

# How to Engage in Social Media: A Dell Perspective

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The power to do more

## Introduction

With Time magazine's anointment of Mark Zuckerberg, founder of Facebook, as its person of the year, WikiLeaks's shakeup of the international sphere and corporate board rooms, and Facebook's \$50 billion valuation, 2010 made it irrevocably clear that social media, in all its forms, is reshaping the world. Inevitably, it's having a massive impact on organizations across the globe. And in many cases that change is coming painfully, being forced from the outside in.

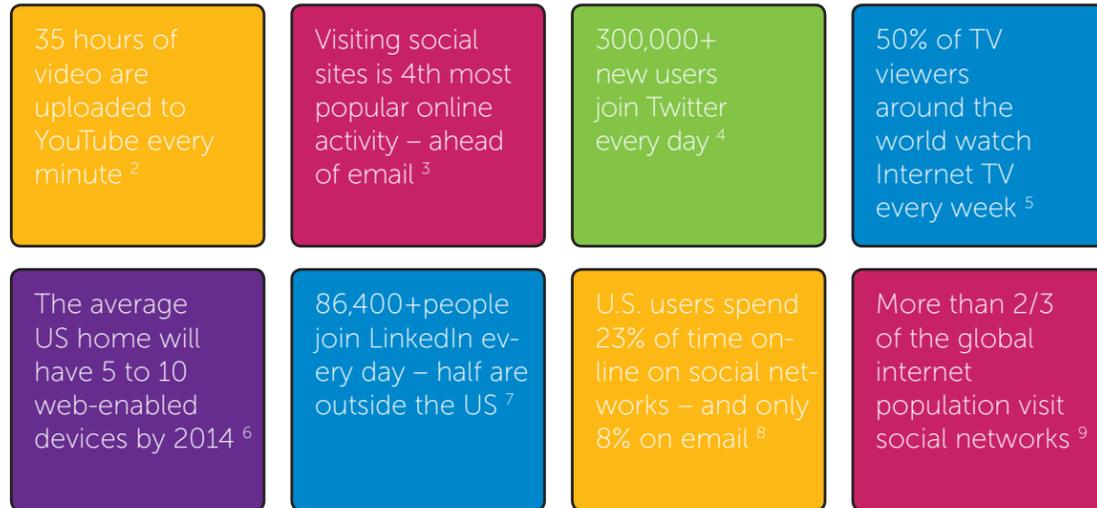
But with a commitment to internalizing and embracing the changes across your organization, it's more than possible to meet the challenges head-on. Allowing the democratizing forces of social media to transform the way we do business from the inside out – across all departments from service and support to IT, HR, PR, sales and marketing – has the potential to reinvigorate business in new and dramatic ways.

And with a new generation of workers – the millennial generation – entering the workforce, bringing new technologies and expectations with them, the time is now. As an employer, you cannot keep these employees from accessing social networks for business or pleasure. And you'd be ill-advised to try: If you block access on work-issued PCs, these employees will simply use their smart phones to tap, tap, tap their way into the social networks of their choice – feeling none too positive about your restrictive and archaic corporate policies.

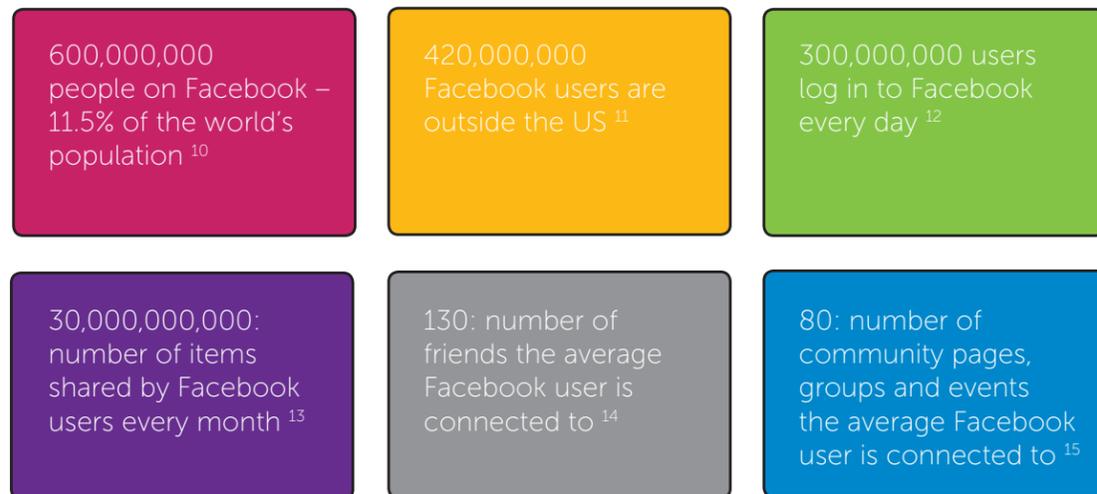
Across the board, social media is transforming all of us in fundamental ways: The ways we relax, the ways we play, the ways we connect and communicate. Over time it will also gain greater and greater traction in the business world. Gartner estimates that by 2014, 20% of all business users will rely on social media rather than email as the primary vehicle for interpersonal communications.<sup>1</sup>

