking to optimize their websites for mobile browsing.

B2C companies were much more interested in interacting with mobile fans (65.4% of B2C versus 54.6% of B2B). 60% of large businesses were interested in mobile advertising.



## Survey participant demographics

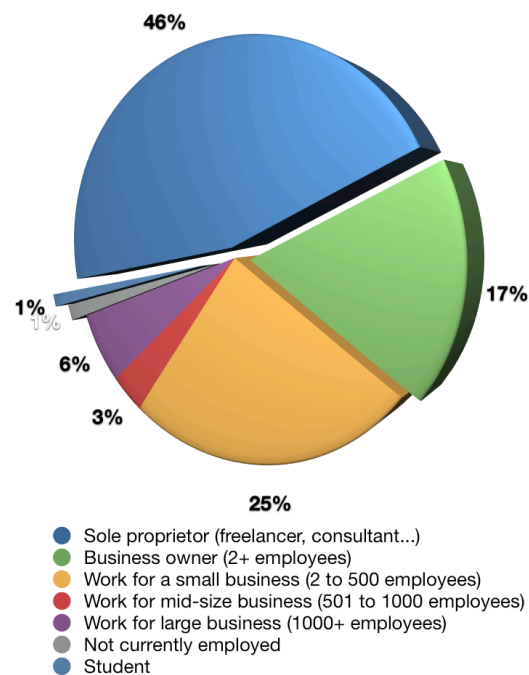
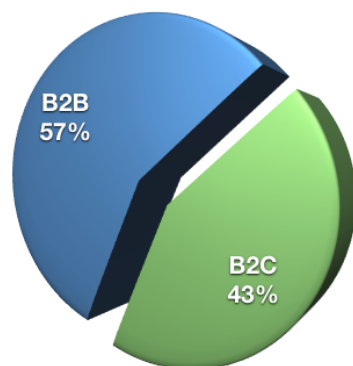
We largely leveraged social media to find participants for our survey. We started with a post on Twitter in January 2010. It simply said, "Take the 2010 Social Media Marketing Industry Survey. Participants get free copy" and included a link to the survey. The message was retweeted hundreds of times by other marketers. In addition, many people posted links to the survey on Facebook, LinkedIn and other social media sites. We asked survey participants to help spread the word about our study. Finally, a list of 8600 marketers was emailed and asked to take the survey. After 5 days, we closed the survey with **1898 participants**.

Here are the demographic breakdowns:

### Survey participants

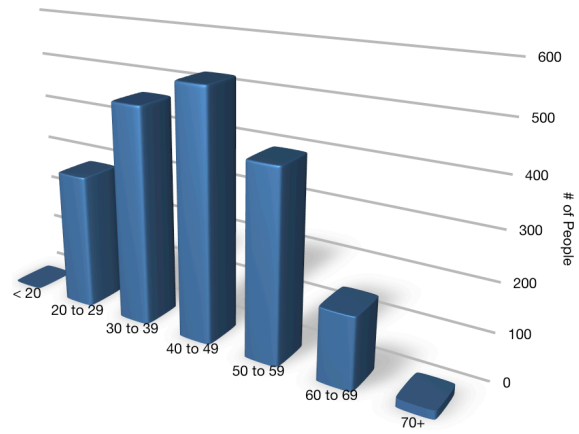
Most people who took the survey were small business owners (63%), followed by employees working at a small business with 500 or fewer employees (25%). Among small business owners, nearly three of four were sole proprietors, such as freelancers or consultants, representing nearly half of all survey participants.

57% of survey participants were focused primarily on attracting businesses (B2B) and 43% primarily targeted consumers (B2C).



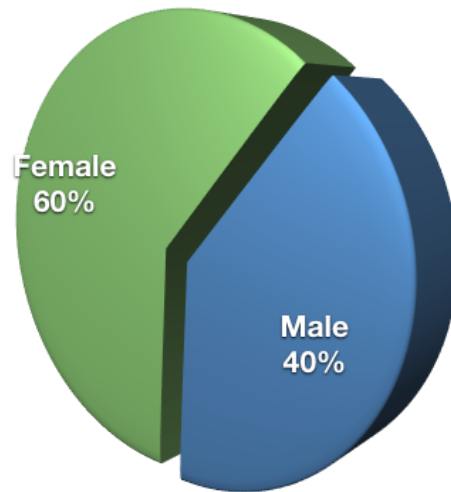
### Age of participants

Most survey participants (75.1%) were between the ages of 30 and 59. The median age was 40 to 49.



### Gender

Females edged out males, representing 60% of all participants.





# About Michael A. Stelzner

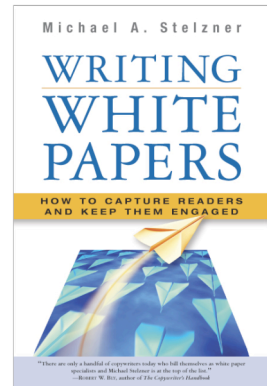
MarketingSherpa calls Michael the "grandfather of white papers." He's author of the bestselling book, *Writing White Papers: How to Capture Readers and Keep Them Engaged*. His work is used as required reading at major universities such as MIT and Johns Hopkins.

Michael is also the founder of [SocialMediaExaminer.com](http://SocialMediaExaminer.com), an online business magazine dedicated to social media. Technorati ranks SocialMediaExaminer.com as one of the top 100 business blogs in the world.

Michael's social media writing has won numerous awards including MarketingProfs #1 story from 2009 and RainToday's #1 article from 2009.

Follow Michael on Twitter at [http://twitter.com/mike\\_stelzner](http://twitter.com/mike_stelzner)

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