Social Media Analytics in Five Minutes a Day
Introduction

All too often there just isn’t enough time in the day to spend extensively analyzing the social media data of your performance and that of your competitors. At the same time, you need to be on top of your game because you never know when the boss might ask you a pointed question about a competitor’s campaign or initiative they saw on AdAge — leaving you fumbling for answers.

If you don’t have the time to dive deep into spreadsheets of data to tease out interesting insights, but need a handle on what’s happening day by day, then this document, which we have aptly named *Social Media Analytics in Five Minutes a Day*, might be exactly what you need.
Contents

04 Vanity Metrics
05 Growth
08 Engagement
11 Mentions
13 Hashtags
15 Video Views
17 What if you haven’t got 5 minutes?
It might surprise you that we’re going to focus quite a bit on vanity metrics in this report, but before you roll your eyes, hear us out.

A pilot of a modern airliner, or even your hobbyist pilot who flies Cessnas over the weekend, isn’t constantly monitoring or watching the dozens of instruments, dials and meters. There’s plenty of other things for them to do such as talking to air traffic control, communicating with other planes in the sky, making navigational course corrections, watching out for weather, eating or even taking a nap (although hopefully not while flying a light aircraft!).

When it comes to checking on the airplane’s status, an experienced pilot will glance over their instruments and see that all the dials are in the right places or expected places. They know what the correct readings should be for everything including engine temperature and pressure, airspeed and altitude, pitch, cabin pressure and so on. There’s rarely enough time to watch each instrument and only if a dial isn’t where it should be is further action necessary.

In the same way, your job has so many other demands that you might not have time to stay on top of what’s happening in your sector. Digital marketing, and in particular, social media, has created hundreds of metrics, and as a result, keeping up with everything is next to impossible. Sometimes you just need to read a few key indicators to know what’s going on...in fact, it can take just 5 minutes a day.
Growth

While the industry has moved on from using increasing fan and follower numbers as a business objective (although we’re sure that you can still point a finger at the few people who judge social media performance by this metric), growth in the community base is a great metric to use as an early warning system when monitoring your competitors.

If you know the average growth rate of your sector, you should be able to spot when there’s a surge in growth. Facebook Insights allows you to track up to 100 different pages and will tell you their fan growth, but to quickly judge if there’s a change in growth you’ll need to see the data in a chart.
When looking at a chart of fan or follower growth over a 7 day period, you’re looking for spikes in growth. These spikes often correspond to a new campaign, a viral piece of content, a piece of publicity earned by the brand, or as the result of some paid push.

Coca-Cola saw a huge spurt in growth on 1st August, adding over 300,000 fans in a single day.

However, more often than not, you will find that the growth for most brands will be linear. If there are no spikes and you’re short of time, you can move on to the next metric.

McDonald’s fan growth has been consistent in this 7 day period so you would move on to the next metric.
If you do come across any spikes in growth, increase the time period to 90 days. Sometimes the spurt can be an anomaly and doesn’t require further investigation. Perhaps in the last couple of weeks, growth has been lower than normal, and the growth spurt is just the profile returning back to normal growth. When seeing the larger picture, you can determine whether it’s worth investigating any further.

Pro Tip

If you see a spurt in growth on your brand’s social profiles or on your competitors’, immediately investigate the mentions the brand is getting on Twitter. If you have access to software that creates word clouds from user Facebook posts and user tweets, see if there are any recurring words being used, which indicates a campaign or potential PR crisis.

“We’re measuring patterns over longer periods of time and applying those insights with each piece of content we publish.”

Ken Ericson
Director of Global Social Marketing at Xerox

Read the full interview here.
The way engagement is measured varies from platform to platform, but however you measure engagement, it’s always useful to see it plotted on a chart over time. Keep things simple by focusing on the engagement for the last 30 days. There can be a fair amount of variation in engagement day by day, particularly on Twitter, so engagement charts tend to fluctuate up and down.

