

EVERYTHING
YOU NEED
TO KNOW
ABOUT PAID
SOCIAL



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INTRODUCTION

Once upon a time, brands could rely on their owned social channels to drive results through social. The billions of people active on social media were all accessible – and at a very low cost. If you built it (as in: your fan base), they would come. You could create a social media empire completely through organic methods. And considering all the races to that ‘1 million followers’ mark, that’s what a lot of brands tried to do. But the golden age of organic reach is over.

The major social networks are making it loud and clear: social media is no longer free. As more and more networks turn into paid platforms, reaching the billions of people active on social media will be next to impossible without paid social.

Brands have an ultimatum: pay to play or forfeit the game.

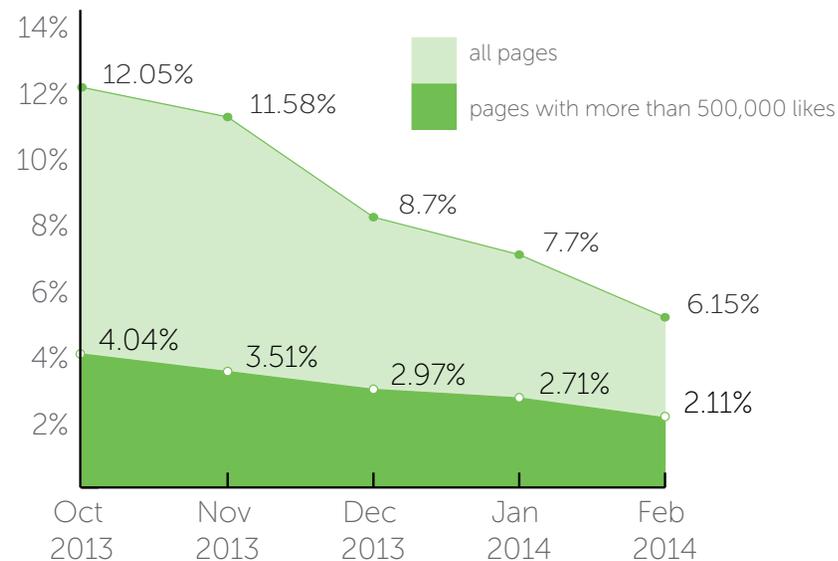
What’s a brand to do... slowly and begrudgingly move toward social advertising or fully embrace the necessary evil? The answer is to get rid of that mentality altogether. Social advertising is an undervalued and underinvested area – social paid spend lags behind customer attention by 50%, or [\\$5 billion](#). This means it’s a huge, untapped resource for marketers.

Paid social isn’t a necessary evil, it’s a one-of-a-kind opportunity for brands.

THE DECLINE OF ORGANIC: WHAT REALLY HAPPENED?

Social networks have changed considerably in recent years – around the time brands really started seeing the value behind (and financially investing in) the medium.

Take a look at Facebook, for example. There are users sharing and ‘liking’ stories, images and videos than ever before. There are countless integrated social games and apps, posting on behalf of users. The volume of social content has exploded. But what happens as people become more social? The impact of each message becomes diluted.



In the same period that the number of Facebook pages ‘liked’ by a typical user [grew 50%](#), organic reach dropped by 50% – from 12% per fan in Oct. 2013 to 6% in Feb. 2014. For pages with more than 500,000 fans, organic is at a measly [2%](#) and heading toward 0%.

IT'S NOT FACEBOOK'S FAULT... REALLY

It might be easy to blame social networks for tinkering with their 'secret sauce' to push brands toward paid. Facebook's revamped algorithm seems like the obvious culprit when your numbers tank. But the party responsible is space. There is simply a finite number of posts that each user is willing (and able) to view in a day, and now there are too many to fit into that space.

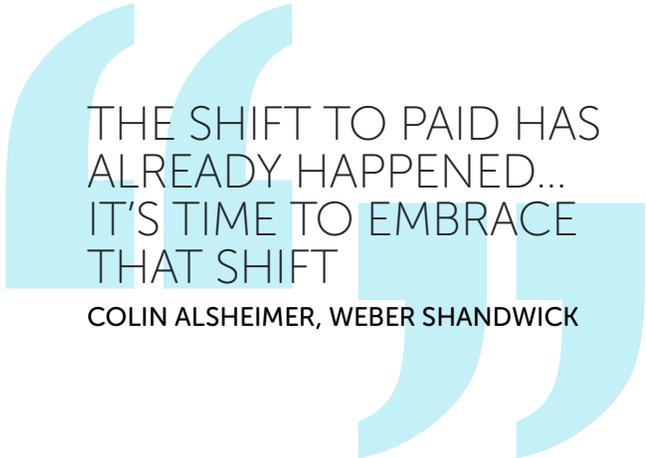
The average user is potentially exposed to [1,500 stories](#) every time they log onto Facebook. Super social users are exposed to 15,000 stories. All of these stories compete against one another for users' newsfeeds and attention spans.

Rather than exposing users to every update, Facebook's new algorithm filters newsfeeds using [100,000](#) different factors to decide which posts will get prime real estate on timelines and which ones will fade into the background. Consider it Darwinism in the social age.

While beneficial for users, the new algorithm left brands with a huge dilemma. After spending years building out a robust fan base, brands suddenly realized that all their efforts were for naught. They can only reach a fraction of their intended audience.

WHERE DOES THIS LEAVE BRANDS?

Relying on organic is no longer a viable option. In order to get the right messages to the right people and drive measurable results through social – and to do all of this at scale – brands need to develop a paid social strategy.