The numbers are daunting –

## A shift in how we play, connect, & communicate



## A shift in where we connect

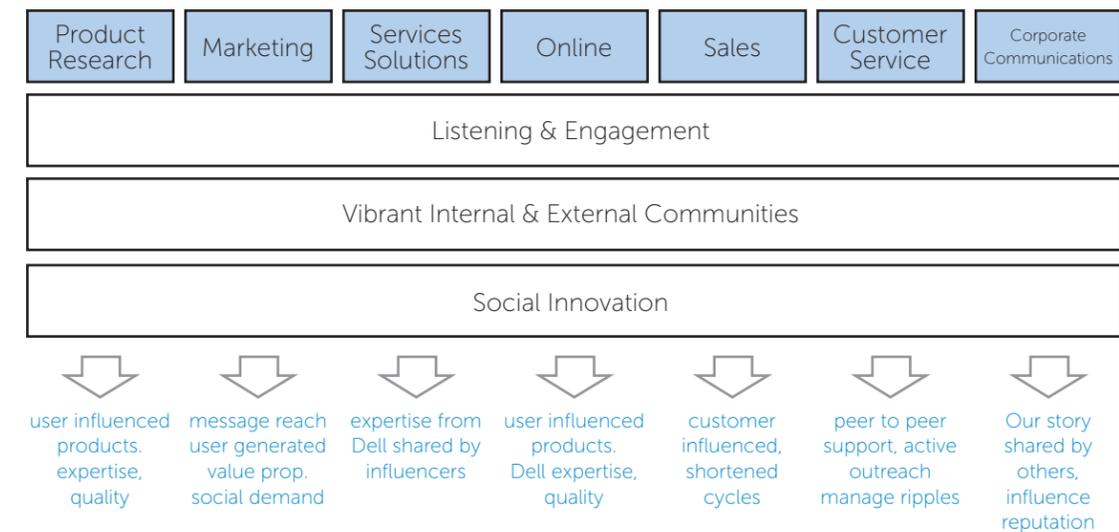


The impact of any social media strategy will span every segment of every organization – from product design to services and support, marketing and management – enough so that failing to take on the challenge could ultimately prove to be a misstep with long-term negative ramifications. Still, it can seem both easy and prudent to do nothing, or to do the bare minimum, and otherwise wait and see what evolves. It's all too easy to sit back and wonder, "Do we need to do anything?"

The answer is yes. The old style of business – changing only when faced by crises and make-or-break challenges; prioritizing investments toward sustaining the status quo rather than innovating; selecting leaders who are masters at the art of effective reaction – has to fall by the wayside. Innovation, change from the inside out, the ability to master social media technologies to be proactive – these are the keys to success in this new landscape.

"The impact of any social media strategy will span every segment of every organization – from product design to services and support, marketing and management."

