



Social Media Without A Parachute

*Survey Results From Digital Brand
Expressions*

June 2010



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“ I can't say that I'm surprised by the findings of our 2010 research study on corporate social media adoption. In the current marketplace, it's fairly well established that social media is a channel that businesses must participate in, leaving CEOs with the new challenge of planning and implementing brand aligned initiatives enterprise-wide and gaining control to ensure brand protection as well as network and intellectual property security. ”

Veronica Fielding
President & CEO
Digital Brand Expressions

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Executive Summary

A Game Plan In Place?

While 78% percent of the respondents said they are using social media, only 41% of them said they have a strategic plan in place for their social media usage, leaving close to 60% without a game plan for their social media activities.

Which Departments Use Social Media?

Of those companies that work from some plan, 94% say that marketing activities are included in the plan and 71% say that the Marketing Department is the group with the primary responsibility for creating and maintaining the firm's social media presence.

Seventy-one percent of respondents with a plan (71%) indicate they use social media for public relations communications, and 55% say that they use social media for sales-related activities. Only 16% say their HR team is using social media for recruiting, employee retention, training and development, etc. Just 26% use it for customer service.

No Plan Yet

Of the firms reporting that they have no plan in place for social media, 88% agree it is important to have such a plan, suggesting that perhaps the lack of a cohesive planning process is preventing the company from moving forward to adopt strategies for the social channel.

For the firms without a plan in place, the question of which departments should be a part of the plan were more evenly spread, though Marketing (100%), PR (70%) were still the top areas, with customer service also being suggested as a key area for activity at 56%.



Employee Education/Instruction Lacking

Surprisingly, even for the firms that do have a strategic plan in place, only 29% reported distributing policies and/or communications protocols to employees. This leaves the majority of organizations exposed to problems arising from employees saying the wrong things in the wrong ways to the wrong people at the wrong time.



Conclusion

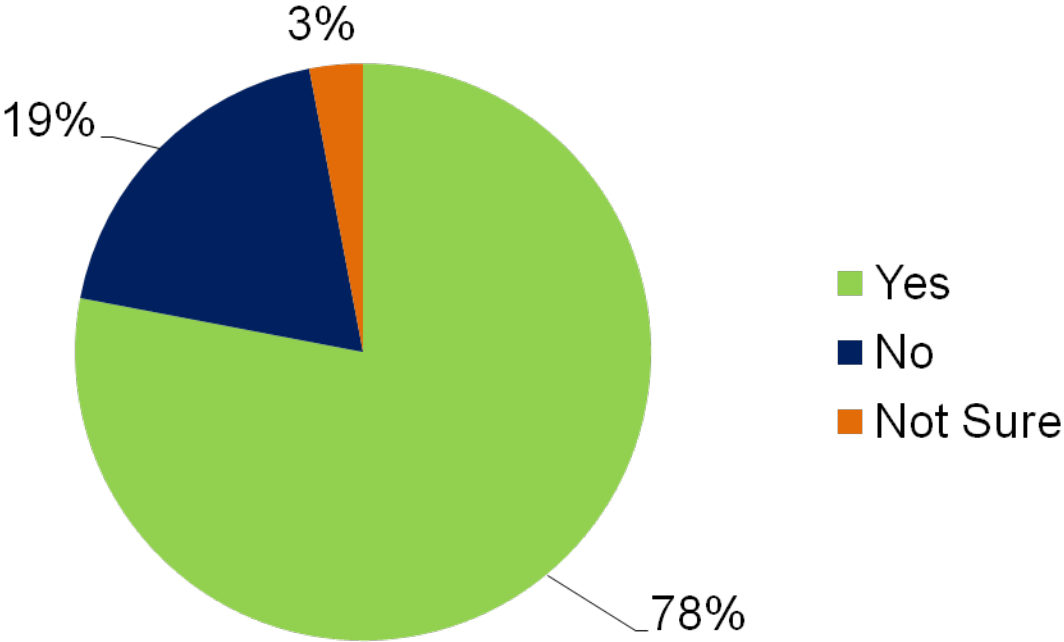
The move into the social arena appears to be being led by Marketing and PR departments with HR

lagging behind. Most companies appear to be shooting from the hip, with no cohesive game plan or measurement systems in place. Even among those with a plan, few have written policies and communications protocols in place, leaving the organization exposed to problems arising out of employees communicating in ways that inadvertently hurt, rather than help, their company brands.