Look for spikes in engagement that could indicate a viral piece of content, the start of a new campaign, or content that has some paid promotion behind it. If there are no significant spikes beyond the usual, you can then move on to the next metric to check.

If there is a spike in engagement, check the date and find the piece of content on the brand’s wall or in its stream. By looking at the content, most people can quickly determine if it got high engagement because it was a particularly excellent piece of content that caused people to share it organically, or if it was result of a paid push.

Acer Worldwide posted 25 pieces of content in the last 30 days but there were no spikes in engagement which could indicate a campaign that resonated or a paid push.
This chart shows the engagement (using Unmetric’s Engagement Score) on Dove USA’s page in a 30 day period. There are three clear days when content was given a paid push.

Further analysis shows that the most engaging post was a celebration of a special day. Strategies with the right message can help brands significantly increase engagement.

**Pro Tip**

Because daily engagement charts tend to fluctuate so much, consider using moving averages to see the overall engagement trend. A 30 day moving average flattens out the fluctuation and gives a better idea of how a brand is doing overall. A steep rise in a 30 day moving average indicates a new campaign with a strong paid element to it.
The 30 day moving average of the engagement shows that Nike Football has been improving its engagement, a sign that an ongoing campaign is happening or something else that needs to be investigated further—in this case it was Nike’s activity around the World Cup.

**Actionable Item**

Create a spreadsheet that records the pieces of competitor content that engaged really well. Log the date, content type and amount of interaction it got. If the interactions are significantly above normal it could be promoted which can help you estimate how much money a brand is putting into advertising on social media and what kind of content they consider important enough to promote. This will help with your own content and budget planning.

“With access to real time data, the use of data is no longer restricted to “pre-campaign planning” or “post-campaign analysis””

**Sandeep Padubidri**  
Digital Business Director at Publicis SE Asia

Read the full interview here.
The number of daily mentions a brand gets tends to be stable, with perhaps more mentions during the week than on a weekend (exceptions to this rule do apply!). Twitter doesn’t give the mentions data in its analytics platform, so you’ll need to use a third-party application that tracks Twitter mentions. Using a 7 day time period, you’re looking for any spikes in mentions.

If you do come across any spikes in growth, increase the time period to 90 days. Sometimes the spurt can be an anomaly and doesn’t require further investigation. Perhaps in the last couple of weeks, growth has been lower than normal, and the growth spurt is just the profile returning back to normal growth. When seeing the larger picture, you can determine whether it’s worth investigating any further.
Looking at the bigger picture of the @xbox mentions, we can see that this is a significant spike and requires further research - which would show that Xbox announced its gaming lineup for the rest of the year and got the gaming community buzzing.

A spike in mentions could mean a campaign that is being launched, a giveaway contest, sponsorship of a sporting event, a piece of content that has gone viral, a PR crisis or the result of some news that has just come out about the company. If the spike lasts for several days, then chances are that it's the result of an on-going campaign. A spike that lasts just one day could be a giveaway contest and a spike that shoots up on one day and then dissipates over the next few days could be the result of a PR crisis.

**Pro Tip**

There are four ways to identify why there has been a spike in mentions:

1. Checking a word cloud that pulls out keywords from user tweets, which might identify a PR crisis
2. Looking to see if an influencer has mentioned the brand and got plenty of retweets or generated conversation as a result
3. Seeing if a hashtag has been used that coincides with the spike in mentions
4. A Google search on the news might also bring up a reason for the sudden spike in mentions.

“*I can’t think of an instance where we don’t refer to social media data.*”

**Carrie Van Es**
Vice President at M Booth

Read the full interview here.

**Actionable Item**

Keep a record of every time your competitor got a spike in mentions and why, a pattern might emerge that may help with planning the social media strategy of your brand.
Hashtags

Hashtag usage by brands is generally an indication of a campaign that is happening, although often brands will also use hashtags as part of pop culture references, in an attempt to sound more human or to ride on a trending topic. Twitter doesn’t support hashtag analysis so you’ll need to use a third-party software for this.

