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Write to The Editor, new media age, 50 Poland Street, London W1F 7AX

We should look abroad for online video trends

Simon Robinson, marketing director international, Vignette



The recent article on online video consumption habits across the pond (nma 28 May) highlights just how fast the market is moving. There's no doubt the rapid rise in online video means that communications, media and entertainment companies are facing a tremendous market and technological change. But how can these companies best harness the opportunities? And how do they do it while encouraging customer loyalty and attracting new prospects?

While I agree there's much the UK can learn from the US, perhaps there's also something we can learn from our neighbours in France. Last week the French film director Luc Besson launched a film on YouTube at the same time as it was shown on TV. He succeeded in drumming up interest in the film across Europe to drive more viewers, both online and offline, all the while avoiding piracy.

The players in the media space that will come out on top are those that use content cleverly to attract online attention beyond UK borders, boosting readership and attracting additional advertising spend.

People are the key to good analytics

Andrew Hood, MD, Lynchpin



Analytics as an industry is reliant on technology and people. Tools capture the data and people analyse it.

While the technology gets more sophisticated (and arguably more accessible from a cost perspective), the challenges in interpreting and actioning the data only get bigger.

Companies are gradually shifting their spend from technology to staff and consultancy, but it's a slow trend and there looks to be an underlying skills shortage. The increase in client-side analysts has been minimal, yet companies still claim to be trying to grow their investment in people.

People and process are still the key factors in closing the gap between the vast potential and the real benefits, but there are clearly challenges in recruiting and co-ordinating that resource to make it happen. There are more than twice as many self-employed web analytics consultants than those working in consultancies, which suggests the market is still highly fragmented.

This insight was a central outcome of the second annual report into the UK analytics sector by Econsultancy in partnership with Lynchpin, following a survey of 800 businesses. Companies are still not getting a good return from online analytics. People, expertise and resource are the answer, not technology.

While the proportion of companies with no analysts has remained high, those with existing analyst teams are clearly looking to expand, which only emphasises the practical benefits felt when organisations dedicate human resources to making the most of the data.

Comment from nma.co.uk Re: Twitter pulls moonfruit campaign from trending topics

I can't tell you how glad I am about this. While I understand Moonfruit's desire to gain the maximum possible exposure, the manner in which they went about it was wrong.

By all means, give people the opportunity to enter competitions, but when the means of entry results in other people being forced to wade through a mountain of Moonfruit-related tweets, it becomes spam.

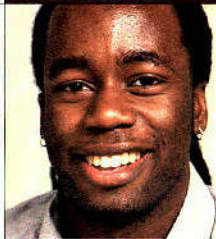
I don't begrudge the people I choose to follow the opportunity to win a Macbook but Moonfruit turned them into spam proxies, which is entirely unfair. If I wanted to hear about Moonfruit then I'd follow it myself or visit its website. A more scrupulous organiser would have allowed entries via direct message to reduce the amount of shite others had to read through.

At least now I can re-follow the people I blocked to reduce the spam.

James Burns

ANDREW DAVIS

Director of social media consultancy The Worst Kept Secret



The spread of social media encompasses the classroom

Social media can add value to core subjects and give teachers more options in lesson plans

When I first started working as marketing and content producer for MySpace in 2006, I could understand why people were saying that social media was a fad and had no intellectual merit. Three years later, the social media camp has some of the biggest websites in the world and there's talk of it being introduced into the classroom. Unfortunately, not all feedback has been positive, which leaves me puzzled.

Starting this September, I've created a social media course that will educate pupils, teachers and parents in the fundamental areas of the medium, including social networks, social bookmarking, blogging, micro-blogging, Wikis and content communities. Using practical and theoretical methods, it will offer an insight into the industry, arming students with the tools to carve out a career within the social media sector. The school I'm piloting the course with has included it in their GCSE English coursework, which hopefully will set a trend.

The general consensus from articles I've read is that people think Twitter will replace English

in school, which it won't, of course. Social media can add value to core subjects and give teachers more options in their lesson plans, though. For example, persuasive writing in English Language is a key element in online editorial and content producing. These two discourses were vital in the MySpace/Skins success story. Part of my job at MySpace was to place editorial content we deemed as cool and relevant to our users. We featured exclusive Skins content on the home page and highly trafficked pages of MySpace while selecting copy to attract the most click-throughs. The project was a great success, joining a long list of campaigns that used this formula.

Young people use social networks - that's a fact. They enjoy these sites and feel comfortable on them. Giving them a better understanding of social networks will not only give them another option for an alternative career path but could also help them with a better understanding of their core subjects.

Social media isn't ready for a curriculum subject this year, but it will be very soon. We've proved over the last few years that it's not a fad and is here to stay. So if any teachers, parents or local authorities are reading this, please help us engage pupils with social media in schools and let us educate everyone involved to change this negative perception. Let's not follow the music industry against illegal downloading example, where it was forever fighting a losing battle because it joined the race too late.

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