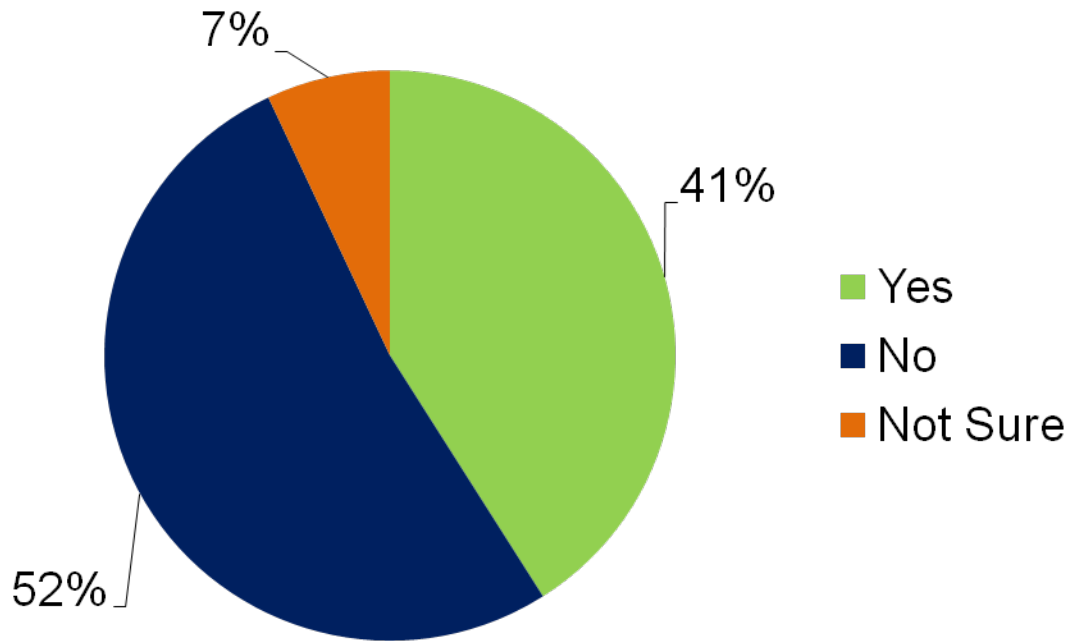
Companies that have held back on adopting social media throughout their organizations would benefit from starting with a cohesive plan that involves all of the key groups within the organization. Organizations that are already communicating in the social channel would benefit from making sure all employees are apprised of the firm's social media communications policies and that department-specific protocols are in place to empower employees to communicate with confidence and to elevate conversations to the proper authorities within their organizations if the need arises.

Key Findings

Is your company actively utilizing social media (sites such as LinkedIn, Facebook, YouTube, etc.)?