## Broad impact



This new set of norms poses substantial challenges to traditional business practices and management strategies:

- The Internet connects people in unprecedented ways. Twitter, Facebook, online communities, YouTube and other social technologies allow anyone to make information publicly available, and that information can become an instant sensation.
- Customers expect a new level of access to your company. If you embrace that expectation, you can achieve new success. If you don't, they may move elsewhere.
- People who post on the social web are valued and recognized by the quantity and value of participation and content.
- Users are now empowered to provision their own IT infrastructure when and where they need it.
- Those same users are also turning to social networks and platforms to create communities of interest, share information and collaborate professionally, both with work colleagues and within their industries.
- Customers now have scores of one-to-one, direct relationships based on trust, not clever slogans. They can seek out any number of resources to educate themselves and one another about the good, the bad and the ugly of your corporate reputation, your products and your service levels. And the information is there for anyone who wants it – some 34% of bloggers post opinions on products. Meanwhile, an estimated 66% of brand touch points are generated by customers.<sup>16</sup>
- The distinctions between professional and personal lives, hours and identities have begun to blur. Employees and customers will use the devices they want, and work and play when and where they want. The shift in usage is dramatic:
  - In 2009, half a billion people worldwide used mobile devices to get online.<sup>17</sup>
  - By 2015, this number is expected to be over 1 billion.<sup>17</sup>

In short, social technologies are democratizing organizations with little regard for hierarchy or assigned roles: Your most valuable brand asset could be a socially networked product engineer whom you've never met. The structural implications for organizations are profound. Every enterprise management team now faces the dual task of empowering employees organizationwide to engage with customers and influencers through social media, while putting a governance model in place to mitigate the risk inherent in unleashing such a broad range of voices.

## The promise and the reality

For all its unwieldy newness, social media isn't about shiny objects. It's about pragmatic approaches toward continually improving your business through basics like customer relationships and connections. It's about creating a sense of intimacy, satisfaction and loyalty among employees and customers. It's back to the future – going back to the feel of the neighborhood store where the owner knew you by name and knew what you wanted. It's about going back to a time when neighbors relied on each other for advice about where to go and what to do. But with social media, you now have a new set of super-powerful tools to intimately engage on a grand scale.

Since entering the blogosphere in 2006, Dell has focused on bringing social media into its communications and marketing mix, and on re-envisioning itself as both a social and adaptive business. Over time, we've evolved a robust social media discipline that supports core business goals like driving revenue, lowering costs and satisfying customers.

As of late 2010, we were tracking and analyzing an average of 22,000 daily mentions on the social web, with a reach greater than the combined daily circulation of the top 12 daily newspapers in the US. In five short years, we've mastered the science of linking these conversations to business relevance. And in that same span of time, this focus on social media has become an integral part of our company, transforming everything from the way we hire, to the way we approach product design, to our IT and HR policies.

During this quick ramp-up we've learned that there are multiple routes to building an effective, enterprisewide social media practice. We've distilled our experience into seven basic steps that can help you move from social media aspiration to effective execution, governance and measurement:

1. Start with your goal – it will define your strategy.
2. Identify and listen to existing conversations.
3. Empower and encourage your internal organizations to participate.
4. Create and cultivate conversations and communities where your customers (and employees!) are.
5. Incent participants to create – and share – great content.
6. Measure your success and adjust your strategy.
7. Engage IT as an enabler of social media

## Step 1: Start with your goal – it will define your strategy.

As you define a social media strategy, the first question to ask has nothing to do with social media. It's more basic: What are your business goals? Do you want to drive awareness? Consideration? Conversion? Innovation? ROI? Customer satisfaction? Brand perception? Cost savings?

Once you have identified a clear goal, you have a few more questions to answer:

- Who are you targeting?
- Where does that audience go for information?
- What type of content does that audience want?
- Who in your company can provide that content?
- Where are the biggest opportunities for engagement?

### EXAMPLE: Dell's Large Enterprise business

After years of driving technology standardization through its direct model, Dell's Large Enterprise business, which focuses on servicing large corporate customers, had a strong reputation as a provider of affordable hardware. But by 2009, Dell realized it was time to revitalize the brand by increasing awareness of Dell's powerful solutions capabilities.

Through research, Dell learned what it already knew at a gut level: Customers value a trusted advisor relationship that's built from education and insight at every stage of the solution lifecycle, from research and consideration to purchase to ongoing support, education and consultation.

To address this need, Dell launched the Dell Tech Center ([www.delltechcenter.com](http://www.delltechcenter.com)), an online community where customers – primarily IT users – communicate directly with Dell enterprise technologists, product developers, members of the CTO's office and each other to address current needs.