THE SHIFT TO PAID HAS
ALREADY HAPPENED...
IT'S TIME TO EMBRACE
THAT SHIFT

COLIN ALSHEIMER, WEBER SHANDWICK

WHY BRANDS SHOULD INVEST IN PAID

Paid social offers multiple advantages that simply can't be achieved through organic methods.

I. MORE EYES ON YOUR CONTENT

Organic social activity is a long game. Audiences must be gradually built over time and it isn't guaranteed that a worthwhile audience will ever be accumulated. Gambling on a campaign going viral is also risky business. Paid social provides big brands with the reach that they need.

II. THE RIGHT PEOPLE SEE YOUR CONTENT

Organic activity, by definition, spreads on its own accord. You cannot be sure that your intended target audience is seeing your content. Paid social opens up an unrivaled wealth of targeting and audience segmentation options that will ensure your campaigns reach the right people. You're not just getting more views, you're getting valuable ones.

III. YOUR OWNED EFFORTS ARE AMPLIFIED

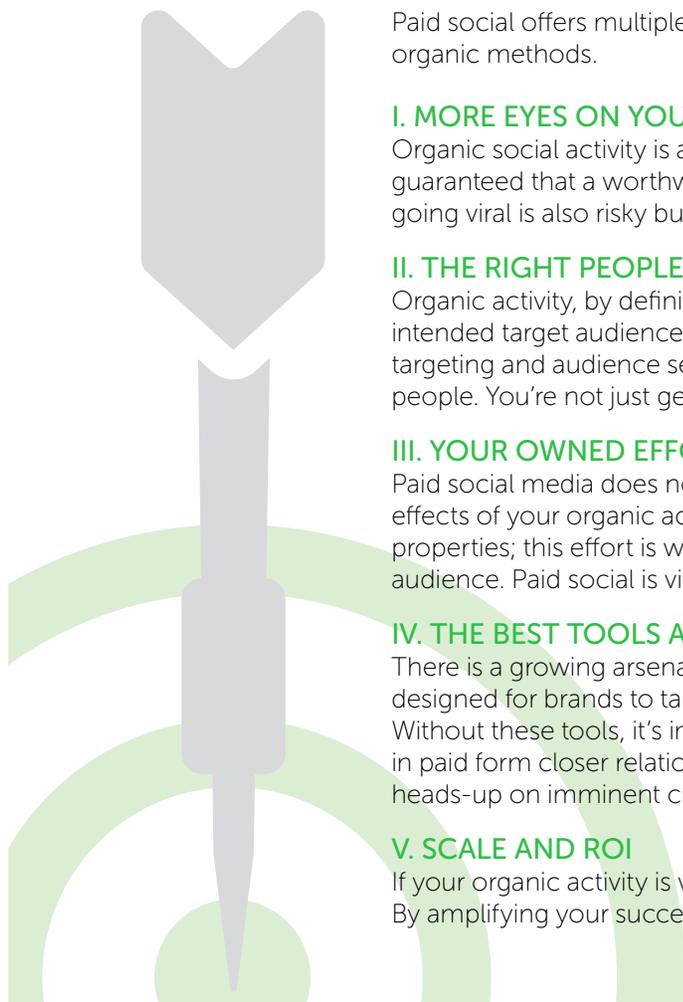
Paid social media does not replace owned social media. It is used to multiply and focus the effects of your organic activity. Many man-hours are required to build and maintain social properties; this effort is wasted when even your most successful posts reach a modest audience. Paid social is vital to extend the reach of your top performing content.

IV. THE BEST TOOLS ARE AT YOUR DISPOSAL

There is a growing arsenal of weapons being added to Facebook and Twitter specifically designed for brands to target, engage and activate audiences, and measure performance. Without these tools, it's impossible for brands to get the most out of social. Brands that invest in paid form closer relationships with the platforms, get early access to new features and get a heads-up on imminent changes.

V. SCALE AND ROI

If your organic activity is working and generating a return, paid is the natural next step. By amplifying your successful campaigns, you reap the rewards of your labor at scale.



DOES PAID SOCIAL PAY OFF?

By now, you have a pretty good understanding of the opportunities around paid. And you see where it's headed... maybe you're even optimistic about its future. But you're probably still unsold on the investment. You're unsure if it's actually worth the financial risk because one day, you'll sit in a budgetary meeting and someone will say, "show me the money."

Castrol Moto recently experimented with paid social. Let's take a look at the results.

ROBERT CORINI
BRAND MANAGER
BP LUBRICANTS:
CASTROL USA

Robert is a dynamic brand-marketing leader for Castrol's Motorcycle products in North America. As the lead brand manager, he is responsible for connecting consumers with the Castrol brand across all channels, including social media in North America.

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CASE STUDY: HOW CASTROL MOTO DROVE 11 TIMES MORE SOCIAL ENGAGEMENT WITH PAID SOCIAL

by Robert Corini of **BP Lubricants: Castrol USA**

We launched the Castrol Moto Facebook community last year. Our objective? To build an online community for motorcycle enthusiasts in North America.

Given the opportunities available through social media, we were convinced this was the right channel for us to communicate our story, our heritage and our products with our consumers. And so, we began our social journey in May 2013. At first, we leveraged a handful of partnerships to help build awareness for our brand. After the first six months, we crunched the numbers in order to gauge our performance.