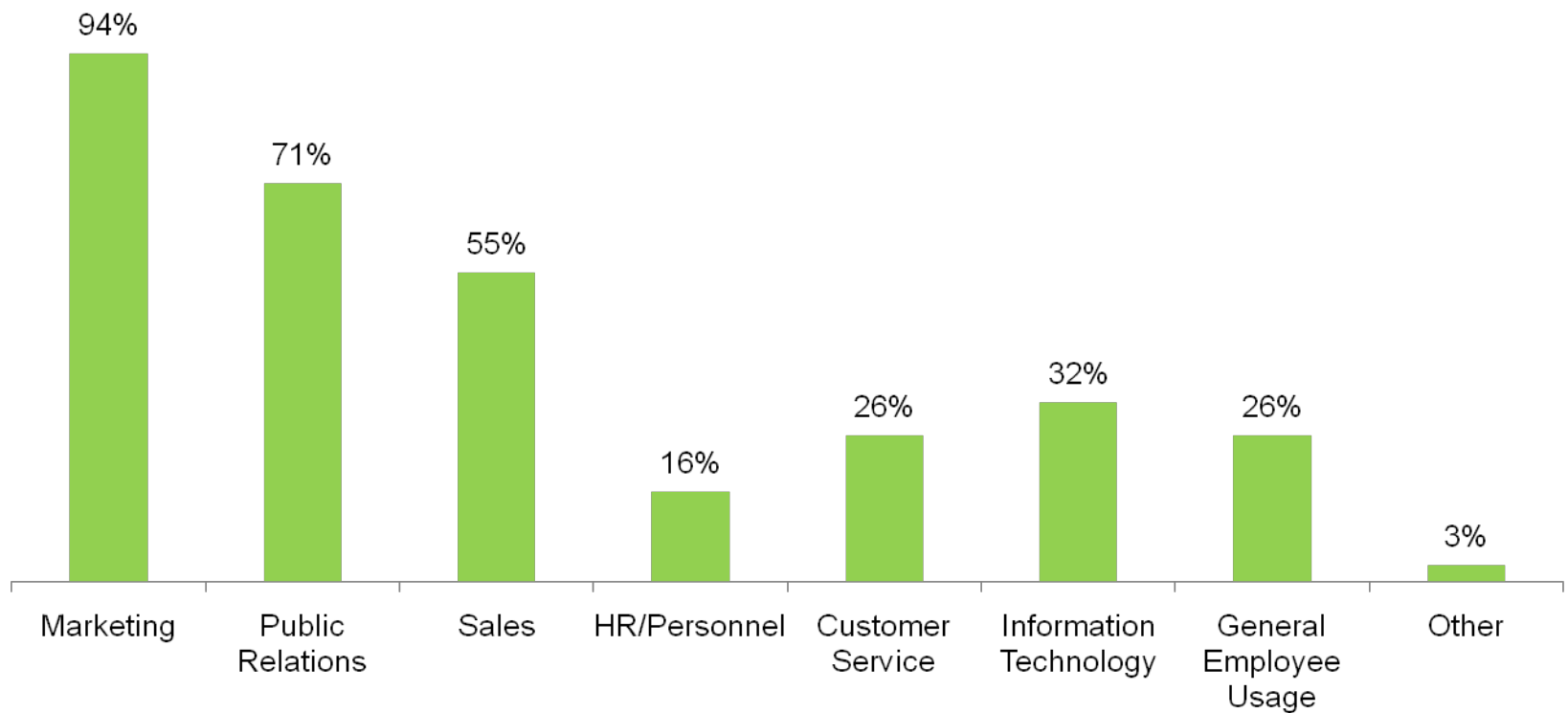
Source: 2010 Digital Brand Expressions Social Media Survey (n=97)
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Source: 2010 Digital Brand Expressions Social Media Survey (n=97)
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Does your company have a strategic social media communications plan in place?

Which areas of your company **are included** in your strategic social media communications plan?



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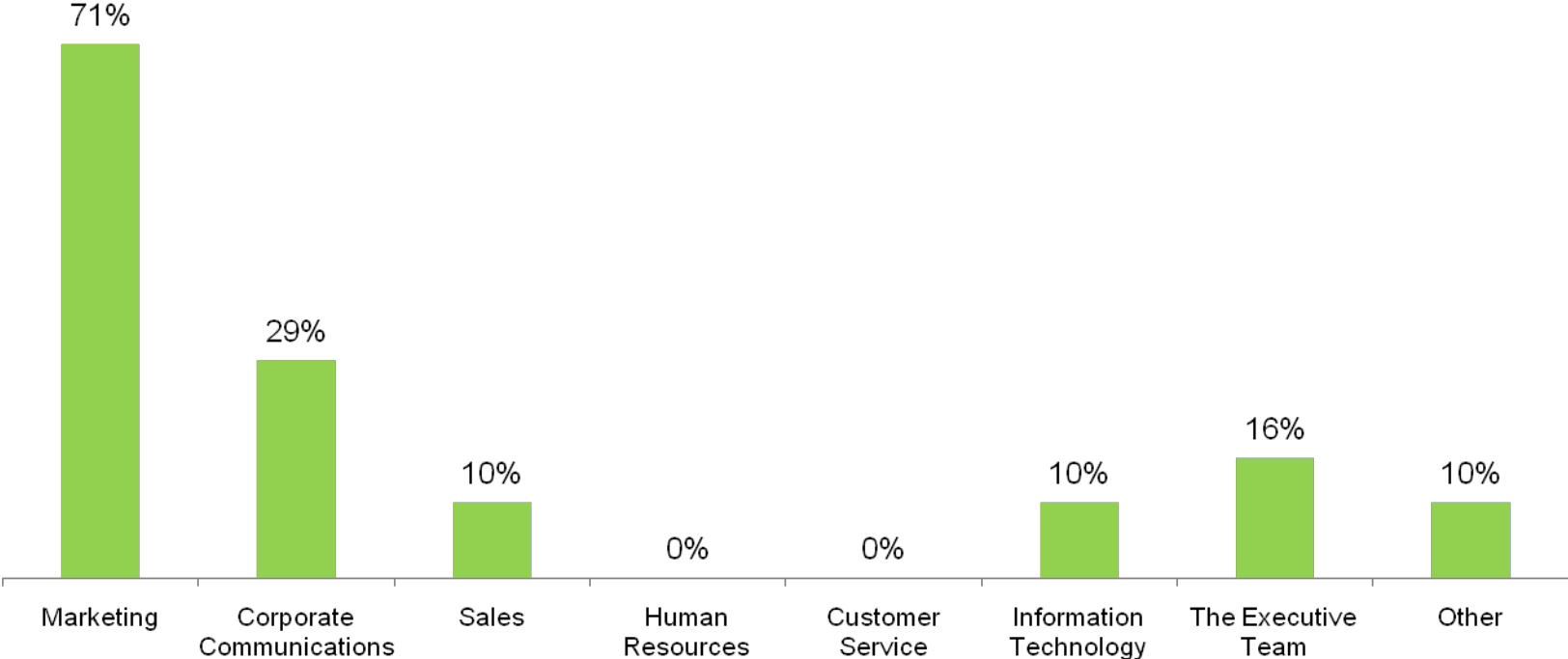
Which of the following activities **have been included** in your company's social media communications plan?