The Tech Center, which has grown rapidly since its inception, has helped Dell's current and potential customers with their challenges and has directly and measurably accelerated Dell sales cycles in the B2B space.

## Step 2: Identify and listen to existing conversations.

Listening is a critical first step to any solid relationship. And with the perpetual conversation in the cloud, there's a lot to listen to. Twitter, Facebook, online communities, YouTube and other technologies allow anyone to make information and opinions publicly available any time.

These conversations can be a tremendous source of insights throughout your entire corporation. Sales and marketing can understand which customers want what, how customers perceive the brand, and who the truly influential people are for their brand. Product and research teams can receive direct product feedback. Support teams can understand the hottest issues. HR can find the best new candidates. PR can stop potentially viral complaints from spreading.

In this environment, you need the ability to monitor, then respond to what people are saying about you and your products. This effort requires listening tools as well as well-thought-out processes, such as internal mobilization of the right employees to listen to the right conversations and respond. It's not as simple as assigning a dedicated person to answer everyone – there's too much conversation for one person to handle. And the listener, seldom a subject-matter expert, may inadvertently come across as a type of spammer rather than the sort of authentic, trusted expert users want to hear from. What you need is a centralized governance model that embeds social media across your enterprise: product and engineering teams, customer and tech support, sales, marketing, HR and more.

### EXAMPLE: Dell's Social Media Ground Control Center

As part of its effort to monitor the endless flood of online chatter, Dell launched the Social Media Ground Control Center, a global operational hub for monitoring some 22,000 online mentions – both posts and tweets – about Dell every day. We filter this information based on topics, sentiment, share of voice, geography and trends. The goal is to track and understand the largest possible number of conversations, good and bad, across the web. From there, the aim is to get that information to the right people wherever they are in the Dell organization.

“Listening is a critical first step to any solid relationship.”

## Step 3: Empower and encourage your internal organizations to participate.

“Social media effectively collapses organizational hierarchies by democratizing influence. The most powerful customer-facing evangelist in your company could be someone you haven’t heard of yet.”

“The basic mantra that guides Dell’s overall approach to employee participation in social communities is simple: Control what you categorically need to control, then free the rest.”

Addressing thousands of conversational streams a day means growing your organizational communications ability on a quantum scale. Simply deputizing a team of marketers won’t work. There aren’t enough of them, and more than likely, they don’t have the in-depth subject matter expertise required to communicate at the right levels with authentic, real, credible conversation.

The ramifications of this shift are staggering: Social media effectively collapses organizational hierarchies by democratizing influence. The most powerful customer-facing evangelist in your company could be someone you haven’t heard of yet: a product engineer with an engaging online personality and a ton of valuable information; a marketer with a bead on the latest, breaking competitive product analysis; an empathetic support guy who always seems to locate needy customers before they have time to flounder.

The fact is that across your organization, your employees are already participating in social media in their personal lives. A significant number are ready and willing to listen and engage on behalf of the company. And an even larger number probably won’t stop participating even if you try to force them. That said, there are real risks involved with letting untrained employees speak on your company’s behalf.

### Empower

So, how do you take your social media efforts to the next level, while minimizing risk? The basic mantra that guides Dell’s overall approach to employee participation in social communities is simple: Control what you categorically need to control, then free the rest. The control mechanisms you need are pretty much straight from HR and Organizational Design 101: Training, clear corporate policies, and centralized governance.

**Training:** Employees in any business need ongoing learning. Social media is no different. At Dell, we send employees to Social Media and Communities University. (We’ve trained more than 5,000 employees so far.) After receiving an overview of our principles and policies, employees decide which tools will enable them to have better connections and conversations with our customers, then train on those. We also conduct internal conferences to share best practices across our global organizations.

**Policies:** This basic principle of control plus flexibility undergirds our corporate social media policy as well. A successful social media policy should provide guidance that enables employees who engage to be successful, but shouldn’t be restrictive. Staying current is also key: Dell continues to evolve its social media policy as new platforms, applications and scenarios emerge. [www.dell.com/SocialMediaPolicy](http://www.dell.com/SocialMediaPolicy)

**Organizational Design:** The right organizational design is key to making a distributed communications model work. A centralized social media team can become a hub of best practices, tools and processes, and can embed them in the fabric of your organization. Within different groups of your organization, teams can execute social media strategies to drive their specific business goals. These same teams can identify representatives to participate in cross-functional councils that ensure alignment across the organization.