HERE'S WHAT WE DISCOVERED:

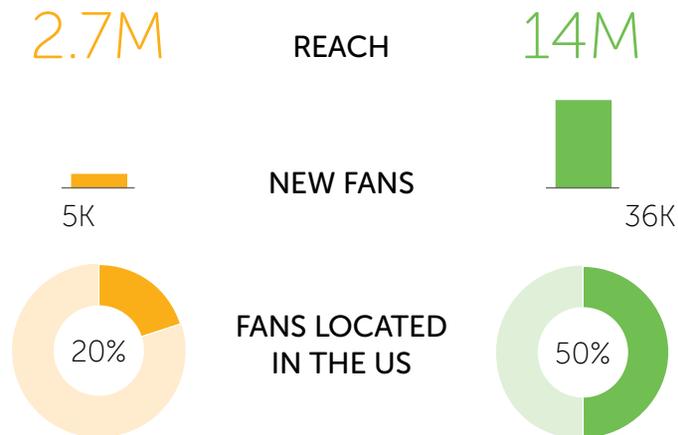
SOCIAL MEDIA PERFORMANCE	BEFORE PAID
reach	2M
social interactions	26K
new fans	5K
fans in the US	20%

The numbers looked optimistic overall, but there was a small issue. We noticed that by relying on our partners to promote our content, we had little control over who saw our posts and eventually subscribed to our page. For example, our target audience was motorcycle enthusiasts in North America, but only 20% of our followers were located in the United States.

We launched a paid media strategy in order to address this gap.

WITHOUT PAID

WITH PAID



We created a series of ads and promoted posts that were targeted at Facebook users based on location, age and interests. We created custom ads that mirrored the interests of those whom we were targeting. During the campaign, we closely watched the performance of each ad and made adjustments to optimize results.

In just eight short months, we've seen outstanding results with paid social.

Paid media has enabled us to not only target the right audience members, but align our creative to match their interests and needs. Our social reach, US fan base and acquisitions have all increased exponentially. And best of all: we're engaging with more fans. Before paid, our Facebook page had only 4,000 monthly interactions.

With paid, we saw 11 times more engagement.



In addition to the improvement in raw numbers, the quality of our engagements has also improved. People aren't just 'liking' statuses and photos, they're actively communicating with the brand – reaching out to us for advice, sharing our stories, etc. Our comments increased more than tenfold over the course of six months.



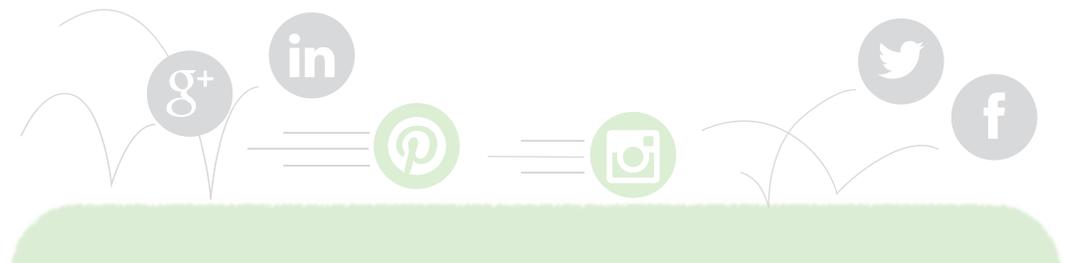
As a result of paid, we're reaching the right people, increasing awareness for our brand and delivering better online experiences.

HOW TO NAVIGATE THE PAID SOCIAL LANDSCAPE

In order to reap the benefits of paid social, brands have to first understand where it's headed – the good, the bad, the confusing.

Like the other aspects of social media, paid social is growing, maturing and changing rapidly. The paid market now totals 4.2 billion users across eight networks. At its current rate (doubling in size every two years), the paid audience is expected to reach 8 billion by 2016.

Networks that were nonexistent a few years ago are now forces to be reckoned with. Paid social is no longer a clear choice between Facebook and Twitter. While the two major players in social – boasting [1.3 billion](#) and [260 million](#) monthly active users in Q1'14 respectively – are still very much running the game, emerging platforms like Instagram and Pinterest are worth a second look.



THE PAID SOCIAL MEDIA AUDIENCE

totals 4.2BN USERS across eight platforms

f 1.3BN

Facebook ads launched Q3 2004. It now has 1.3BN monthly active users (MAUs). These logged-in users are exposed to ads in their news feed (and the right hand side on desktop).

You Tube 1.3BN

YouTube ads launched Q3 2006. It now has 1.3BN monthly unique vistors. This includes logged-in and non-logged-in users who are exposed to in-video ads.

in 200M

LinkedIn ads launched Q3 2008. It now has 200M MAUs. These logged-in users are exposed to ads via sponsored updates.

Twitter 260M

Twitter ads launched Q2 2010. It now has 260M MAUs. These logged-in users are exposed to ads in the Twitter timeline.

t 48M

Tumblr ads launched Q2 2012. It now has 48M MAUs. These logged-in users are exposed to ads in the Tumblr feed.