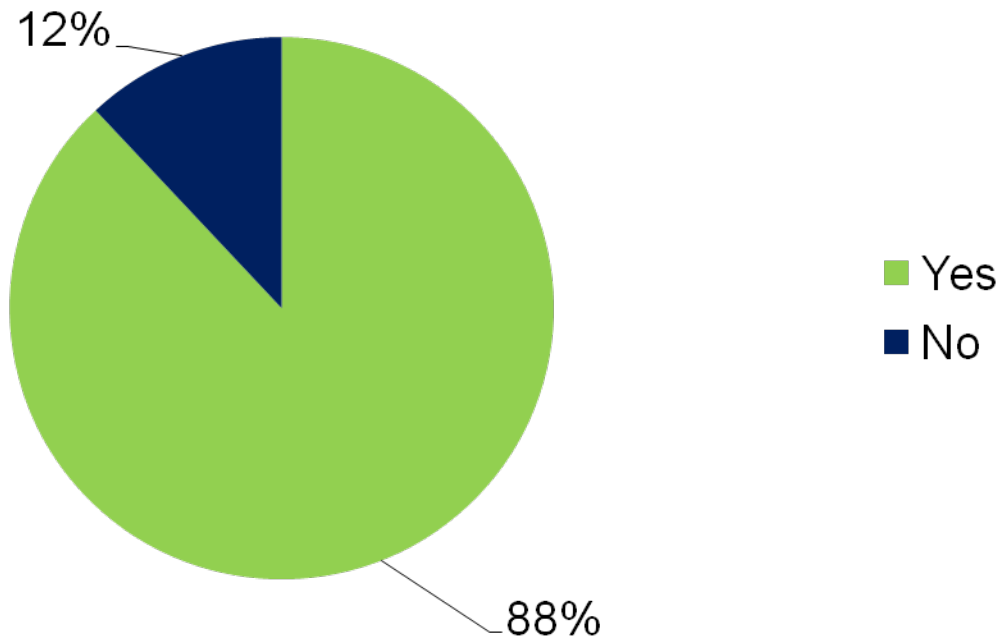
Registering branded usernames on important social media websites	77%
Researching how brand competitors and key stakeholders are utilizing social media	74%
Setting up metrics/tracking methods to measure ROI of social media activities	71%
Allocating resources for ongoing social media activities	90%
Specifying the proper configuration of account settings on important social media websites	55%
Preparing and distributing protocols/policies for ongoing communications, including how to respond to positive/negative comments on social media websites	45%
Preparing and distributing protocols/policies for utilization of social media websites by specific departments, e.g. guidelines for Sales, Talent Recruitment, Customer Service, etc.	29%
Planning for ongoing monitoring of brand reputation in the social media environment	52%
Distributing guidelines for all employees regarding their general use of social media for personal and professional use	39%

Source: 2010 Digital Brand Expressions Social Media Survey (n=31)
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Which area of your company is responsible for the creation and maintenance of your strategic social media communications plan?