### How do we engage?



### Encourage

Once you have the right structure in place, the challenge is ensuring a critical mass of engagement and sustaining it over time. To that end, you need to embed processes that encourage participation across all parts of the company.

Effective strategies include incentives in employees’ performance plans, plus metrics that track participation; friendly competitions for bragging rights and cash; and executive sponsors and leaders who lead by example, visibly and enthusiastically engaging in social media. Dell has implemented these strategies to great effect.

- Hundreds of Dell employees around the world blog, micro-blog and comment on thousands of posts both internally and externally.
- Our HR teams use LinkedIn to proactively identify desirable job candidates.
- Support teams identify hot issues on the social web before they hear reports elsewhere.
- Product and solutions teams review customer-generated ideas on Dell's IdeaStorm site, and analyze product reviews and ratings to improve our products.
- Michael Dell actively participates in forums, including Twitter, to address customers, influencers and employees alike. Dell's CIO, Robin Johnson, creates provocative and popular videos on critical issues facing CIOs.

All told, Dell employees at every level use social media to engage and interact with customers in more than 11 different languages.

## Tying executive tweeting to @DellCares

Customer voices frustration...	...Dell Listens, Engages and Resolves issue...	...delighting the Customer whose following retweets to 150k+ users
<p><b>TWEET FROM: MODELSUPPLIES</b></p> <p>Posted on Apr 18, 2010 at 11:06 AM</p> <p>@forrestkoba Thanks! Yes, seems I better go to another pc, can't see the support pages from here... Dell D600 laptop - screen is 95% black..</p> <p>Source: ModelSupplies (twitter.com)</p>	<p><b>TWEET FROM: MODELSUPPLIES</b></p> <p>Posted on Apr 21, 2010 at 12:23 AM</p> <p>@joycecherrier Well, after replacing my 2 yo Dell laptop hard drive, my backlight went out so no scree! DellCares said they want to help...</p> <p>Source: ModelSupplies (twitter.com)</p>	<p><b>TWEET FROM: MODELSUPPLIES</b></p> <p>Posted on Apr 21, 2010 at 5:39 AM</p> <p>Now THAT's how to use Twitter—!!! @RobbyatDell Thank you =) if I have to get another one &amp; go with Dell, they should know it's bc of Twitter</p> <p>Source: ModelSupplies (twitter.com)</p>

Michael Dell jumps in...	Model Supplies raves
<p>@ModelSupplies Thanks for contacting @dellcares and for the positive feedback too. Thrilled to hear you are a happy Dell customer! 6:14 PM May 25th via web</p>	<p>You're very welcom! @MichealDell Thank you for the fantastic service - and for the reminder of things still to do! x0x 7:43 PM May 25th via web</p>

## Step 4: Create and cultivate conversations and communities where you customers (and employees!) are.

In the shifting social media sphere, establishing and maintaining relevance is critical. You have to gain a foothold, and then nimbly navigate as conversations, interests, tools and platforms change out from under you.

### Who's ready to talk?

The easiest place to start is by identifying the hungriest, most underserved audiences and creating a hub for conversation. Finding the right opportunities depends on careful analysis. Then, once you know who your target audience is, you need to analyze the audience's habits, the conversations they're already having and the places they're having them. Start with a few questions:

- Which sub-segments of your audience are most likely to engage in social media?
- What types of social media does each of those sub-segments engage in? Blogging? Micro-blogging? Reviewing? Commenting? Research?
- What other players are already chasing this audience?
- Is your audience's attention already saturated with identifiable, best-in-class social content that will be hard to compete against?
- Are there places your target audience is underserved?