Pin 60M

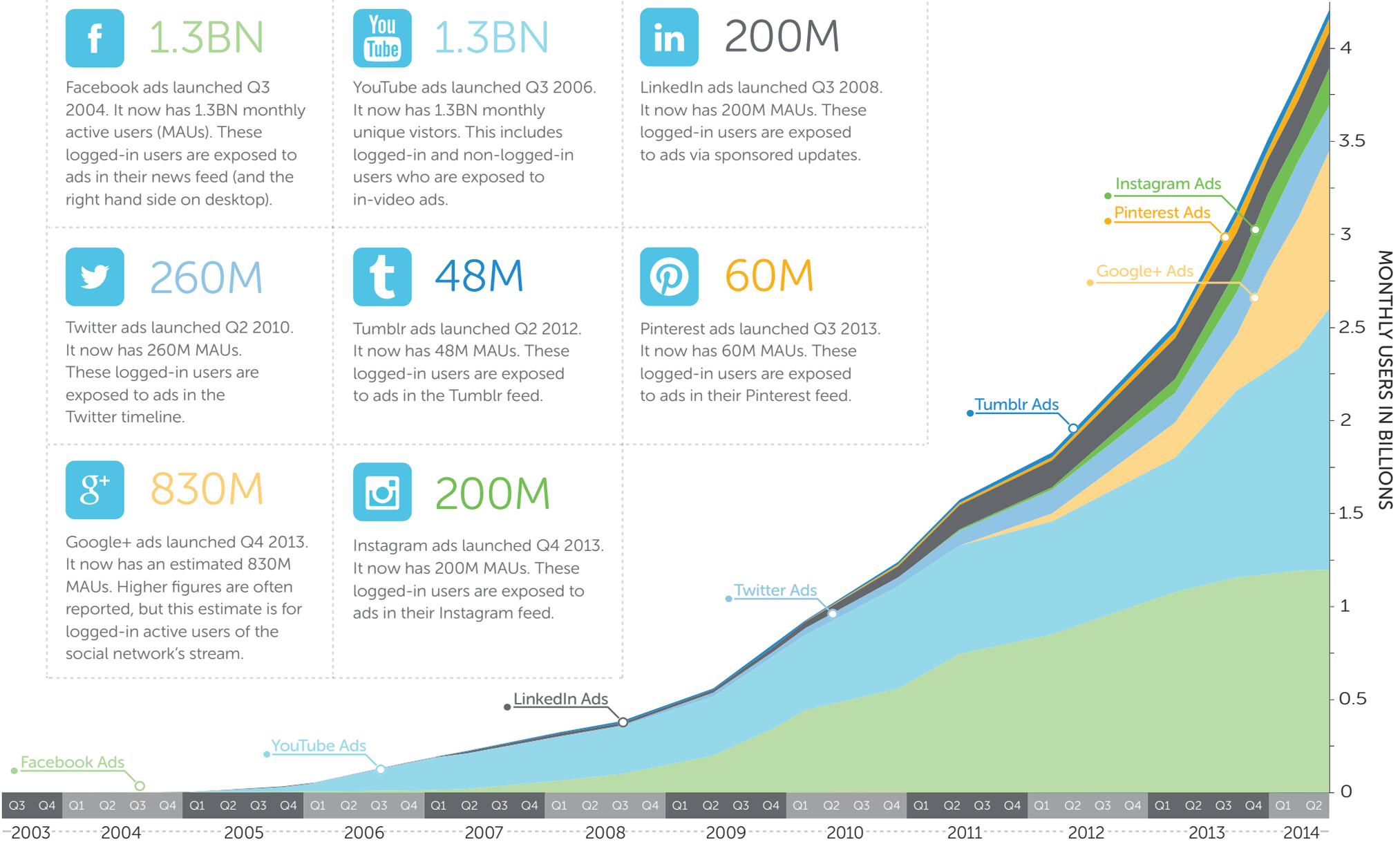
Pinterest ads launched Q3 2013. It now has 60M MAUs. These logged-in users are exposed to ads in their Pinterest feed.

g+ 830M

Google+ ads launched Q4 2013. It now has an estimated 830M MAUs. Higher figures are often reported, but this estimate is for logged-in active users of the social network's stream.

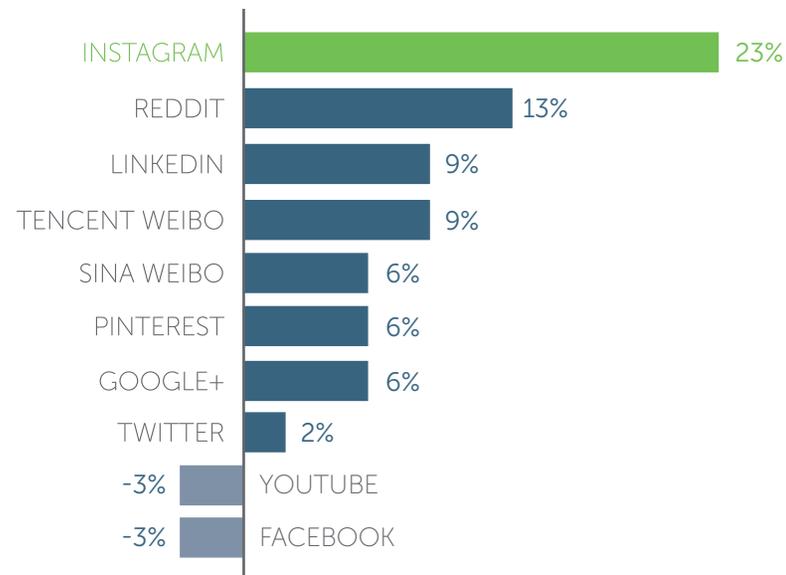
Instagram 200M

Instagram ads launched Q4 2013. It now has 200M MAUs. These logged-in users are exposed to ads in their Instagram feed.



Since 2005, the paid social audience has doubled every two years. At this rate, it'll reach 8BN by 2016 and span 10 platforms.

MEET THE NEW PLAYERS IN PAID SOCIAL



INSTAGRAM: FASTEST GROWING NETWORK

Instagram is the fastest growing social network [globally](#) – outpacing Facebook, Twitter, Youtube, LinkedIn, Google+, Sina Weibo, Reddit, etc.