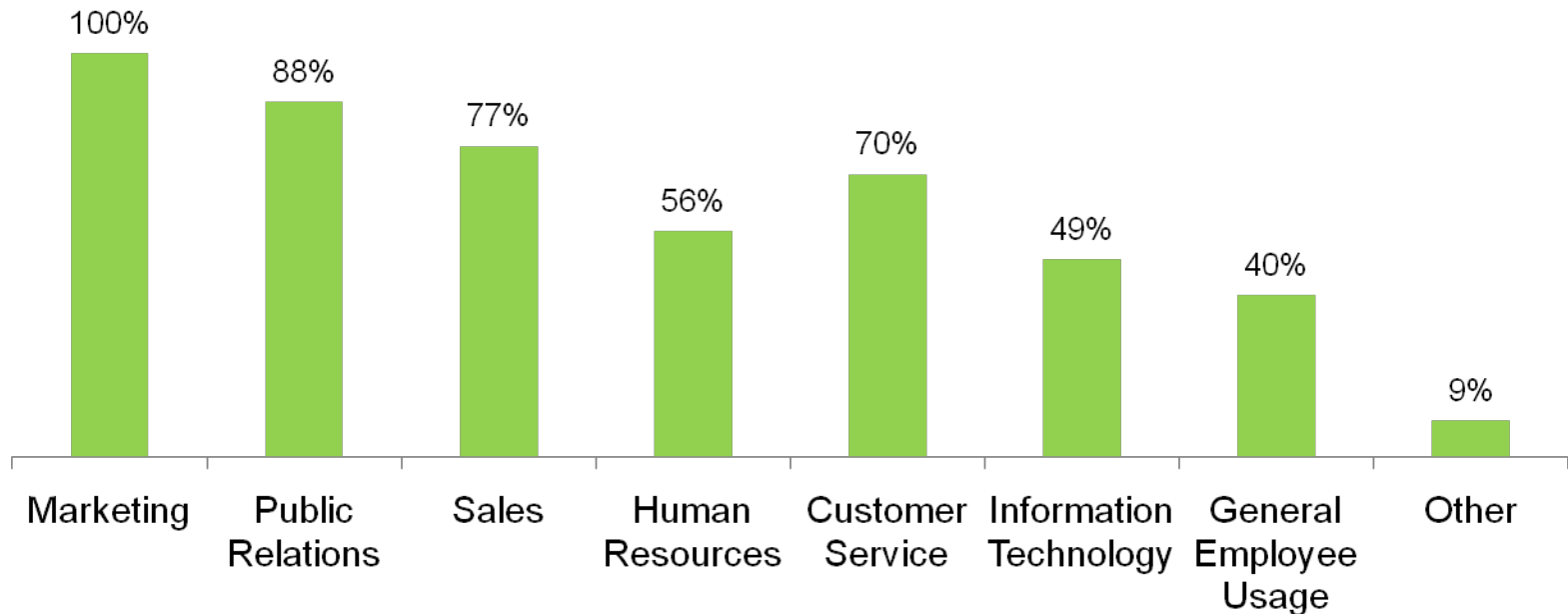
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Do you think it's **important** to have a strategic social media communications plan in place?

Source: 2010 Digital Brand Expressions Social Media Survey (n=58)
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Which areas of a company do you think **should be included** in a company's strategic social media communications plan?



