Canary in the Coal Mine: How Social Data Can Prepare Us for Big Data
“I believe that, in the future, social networks will be like air.”
Charlene Li, 2008
1: Social data is a type of big data

Volume
Millions of conversations

Velocity
Thousands of posts per second

Variety
Structured and unstructured data

Source (3Vs construct): Gartner Group
2. Social media spans the enterprise

"In which of the following departments are there dedicated people (can be less than one FTE) executing social?"

- Marketing: 73.4%
- Corporate Communications/PR: 65.6%
- Customer Support: 39.8%
- Digital: 36.7%
- Social Media: 35.2%
- HR: 28.9%
- Product development/R&D: 16.4%
- Advertising: 16.4%
- Customer/User experience: 14.8%
- IT: 14.1%
- Executive: 10.9%
- Legal: 9.4%
- Market Research: 7.8%

At least 13 different departments actively involved in social media
Average number of owned social accounts (enterprise-class companies): 178

“Approximately how many official social accounts exist across the entire company, including all business units, products, or regions? (Please provide your best estimate.)”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Platform</th>
<th>Average # of accounts</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Twitter</td>
<td>39.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blog</td>
<td>31.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Facebook</td>
<td>29.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LinkedIn</td>
<td>28.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Forum/Message Board/Communities</td>
<td>23.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>YouTube</td>
<td>9.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foursquare</td>
<td>6.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All Others</td>
<td>5.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flickr</td>
<td>3.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gowalla</td>
<td>0.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>SUM</strong></td>
<td><strong>178</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Base: 140 global corporate social media program managers at companies with over 1000 employees

Source: “A Strategy for Managing Social Media Proliferation,” Altimeter Group (January 5, 2012)
3: Business value depends on where you sit
Six primary use cases for social data

The Social Media Measurement Compass

- **Innovation**: Collaborating with customers to drive future products and services
- **Brand Health**: A measure of attitudes, conversation and behavior toward your brand
- **Customer Experience**: Improving your relationship with customers, and their experience with your brand
- **Marketing Optimization**: Improving the effectiveness of marketing programs
- **Operational Efficiency**: Where and how your company reduces expenses
- **Revenue Generation**: Where and how your company generates revenue

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4: **It disrupts interpretive conventions**

1. **Strains the definition of an analyst.** Consumerization of IT = consumerization of data. Broader set of stakeholders trying to interpret social data.

2. **Strains the definition of expertise.** Social expertise, analytical expertise. Few combine both domains.

3. **Strains confidence levels.** Nascent analytics and 3-V data make for imperfect science.

4. **This will only get worse** as data becomes more freely available in real/right time.
Organizations experiment to find meaning...

Figure 6: Brands Blend Top-Down and Bottom-Up Measurement Approaches

“In which ways does your organization measure the revenue impact of social media?”

- Anecdote: 44%
- Correlation: 44%
- Links: 42%
- Tagging & cookies: 37%
- Integrated: 32%
- A/B or Mutivariate Testing: 17%
- Direct: 16%

Base: 71 respondents responsible for social media measurement in their organization

Source: “The Social Media ROI Cookbook: Six Ingredients Top Brands Use to Measure the Revenue Impact of Social Media,” Altimeter Group (July 24, 2012)
…with unexpected results

Figure 4: The Primary Business Value of Social Media: Customer Insight

“What have been the primary positive impacts of social media measurement within your organization? (Check up to three)”

- Customer/community insight: 84%
- Decision-making: 51%
- Investment: 35%
- Financial impacts: 32%
- Organizational development: 26%

Base: 69 respondents responsible for social media measurement in their organization

Source: “The Social Media ROI Cookbook: Six Ingredients Top Brands Use to Measure the Revenue Impact of Social Media,” Altimeter Group (July 24, 2012)
5. It drives organizational change
5 primary organizational structures for social
Most companies organize as Hub & Spoke, but are moving toward Multiple Hub & Spoke

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2010</th>
<th>2012</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Decentralized</td>
<td>10.8%</td>
<td>9.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Centralized</td>
<td>28.8%</td>
<td>29.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hub and Spoke</td>
<td>41%</td>
<td>35.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multiple Hub and Spoke</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>23.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Holistic</td>
<td>1.4%</td>
<td>2.4%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Decentralized: No one department manages or coordinates; efforts bubble up from the edges of the company.

Centralized: One department (like Corp Communications) manages all social activities.

Hub and Spoke: A cross-functional team sits in a centralized position and helps various nodes such as business units.

Multiple Hub and Spoke ("Dandelion"): Similar to Hub and Spoke but applicable to multinational companies where "companies within companies" act nearly autonomously from each other under a common brand.

Holistic: Everyone in the company uses social media safely and consistently across all organizations.
In summary, social data...

1. is a type of big data
2. spans the organization
3. has variable business value
4. disrupts how we understand our business
5. drives organizational change

All this is or will be true of big data
“If big data will be like air, we’d better start taking care of our air quality now.”
Susan Etlinger, 2013
Social data is the canary in the coal mine

Life for an actual canary in a coal mine could be described in three words: "short but meaningful."

Source: Wisegeek.com
Air quality control for big data

1. **It’s not just about IT data and analysts**
   - Social data stakeholders are big data stakeholders. Build relationships and plan cohesive analytical approaches.
   - Enterprises are already starting to integrate social and enterprise data; get ahead of the curve.
   - This requires mutual education.
   - Cultivate your business stakeholders now, including executive champions!
   - Hint: remember the 13 departments and start there.)
Air quality control for big data

2. **It requires a holistic approach with tailored execution**
   - Analysts across the organization must work cohesively with shared approaches and tools
   - This means different backgrounds, skill levels and focuses
   - Start incrementally and build over time
Air quality control for big data

3. **Use social media adoption as a starting point for what to expect:**
   - **Financial.** Building business cases; what’s working?
   - **Organizational.** Which silos are breaking? How is the organization adapting?
   - **Cultural.** What happens when big data is a given? How does it affect decision making?
   - **Political.** How are decisions being made? What are the unintended consequences?
A healthy environment = happy canaries
Thank you

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