At its current growth rate of 23%, (over the last six months) Instagram is expected to have 302 million users by next year. That's still not enough to dethrone Facebook, but there is more to the story...

Instagram is the No. 1 social network for delivering engagement, according to a recent report by [Forrester](#) – and by quite a landslide. The social network delivers 58 times more brand engagement than Facebook and 120 times more than Twitter. Who’s engaging with brands on Instagram? [Millennials](#): the next generation of spenders.

Instagram is different from other social platforms; there aren’t any clickthroughs or actions beyond viewing, liking or sharing a post. This means campaigns are purely for branding and they are measured based on reach, ad recall and awareness.

In October 2013, Instagram began [testing](#) sponsored photos and videos. The initial results showed promising results for brands. Ben & Jerry’s, Adidas and Levis all saw a [32 point incremental lift](#) in ad recall on average. Ben & Jerry’s, the top performer in the bunch, reached 9.8 million users over an eight-day testing period. This is [25 times](#) their usual reach. The brand’s first ad received more than 380,000 ‘likes’ – a 2,000 percent increase from the company’s average post



EMERGING PLATFORMS
ARE ALWAYS ON
OUR AGENDA

WILL SILTO, VODAFONE

PINTEREST: MOST DESIRABLE TO DECISION MAKERS

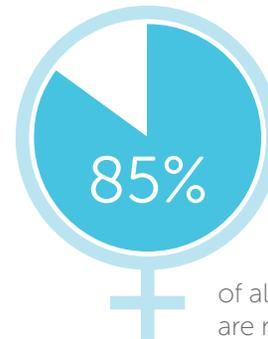
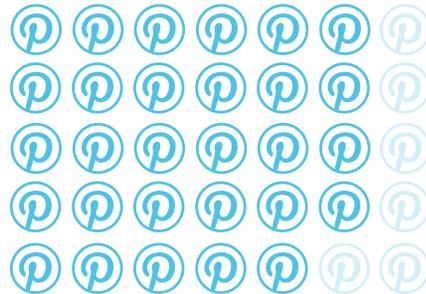
The most interesting thing about Pinterest is that it’s not user or brand-based, but object-based. Users don’t ‘like’ or follow brands, they specifically share (‘pin’) items that they want to buy or ideas they want to try. Due to its object-based focus, Pinterest is a huge opportunity for showcasing products and driving web traffic.

The network’s user base is also the ideal audience group for any e-commerce brand, and for a number of good reasons...

I. PINTEREST'S USERS ARE THE DECISION MAKERS OF THE FAMILY

Of the estimated [60 million users](#), around [80%](#) are females. Of the [30 billion pins](#) now on Pinterest, more than [90%](#) of all pins were created by females. Girls clearly run the world on Pinterest. Why should this be appealing to brands? Because women are the budgetary decision makers – from homes to vacations to healthcare, [85%](#) of all consumer purchases are made by women.

80% of Pinterest users are female



of all brand purchases
are made by women

II. PINTEREST'S USERS HAVE MONEY...

The average pinner's income is [9%](#) higher than non-users.

III. AND THEY'RE NOT SHY TO SPEND IT

Pinterest drives more [traffic](#) to sites than other social networks; it's second to only Facebook. And when users are being referred to these sites, they're adding things to their cart. Roughly [38%](#) of all active users bought something because they saw it on Pinterest. The average order of Pinterest users? [Over \\$120](#) – more than double average order value of Facebook.

Promoted activity on Pinterest is still in its early stages, but testing has shown some [promising results](#). Wayfair reported that traffic from Pinterest ads was 20% more valuable than average visitors and Four Seasons Hotels and Resorts saw an ad for a \$70,000 luxury hotel package repinned over 9,000 times.

Pinterest is already driving revenue for brands in a big way; promoted Pins will just amplify this. There are big things in s-commerce from the social scrapbooking site.

THE 10 COMMANDMENTS OF SOCIAL ADVERTISING

Paid social offers brands a remarkable opportunity to deliver the right content to the right audience and deliver measurable results through social, all at scale – capabilities not possible through organic methods. But in order to achieve the best results through paid, you need the right strategy.

To help you hit the ground running with your paid social initiatives, we put together a list of best practices.

I. MEASURE WISELY

Campaigns should be measured and optimized based on the ultimate goal – be that awareness, sales or something more specific like footfall in store or repeat orders. Once you've identified the overall business goal, you can then select the KPIs (key performance indicators) that map back to this.

Consider using enterprise social media management platforms, as they offer more detailed measurement and reporting than the default tools within social platforms. Having social listening, for example, would allow you to track sentiment for your brands, measure content performance across multiple social networks, stay on track of market trends and benchmark against competitors.

II. CHOOSE THE RIGHT PLATFORMS

Not all platforms will drive the same results. Choose which platforms to run your paid campaigns on based on your objectives and target audience. Is the majority of your target audience active on the main social networks or emerging platforms? Spend more of the budget targeting the portion of your audience that you can most easily influence.

III. STAY ON TARGET

Target the right people with the most relevant ad creative or content. It's important to narrow targeting to the right demographics and interest groups, rather than wasting budget targeting groups that are not relevant to the campaign. Targeting specific groups with content tailored to their interests will improve performance.

IV. CREATE GREAT CONTENT

It's a good idea to use uncluttered, easily recognizable imagery. A strong call to action often works well on Facebook, but emerging paid social platforms require a softer sell. But while there are general guidelines, you should also experiment to confirm what works for your brand. Test different variables: with and without logos, featuring people or no people, product close-ups vs. full shots, and use of colors. Getting creative with your content gets results.