Some of the most fertile ground for seeding a social media effort is international. We've launched versions of our Direct2Dell blog in Japan, Norway, India and China. The Dell TechCenter has local versions in China and Japan and will soon launch in Germany, where our target community is both active in social media and underserved by existing local social networks

### Who are you ready to talk to?

You may also decide that you have something unique to offer a highly desirable community that is already well-served. For instance, to attract and service an executive audience with what we believe is a unique perspective on the evolving world of IT business challenges, Dell launched a sponsored site, EnterpriseEfficiency.com, that features daily, topical blogs written by InfoWeek editors and writers as well as by Dell executives. The daily blogs can be read by anyone, but community members have special privileges, such as the ability to download whitepapers, to view and comment

on webcasts, to comment on blogs, and to engage with CIOs and others via Q&As at live events like radio shows. In turn, this community has enabled us to gain significant insights into a group of users whose habits, interests and needs would be harder to analyze in a more diverse, less targeted forum like our broader Facebook communities.

## Where do you want to meet?

Of course, rather than launching a new site, one of the simplest ways of engaging is by creating communities and conversations wherever your customers already congregate – places like SlideShare, LinkedIn, Facebook and YouTube, among others. As you define your strategy, be sure each community you foster has a clear goal. Ask:

- Why build a page on this particular site? Target properties that have large enough audiences to support your business goals. Some promising platforms may still be too nascent to be worth your while.
- Will the community benefit customers? Users need to get something out of participating in the conversations you start. They might get access to promotions or insightful information; they may appreciate the ability to provide feedback and be a part of the brand/community; they may want to be recognized for their contributions – to, in effect, become “microstars.” Find ways to accommodate them.
- Have you adequately resourced the project? Social media efforts require continual care and feeding. Set up a forum for users, then abandon it, and you’re inviting criticism and backlash. Assign clear responsibility for nurturing and administering your pages, and ensure that the employees who have that responsibility have ample time to do their job well. The water-carrier for your social media efforts must have a clear mandate to escalate issues and request content from customer service, technical support, sales and others. And be sure to staff appropriately: A mature social media strategy requires staffing. Getting steps 1-3 right are critical to making this successful.

In some cases, you may find that your goals can best be achieved by targeting very specific subsets of your audience. Dell has unique Facebook and LinkedIn communities designed to speak to small and medium businesses, to enterprise-level participants, and to a wide range of audience members from systems administrators to CIOs.

## Are there other audiences you want to reach?

Internal communities can likewise offer tremendous opportunities to connect directly with employees to improve your business and understand and address needs before they become discontents. For example, Dell launched its internal EmployeeStorm to generate feedback and almost 6,000 brainstorming ideas from employees.

And don’t forget your own website: Dell launched its customer-facing IdeaStorm site in 2007. By mid-January 2011, it had crowdsourced more than 15,000 ideas leading to more than 400 implementations.

## Step 5: Incent participants to create – and share – great content.

Incenting employees to create content is one thing: You can put hard metrics in their performance plans or propose a little friendly competition and the promise of a cash bonus – even a small one – at the end. Dell has done both, and both work. But how do you incent people outside your company to create great content on your behalf?

Truth be told, customers are already communicating about your products with each other and with online experts who aren’t your employees. In fact, on the social web, 66% of brand touch points are now generated by customers, with 34% of bloggers posting opinions about products.<sup>16</sup> Given this already rich stream of content, there’s an argument to be made for simply letting these conversations play out on their own. But there are risks to that strategy. Any conversation has the potential to become a lightning rod for negative customer feedback; all it takes is a small cadre of passionate complainers. In most cases, such conversations will self-regulate over time, thanks to customers who join the fray as advocates on your behalf.

If you aren’t willing to take that risk, however, there are other options. Simple one-to-many engagement models remain as powerful as ever. In 2005, two Dell communications employees began to reach out online to customers who needed support with a goal of facilitating more open and direct relationships and conversations. In addition to individual interactions, they publicly thanked happy customers for supporting Dell on blogs, forums and social networks. The response was phenomenal. We started seeing much more positive sentiment toward Dell. This program has now grown from two team members to almost 50 employees monitoring conversations in nine languages around the world. Through @DellCares, we offer online Twitter support to help social-media-savvy customers when and where it’s most convenient for them.