Using the 30 day time period, look for any hashtags that have been used by a brand and/or have been used by the Twitter community and the tweet has @-mentioned the brand. You are looking for spikes in usage. A hashtag that is used a few times by a brand and many times by a user could be an example of a contest or the brand doing something creative around a trending topic.

Pro Tip

A hashtag used by the brand that saw a spike in usage but is riding on a trending topic might not be of much use, so reference the brand’s use of the hashtag with the amount of engagement it got to see if the content resonated well with its community.
Red Bull went all out on 19th August to celebrate Aviation Day and rode the trending #aviationday hashtag, but it was only the sixth most engaging hashtag for the brand.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hashtag</th>
<th>Engagement Score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>#motogp</td>
<td>125</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#givesyouwings</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#epic</td>
<td>110</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#redbull</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#soundspace</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#lolla</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#xfighters</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#aviationday</td>
<td>125</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#lollalive</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#putacanonit</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Actionable Item**

Make a note of how often a brand uses a trending hashtag, how often it uses a contest hashtag and how often it uses a campaign hashtag to understand the content strategies used by the brand and use that data to help with your own social media strategy.

“Social media data is critical across the entire marketing-communications journey or process for a company.”

Zaheer Nooruddin
VP Social Media at Waggener Edstrom APAC

Read the full interview here.
More often than not, a brand’s YouTube channel will see linear growth in its YouTube video views. Use the 7 day time period to watch out for spikes in video view growth across all of the brand’s videos. A surge in views is an indication that either a new video has been uploaded recently that’s going viral, a series of videos have been uploaded as part of a campaign or an older video is getting attention again, perhaps as a result of some media mention.

Old Spice saw a spike of 2 million views in two days when it uploaded a video advertising one of its hair products. The video didn't generate too much media buzz according to Google which suggests that a paid push was used over two days to promote the video.

If there are no spikes in video views, then your 5 minutes of analytics is done for the day. If there is a spike in views though, check the most recent videos that were uploaded to see if one of those has gone viral. The video might be part of a larger campaign or a one-off video, so check the other recent videos the brand has uploaded to see if there’s a campaign message or not. If there are no significant views on recent uploads, it’s likely that an older video is finding new life. On the brand’s channel, sort the videos by popularity to see if there are older videos that are getting a lot of views, or use a platform that lets you sort by most popular videos in a specific time period. Alternatively, turn to Google to see if the brand has been mentioned by any popular news outlet recently that embedded one of its YouTube videos on the site.

**Pro Tip**

Brands are often using a paid push to gain views on new videos, watch the view growth carefully for each video over a 90 day period to see if there is a pattern in terms of early view growth to the point where the views plateau. You might be able to work out how long a brand is paying for the video to be promoted and subsequently how much they’re spending.
The growth in video views on the 29th June, 27th July and 17th August suggest a paid push by Geico. Further analysis show three different videos were promoted on each of these dates.

“Paid Media is a critical piece to success in Social Media and shouldn’t be treated as a nice-to-have but as mandatory.”

Jeff Melton
Chief Analytics Officer at MRY

Read the full interview here.
What if you don’t even have 5 minutes to spare?

If the thought of checking these metrics every day sounds daunting (or even a little laborious), there is a solution. Just like a modern day aircraft will use an audible and visual alert to tell the pilot there’s something unusual happening with one of the instruments, Unmetric sends instant email alerts the moment it detects something ‘different from normal’ across a range of social media metrics, including ones mentioned in this document.

By compiling sector benchmarks for a variety of metrics and looking at the historical data of individual brands, the Unmetric platform immediately knows if there is some unusual activity happening on one of your competitors’ social profiles. Whether it’s a spike in growth rate, an increase in engagement, or a video that’s going viral, an email alert is sent instantly, meaning you can be on top of what’s happening without even analyzing a single chart.

To find out more on how you can get these alerts

Click here to get a trial or demo of Unmetric

If you would like to get more information about Unmetric, send an email to:
info@unmetric.com

Thank You