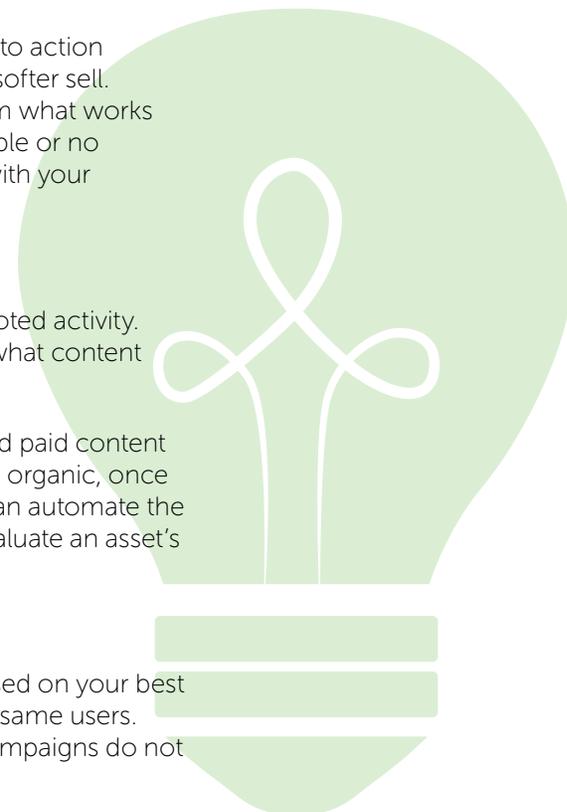
V. ESCALATE THE WINNERS

Non-promoted posts (organic content) should be used to inform your promoted activity. Posts that perform well can be amplified with spend; they can also indicate what content areas need some rethinking.

Using a social media management system that can manage both organic and paid content in the same environment simplifies this process. When paid is integrated with organic, once an organic post reaches a threshold (e.g. high engagement), your platform can automate the promotion of that specific post – removing the manual labor of having to evaluate an asset's performance before putting paid behind it.

VI. KEEP THINGS FRESH

Refresh your ad creative regularly and formulate new ideas and variations based on your best performers. It's important to avoid repeatedly showing similar content to the same users. New imagery and text will appeal to a new audience and ensure that your campaigns do not become stale.



VII. TEST THINGS OUT

Always perform new tests in your campaigns: keywords, bidding, demographics, copy, image variations, time of posts, etc.

Test a variety of interest targeting: keywords, Facebook and Twitter interest categories, Twitter handles, Facebook Custom Audiences, etc.

Ensure that your tests are statistically accurate. To make sound optimization decisions based on your tests, you must generate a large enough sample size for the comparison to be valid. Your budget, media costs and targeting will dictate your potential sample size and the number of tests you can perform.

VIII. OPTIMIZE YOUR BIDDING

Change bids regularly based on performance. Consider automating re-bidding through your social media management system, if possible. Rather than manually increasing or decreasing bids based on performance, you'd be able to create 'rules' that automatically execute this task.

IX. DROP POOR PERFORMERS

Cancel spend on segments that are not performing and set up new tests (it's also important to keep your campaigns, ads and ad sets well structured for easy management).

X. LEARN FROM THE PAST

Make a point of documenting what worked well and, if applicable, use similar techniques as a starting point for your next campaign.

Brands that handle large amounts of social assets should consider using a social media management platform that includes an asset manager (a.k.a. content library). This feature allows you to store, manage, check the performance of, reuse and share assets from a central system – rather than having to manually enter data in Excel spreadsheets and store files in desktop folders.

CONCLUSION

As social evolves, adaptation is the only way for brands to survive. This requires revisiting and revising content strategies. It means adopting the right mindset across the organization. And most importantly, it necessitates staying up-to-date on the latest changes in social.

The biggest change facing brands today is the tectonic shift away from organic. While still very much relevant to the social media marketing mix, organic can no longer exist independently. Organic and paid are converging and becoming dependent upon one another. You still need great organic content, otherwise, you shouldn't be on social. But you need paid to make your organic efforts count.

Without paid social, your organic content is the proverbial tree in the forest... if great content happens, and no one is around to see it, does it make an impact?

ASK THE EXPERTS

You've seen the Sprinklr perspective on paid social. But it wouldn't be a fair discussion without a few different takes. And so, we sat down recently with thought leaders from various industries to get their vision for the future of social media and the role of paid.

WILL SILTO VODAFONE

MARKETING MANAGER – DISPLAY, SOCIAL MEDIA AND AFFILIATES

Will sits within the Brand and Communications Department. He is experienced in both the financial and telecommunications industries holding both analytical and product marketing roles.

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CAROLYN ANDERSON visit kc

SOCIAL MEDIA MANAGER

Carolyn manages the social media landscape at Visit KC, working daily to fulfill the organization's mission of igniting global passion for Kansas City.

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WILL SILTO OF VODAFONE

MARKETING MANAGER – DISPLAY, SOCIAL MEDIA AND AFFILIATES

HOW IMPORTANT IS PAID SOCIAL TO YOUR BUSINESS WHEN COMPARED TO OTHER CHANNELS?

Paid social is an intrinsic part of our digital marketing and differs for a couple of reasons. Firstly, the area of paid social is still relatively infantile vs. some of the more established channels, which is great as the scope of opportunity is continually changing. Secondly, and most importantly for me, it enables very granular targeting ensuring you are reaching the right people with the right message, which is crucial in delivering a great user experience.