Source: 2010 Digital Brand Expressions Social Media Survey (n=43)
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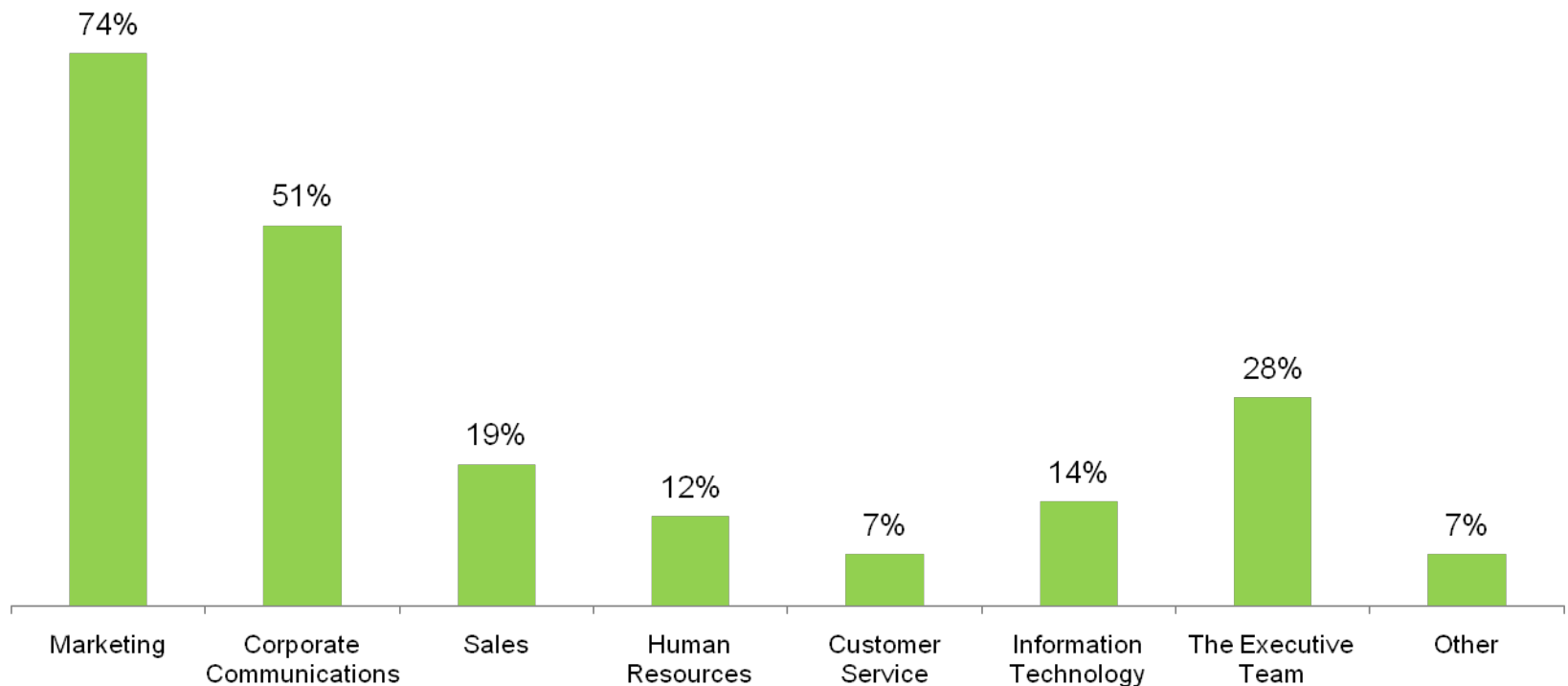
Which of the following activities **would you want included** in your company's social media communications plan?



