

NEWS RELEASE



SO YOUR BRAND HAS ACQUIRED 10,000 NEW FOLLOWERS ON FACEBOOK THIS MONTH... NOW WHAT?

Today the majority of businesses recognise the impact and influence of social media and have created their own social presence on platforms such as Facebook or Twitter. It can often be all too easy to get excited about counting the number of likes, followers or fans you have – but is this something your CEO really cares about? Probably not. Using a framework that links and measures the performance of your social media channels to actual engagement or business results is much more likely to catch the attention of senior executives and help you assess the returns from your social media investments. The question is: how effectively can technology support these aims? In a new online event **MWD Advisors** tackles some of the key issues surrounding social analytics maturity and examines what organisations need to do to progress.

Horsham, UK – 18 JANUARY 2012 – IT analyst and advisory firm MWD Advisors (MWD) today launches the latest in its series of ‘MWD Insight’ events, with an event entitled “Social Analytics: Optimising your social media investment for better business outcomes”. The event is available immediately and free of charge at the MWD Advisors website ([www.mwdadvisors.com /events/social-analytics/](http://www.mwdadvisors.com/events/social-analytics/)). The event is led by MWD’s Principal Analyst for Analytics, Helena Schwenk, and Principal Analyst for Collaboration, Angela Ashenden, and includes four free analyst webcasts as well as additional resources from the event’s sponsor (SAS) available in the virtual exhibition hall.

Balancing hunger for information with a need to demonstrate value

In the last five years, social media has exploded into our consciousness and our daily lives, both personally and professionally. But many organisations are finding that it’s very difficult – if not impossible – to keep track of everything across all the different social channels using straight manpower alone. The more experienced they become, the more they discover that it’s hard to get an overall picture of their brand’s perception across multiple channels as a whole. What’s more, as organisations’ investment in social media strategies increases, so the pressure increases to be able to justify this growing investment.

Whether you want to make sense of the noise in the social sphere, measure the impact of your efforts and develop strategies and allocate resources accordingly – or both – the emerging trend of social analytics is increasingly helping organisations to support them in these goals.

“Over the last couple of years, we’ve started to see a growing number of software vendors releasing products and services focused on providing “social analytics,”” said Angela Ashenden, Principal Analyst for collaboration.

“The range of products out there typically help organisations to do one or more of the following three things: monitor social activity, understand the meaning behind the data, and then provide insights that can be applied to active engagement, such as driving campaign management.

“Today the two main areas of technology solutions that address this opportunity are social media monitoring tools and social analytics tools,” Ashenden continues. “Although the two terms are often used interchangeably in the market – which can be confusing – there are significant differences between the two, and we outline these in the webcasts. The more advanced tools are also starting to include some basic features in the area of engagement, such as simple predictions, for example. At the moment there’s a long way to go at this most advanced level in terms of integrating social analytics more tightly with broader business systems to drive decision making, partly because the majority of organisations aren’t mature enough in their understanding of this space to warrant vendors investing in these types of capabilities. However, we fully expect this to develop over time.”

Climbing the five steps of social analytics maturity

Based on independent insights from MWD’s technology and market research and analysis as well as best practice insights from business leaders, this event sets out to help you understand how you can use social analytics to extract value from existing social media marketing efforts (and other use case scenarios such as social media for customer care, market intelligence and online communities) – and provides practical next steps for getting the most out of a social analytics investment.

“We’ve identified five levels of maturity that organisations go through on their social analytics journey,” says Helena Schwenk, Principal Analyst for analytics. “These are observing, classifying, integrating, harmonising, and optimising. In our webcasts we describe these levels in detail and outline how to get started and the vital next steps organisations need to take to capitalise on their social media analytic investments, as well as identifying the potential pitfalls to be avoided and challenges to overcome.”

“Our research tells us that most organisations are still at an early stage of maturity and are focusing their efforts around listening and understanding the volume and shape of online conversations,” continues Helena. “It’s an obvious and also easy place to start; especially as there is a wealth of free tools out there that can get you up and running at a relatively low cost – although such tools can quickly hit a wall if anything more complex or in-depth is required. Our objective is to help organisations leap this wall and make the most of their social media investments.”

About the event

The four free webcasts are accessed via an interactive console which allows the viewer to skip forwards or backwards through the presentations at will, and return to the presentations to re-watch or complete the presentations at any time. The four webcasts are:

- I. Do you need social analytics? (8'25")**

Angela Ashenden provides an overview of the emerging trend of social analytics, comparing it with

similar trends such as social media monitoring, and examining how it can help organisations derive value from its different social channels.

2. **Enabling an integrated marketing strategy (10'20")**

In this presentation, Helena Schwenk examines why marketing has become the focal point for many social analytic efforts and outlines the opportunities and challenges that may arise from its integration across marketing.

3. **Alternative scenarios for social analytics (7'03")**

In this presentation, Angela outlines a variety of different contexts in which social analytics may be applied, contrasting public social media scenarios with those of more targeted internal or external social software implementations, and illustrating the role social analytics can play in delivering value from both investment areas.

4. **Preparing your social analytics strategy (10'05")**

Helena outlines some vital next steps for any organisation looking to capitalise on its social media investment using social analytics, identifying potential pitfalls to be avoided and challenges which need to be overcome.

The event is kindly sponsored by SAS, whose generous patronage enables MWD to provide these events to viewers free of charge. SAS also provides additional free resources via their virtual 'booth' page in the exhibition hall which can be accessed via the event home page. Visitors may also elect to receive information direct from the event sponsor. Visit the event micro-site at <http://www.mwdadvisors.com/events/social-analytics/> to access the webcasts and visit the virtual exhibition hall. No registration is required to access the webcasts.

About MWD Advisors

MWD Advisors is a specialist European IT advisory firm which provides practical, independent industry insights that show how leaders create tangible business improvements from IT investments. Founded in 2005 by two high profile UK-based industry analysts, MWD provides advice to enterprise IT organisations and suppliers of IT technologies and services to help senior decision makers make better business decisions, and to maximise the business value received from IT investments.

MWD's analysts bring over 60 years' experience working with senior IT decision makers worldwide from a range of industries including retail, financial services, oil and gas, travel and leisure, utilities, manufacturing, public sector, healthcare and telecoms. We use our significant industry experience, acknowledged expertise, and a flexible approach to advise businesses on IT architecture, integration, management, organisation and culture.

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