DO YOU EXPECT TO INCREASE YOUR SPEND ON PAID SOCIAL MEDIA NEXT YEAR?

Our investment in paid social has increased over the past three years – which is a trend I expect to continue. As social media becomes further integrated into people's lives, the importance to have a relevant paid strategy grows in tandem.

DO YOU WORK ON A CAMPAIGN BASIS OR ARE ANY OF YOUR BRANDS 'ALWAYS-ON'?

Both! We have an 'always-on' strategy to ensure we are in contact with our customers, but will adapt this where necessary if there is a campaign that requires a different approach or holds a different message that may require a more tailored approach.

DO YOU HAVE ANY PLANS TO SPEND ON EMERGING SOCIAL PLATFORMS WHEN THEY BECOME AVAILABLE? (E.G. INSTAGRAM, PINTEREST) IF SO, WHY?

Emerging platforms are always on our agenda – the critical piece for me is ensuring that you can leverage the platforms for actual business benefit and not to follow suit because 'that's what other brands are doing.'

WHAT EXCITES YOU MOST ABOUT THE FUTURE OF PAID SOCIAL?

As social becomes more and more integrated into people's everyday lives, the need for companies to recognize and incorporate this into their planning is ever more important.

This is what excites me the most about paid social – because it's still emerging, the potential still exists to really own and define the direction and role of paid social. My philosophy across all digital channels is 'progression through innovation,' and I think there is no other channel that rings more true than paid social.

PAID SOCIAL IS AN
INTRINSIC PART OF OUR
DIGITAL MARKETING

WILL SILTO, VODAFONE

COLIN ALSHEIMER OF WEBER SHANDWICK

SENIOR DIGITAL MANAGER

HOW IMPORTANT IS PAID SOCIAL?

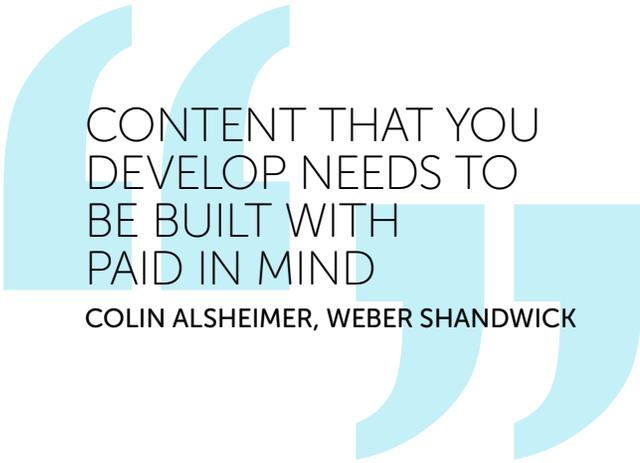
With the way that the industry has progressed and changed over the last couple of years, paid social and paid media in general have become a vital component to the success of a marketing campaign.

These days, as social channels like Facebook and Twitter move more to the pay-to-play model, and in the case of Facebook actively tweaking content display algorithms to encourage this, it's almost not worth devoting resources or time to extended social campaigns without paid support. The days where a marketer could drive measurable business results at impactful volumes through organic methods alone are basically over. Paid is now mandatory, and no longer optional.

OWNED, EARNED AND PAID: WHO WILL WIN IN FIVE YEARS?

I don't think it will ever be a singular tactic that wins out. Smart marketers and successful brands find ways to leverage all three, and they create campaigns where each tactic reinforces the others. Nothing in marketing exists in a vacuum any more.

For example, now, when we secure earned media placements, our work doesn't stop at securing the placement. We will take that placement and distribute it via owned media channels. We'll also apply paid media through targeted website distribution channels, or paid social. It all becomes a working ecosystem.



CONTENT THAT YOU
DEVELOP NEEDS TO
BE BUILT WITH
PAID IN MIND

COLIN ALSHEIMER, WEBER SHANDWICK

WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF PAID FOR BRANDS?

Ensuring that the content that brands create for their social channels is reaching the right audiences at the right volume and driving measurable business results that actually move the needle.

WHEN SHOULD BRANDS MAKE THE TRANSITION TO PAID SOCIAL?

Yesterday. Seriously. The switch to paid social has already happened and it's been happening for a long time now. It's time to embrace that shift and start to allocate portions of marketing budgets to paid media programs. Otherwise the impact of social programs will continue to lag behind other marketing programs that drive better results with a more efficient spend.

THE DAYS WHERE A
MARKETER COULD DRIVE
MEASURABLE BUSINESS
RESULTS AT IMPACTFUL
VOLUMES THROUGH
ORGANIC METHODS
ALONE ARE OVER

COLIN ALSHEIMER, WEBER SHANDWICK

MAJOR PLAYERS VS. EMERGING PLATFORMS – WHERE SHOULD BRANDS INVEST?

Here's where I'll give the classic consultant's answer – it depends. What are your goals? Who is your target audience? The major players have the user volume and typically the more developed advertising platforms. But it may be that the average Pinterest user is a much better fit for your product, so it makes more sense to devote resources and spend to that platform than Facebook, for example. Of course working with emerging players comes with trade-offs. Some don't have advertising programs yet, or, in the case of a platform like Instagram, they're still developing their offering and working with a limited set of brands in a closed (and expensive!) beta testing environment. Others (Tumblr comes to mind) may have an advertising platform, but limited targeting and customization options, so your advertising may not always reach the right people.

HOW CAN COMPANIES GET THE MOST OUT OF PAID SOCIAL?