## Step 6: Measure your success and adjust your strategy.

The whole point of your social media efforts, of course, is to pragmatically address fundamental business goals. You need quantifiable insight into how online engagement with customers can improve the key value drivers of your business – critical factors like revenue, costs, loyalty, product innovation, Net Promoter Score, hiring and brand reputation. Otherwise you'll be expending a ton of your employees' efforts and your company's money for potentially negligible returns or shiny objects.

And the results are there to be measured: A recent McKinsey study (Web2.0: McKinsey Global Survey Results) found that 69% of surveyed companies gained measurable business benefits from social media. These benefits included product innovation, more effective marketing spend, better access to knowledge, lower cost and higher revenues. The data also show that the handful of companies with the most mature social networking integration across the enterprise are likely to be market leaders or to be gaining market share – and are also more likely than less socially networked competitors to use management practices that lead to higher margins.

The challenge is that measuring the success of individual social media initiatives can be complex. Active participants in even the most successful efforts don't always follow traditional linear paths from awareness to consideration to conversion. So how do you determine the right metrics to measure value drivers based on your business needs – and then use them to guide investment decisions and optimize your social media initiatives?

One relevant metric is the Net Promoter Score (NPS), which measures the loyalty of your customer base and acts as a single, actionable metric to enable you to identify opportunities for increasing your overall brand health and enhancing your customers' perceptions of – and loyalty to – your company.

More specific efforts are also trackable. With careful foresight and the right analytics, return on investment (ROI) is measurable and can be optimized as you employ analytics to retool and improve the effectiveness of your campaigns. For example:

- After putting social reviews in the product purchase path, Dell Japan saw a 3x increase in revenue per visitor.
- Dell product groups receive detailed reports about how customers perceive their products online. These groups have built a "Five Star Challenge" to grow current review ratings from an average of four stars to five stars. Dell product engineers have taken customer conversations, ideas and suggestions discovered online and inte-

grated them into product design. The "Five Star Challenge" is credited with improving the average star rating on Dell.com's Rating and Reviews site from an average of four to an average of 4.6 stars.

Likewise, by tracking elements like recency and frequency of visits against purchases over time, Dell has been able to measure how participation in the TechCenter community influences new sales cycles and accelerates those already in progress. We've also been able to communicate valuable insights back up the sales chain, where they can be used to open new opportunities.

## Step 7: Engage IT as an enabler of social media.

To really succeed in enabling social media innovation, it's critical that you engage IT. Business and IT share the imperative to manage collaboration, knowledge and information. And the IT department is probably more than ready to be engaged. In many cases, organizations with progressive outlooks on social media are saddled with rigid IT architectures that make it hard to adapt to new accelerating demands.

Consider:

- The amount of digital information produced in 2011 is expected to equal almost 1,800 exabytes. That's 10 times the data produced in 2006. A full 95 percent of that will be hard-to-manage unstructured data: emails, word documents, videos and the like.<sup>18</sup>
- Sweeping changes in modern communications networks have created billions of endpoints worldwide.
- A changing workforce – led by the influx of millennials who bring their own devices to work and work on their own hours in their own locations – will engage on the social web no matter what policy or IT restrictions you put on them.
- New form factors such as smart phones and tablets are creating an explosion in the number of available applications and – consequently – possibilities for intense collaboration, communication and awareness.

From an IT perspective, an enterprisewide social media initiative that takes advantage of all these factors has the potential to further accelerate complexity. If social media initiatives are the spur that drives infrastructure transformation, your IT managers may well welcome the challenge with open arms.

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## The Social Media Impact to IT

"Control what you categorically need to control, free the rest." It sounds a little new age-y, but it's a mantra that should be adopted by every IT manager confronting the prospect of an enterprisewide embrace of social media. The truth is that there's no point in enacting overly restrictive policies around devices, website access and content. As employees increasingly bring their own devices to work and work on their own hours in their own locations, the challenge has become insurmountable. Employees will engage on the social web regardless of what your IT department does. So rather than fight, take a look at pragmatic approaches for supporting and securing your organization's flow of information:

1. Redefine security policies in relation to the use of employee-owned devices and social media platforms.
2. Launch training and education programs to give employees guidance about legal and regulatory risks, as well as appropriate ways of engaging on the company's behalf.
3. Integrate social media into your collaboration and communication planning and roadmap. Identify other integration points such as CRM.
4. Comprehend personal device usage at work in relation to your industry. Some organizations can move to being "enablers." Others will have to be "blockers" due to compliance and other constraints.
5. Define feedback loops as well as mechanisms for integrating those loops with business intelligence data.
6. Build a core competency in managing consumer devices and applications at an organizationwide level. Dedicate a team and realign resources to support it.
7. Evaluate and monitor the changing landscape of vendors, platforms, applications and devices.
8. Ensure that business units are aligned around your social commerce architecture, investment categories and their scope.