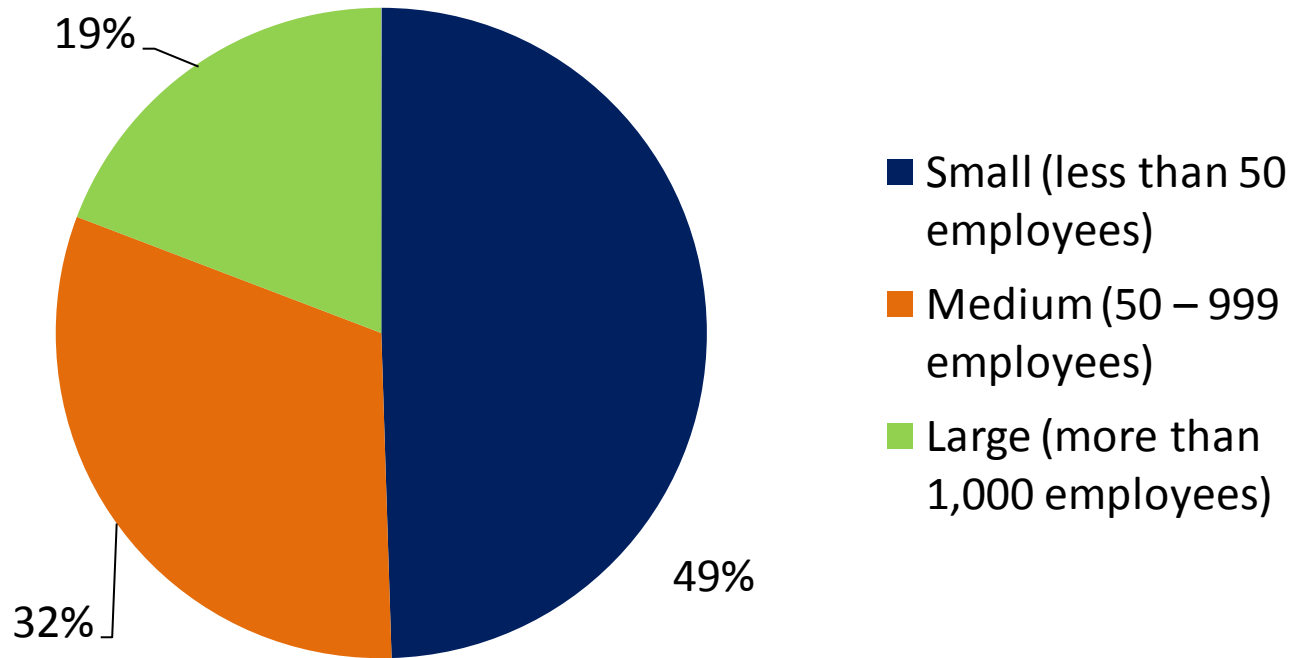
Registering branded usernames on important social media websites	57%
Researching how brand competitors and key stakeholders are utilizing social media	67%
Setting up metrics/tracking methods to measure ROI of social media activities	69%
Allocating resources for ongoing social media activities	76%
Specifying the proper configuration of account settings on important social media websites	43%
Preparing and distributing protocols/policies for ongoing communications, including how to respond to positive/negative comments on social media websites	71%
Preparing and distributing protocols/policies for utilization of social media websites by specific departments, e.g. guidelines for Sales, Talent Recruitment, Customer Service, etc.	67%
Planning for ongoing monitoring of brand reputation in the social media environment	71%
Distributing guidelines for all employees regarding their general use of social media for personal and professional use	60%

Source: 2010 Digital Brand Expressions Social Media Survey (n=42)
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Which areas of a company do you think **should be responsible** for the creation and maintenance of a strategic social media communications plan?



Source: 2010 Digital Brand Expressions Social Media Survey (n=43)
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Source: 2010 Digital Brand Expressions Social Media Survey (n=77)
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What is the size of your organization?

Survey Methodology

DBE completed its polling of 100 companies in May 2010 to find out:

1. If social media is being utilized
2. If there is a strategy or plan in place for its use
3. If yes, what types of activities those plans and strategies cover
4. Which departments are using and/or are in control of social media initiatives



About Digital Brand Expressions

Digital Brand Expressions (DBE) is internationally recognized as a top-tier, best-practices driving player in the search and social media marketing arenas. We're known for creating game-changing competitive advantage for our clients. Through interwoven marketing solutions, we ensure they are found on the Web faster than their competitors and more immersed in social conversations with their prospects, customers, the media, and other key stakeholders. DBE's clients are able to quantitatively improve sales, leads, donations, and every other measurable action that demonstrates profitability and success as a direct result of our team's expertise.

With over 80% of consumers and business people starting their quests for information on the Web at a major search engine and 85% of consumers saying they expect brands to interact with them in social channels, having a cohesive, integrated and strategic approach to your digital reputation management is more important than ever.

Our business is 100% concentrated on search and social media marketing and we provide services in each of these key channels:

- Search engine optimization (SEO) including search-engine-approved natural link building
- Search engine advertising (also called SEM or paid search)
- Social media marketing strategy and program management
- Enterprise social media consulting—developing strategies, processes, policies and communications protocols for key departments and personnel
- Digital reputation management
- Content development/copywriting
- Analytics consulting



Organizations turn to DBE when they have a critical need to reach, connect with and generate an action from key audiences who are using search and social environments to find information, products and services.



To learn more about DBE, please visit our website at www.DigitalBrandExpressions.com or our blog at DBESEM.blogspot.com.

Or give us a call at 866-651-6767