Make sure to devote time, budget, and resources at the outset of a project. Content that you develop needs to be built with paid in mind. Content that is used in paid social sometimes needs to be optimized and developed differently from how it would be used through organic methods alone.

Also, don't skimp out on the budgets. The best way to ensure successful paid social campaigns is to come to the table with a sizable budget. This will help ensure that you'll have competitive bids in a CPC self-serve model, and that you'll be able to drive impactful volume.

FOR BRANDS THAT HAVEN'T STARTED, WHAT ARE 5 THINGS THEY NEED?

1. A clear understanding of business goals
2. A clear understanding of your target demographics
3. An ability to test and measure (curiosity helps)
4. High quality content
5. Budget and campaign management resources

WHAT ARE THE BIGGEST MISTAKES BRANDS MAKE WITH PAID:

Mostly not incorporating paid elements into campaigns or thinking that campaign goals can be achieved with a budget of one or two thousand dollars. Beyond that, it's not devoting time and resources to ongoing optimization of a paid social campaign. Unfortunately it's not a set-it-and-forget-it tactic!

CAROLYN ANDERSON OF VISIT KC

SOCIAL MEDIA MANAGER

WHEN DID YOU MAKE THE DECISION TO MOVE TOWARD PAID?

Kansas City Convention & Visitors Association (Visit KC) started to test paid advertising – promoting our channels and posts – in 2012. We saw promising results with general promotions, but we kept our investment fairly frugal since we were still seeing positive results through organic methods.

As rumors of changes to the way Facebook promoted brand posts became a reality, we noticed a dramatic drop in our organic reach around October 2013. We were prepared for this, however, and made sure our budget allowed for changes in the social landscape. We started allocating dollars to test reach and engagement where it was once 100% organic. Our efforts paid off.

HOW DO YOU SEE THE PAID SOCIAL LANDSCAPE DEVELOPING OVER THE NEXT THREE YEARS?

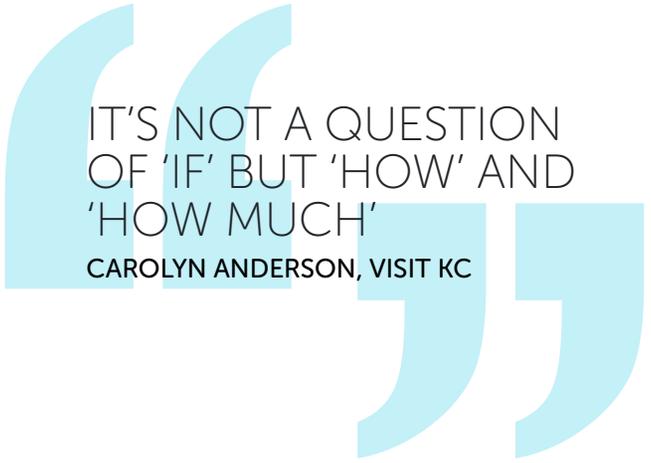
That's the part of my job that's both fun and challenging. We can't know what new platforms might emerge, let alone how they will change, evolve or die! (I once thought Plurk was going to be huge.) How we decide to allocate our dollars throughout the different social channels requires constant testing, evaluating and adjusting.

It's not a question of 'if,' but 'how' and 'how much.'

HOW IMPORTANT IS PAID TO YOUR OVERALL SOCIAL MEDIA STRATEGY?

Paid social allows us to focus our ad buys. As a marketer, you always want to reach your intended audience, but your control over that depends entirely on the channel. It may cost me more money than before to promote a local event, but I can target my ads specifically when I put dollars behind them. For example, when marketing an event centered around craft beer, you don't need to promote the event to members of your audience who can't legally drink.

The greatest benefit of paid for any organization is the opportunity to hyper-target your posts and get them in front of the people who are actually interested in what you're promoting.



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CAROLYN ANDERSON, VISIT KC

WHAT ARE SOME OF YOUR BEST PRACTICES FOR PAID?

No surprise here: testing is crucial. Start by identifying the most common types of posts you push out. Product posts every Tuesday? Little-known facts every Thursday? By identifying common themes, you're in a better position to begin testing and can prioritize your budget accordingly.

Knowing your audience is critical whether you're seeking paid or organic reach. In the travel and tourism industry, for example, seasonality and personality naturally play a role in the type of posts you'll want to promote. If you're targeting a thrill seeker, you'll obviously want to promote adventurous destinations and extreme activities. If someone is more of a history buff, they'll be more interested in your posts referencing landmarks, museums and famous sites.

WHAT IS ONE PIECE OF ADVICE YOU WOULD GIVE TO OTHER COMPANIES?

Two things: 1. Social isn't going anywhere. 2. Social isn't free anymore!

Actually, let me rephrase that: social is constantly evolving, so plan for the unexpected and set aside budget for experimentation – to allow your content to have the best possible chance to reach the most relevant, engaged and EXCITED audience you can..



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Request a Demo

Product Sheet Info

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Sprinklr is the most complete enterprise social media management technology in the world, purpose-built for large companies to drive business outcomes and manage customer experiences across all touch points. Called “the most powerful technology in the market” by Forrester Research, Sprinklr’s fully integrated social media management software powers more than four billion social connections across 77 countries. Headquartered in New York City with more than 550 employees globally, Sprinklr is revolutionizing customer engagement for more than 750 top enterprise brands, including IHG, Intel, Microsoft, Samsung, and Virgin America, and partners like Deloitte, Accenture, R/GA, Golin, and AKQA. For more information, visit sprinklr.com or tweet us @sprinklr.

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