## A new era

The good news is that as these disruptors have emerged, the technology industry has met them head-on with a raft of innovations that have radically changed the economics of IT. The reality is that most companies spend about 80 percent of their budgets just to stay up and running. But with new technologies and solutions like virtualization, cloud, flexible computing, network convergence and more, the math begins to change.

In an efficient enterprise that effectively deploys these solutions, it's possible to achieve 50/50 fixed versus discretionary spending – and that opens up enormous opportunities for innovative approaches to emerging workplace complexities and opportunities. After dramatically transforming our own IT infrastructure through standardization, simplification and automation, Dell has seen these results firsthand.

The principles we follow...

- Avoid lock-in with a single-vendor and closed, proprietary infrastructures.
- Protect the investment you have in your current infrastructure, and ensure that it continues to provide returns for your business.
- Build on this foundation with open-standards-based, capable and affordable solutions
- Control what you need to control, and free the rest to the cloud

Dell calls this new technological era the "virtual era." Its new math enables companies to drive down capital and operational costs while increasing flexibility. Embracing this era allows CIOs to redefine the role IT plays in business, transforming from a cost center to a driver of innovation, even as demands from the social web increase. For more information on the virtual era visit [www.dell.com/EfficientEnterprise](http://www.dell.com/EfficientEnterprise).

## Conclusion

Conversations on the social web affect every aspect of your business, offering new opportunities to gain invaluable insight into your customers' needs, perceptions and wants. With the right tools and processes, you have the ability to hear virtually everything that's said about you anywhere on the social web. And with the right processes in place, you also have the ability to ensure that the relevant people in your businesses receive feedback and connect with customers directly.

But you're missing tremendous opportunities if you don't go beyond these tactical efforts. No matter how well executed these initiatives are, your social media strategy won't really pay off unless you start thinking in a blue-sky way.

Social media gives you unprecedented opportunities to build communities based on inspiration. It gives you a chance to move hearts and minds on a massive, but also hyper-local, scale. At the most basic level, that combination of engagement, empathy and creativity gives you a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to change your business from the inside out.

To learn more about driving a social media strategy in your organization, contact your Dell sales representative or request a visit to our Dell Executive Briefing Center for a custom briefing with Dell executives.

Special thanks to Ashley Craddock for support in writing this paper.

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- 10) 600,000,000+ people on Facebook ("Goldman to clients: Facebook has 600 million users." MSNBC, January 5, 2011)
- 11) 420,000,000 Facebook users are outside the US (Official Facebook statistics. <http://www.facebook.com/press/info.php?statistics>. January 15, 2011)
- 12) 300,000,000 users log in to Facebook every day (Official Facebook statistics. <http://www.facebook.com/press/info.php?statistics>. January 15, 2011; US and World Population Clock. 7:14 a.m., January 15, 2011. <http://www.census.gov/main/www/popclock.html>)
- 13) 30,000,000,000: number of items shared by Facebook users every month (Official Facebook statistics. <http://www.facebook.com/press/info.php?statistics>. January 15, 2011)
- 14) 130: number of friends the average Facebook user is connected to (Official Facebook statistics. <http://www.facebook.com/press/info.php?statistics>. January 15, 2011)
- 15) 80: number of community pages, groups and events the average Facebook user is connected to (Official Facebook statistics. <http://www.facebook.com/press/info.php?statistics>. January 15, 2011)
- 16) Sources: Universal McCann's Social Media Research Wave 3, March 2008; McKinsey Quarterly, July 2009
- 17) Source: "Global Mobile Media Forecast 2010-2015." Strategy Analytics, March, 2010.
- 18) "The Diverse and Exploding Digital Universe: An Updated Forecast of Worldwide Information Growth Through 2011," IDC, March 2008

