

Media and Entertainment Brands Leading the Way in Social Media

Like their counterparts in the retail industry, media and entertainment (M&E) companies are experimenting with different strategies to engage with consumers via social media. The crossover between traditional M&E marketing channels and the social web is clear: Consumers rely heavily on social media for recommendations on M&E purchases. Nearly 30% use social media resources to influence entertainment purchases like music, movies and TV shows, while close to 40% use them to help decide what print media to buy. M&E companies that lack strong social strategies risk losing customers and market share.

Figure 1

Can you Give an Example of a M&E Company that you Believe has the Best Social Media Presence?

Company	Percent of Total Mentions
Netflix	5%
Google	3%
Sony	3%
Disney	2%
Apple	2%
Fox	2%
ABC	2%
Microsoft	2%
Xbox	1%
Amazon	1%
Yahoo	1%

Source: L.E.K. Analysis

To understand which M&E companies are leading in social media and what strategies they use to outpace competitors, L.E.K. Consulting asked 2,000 U.S. consumers in August 2011 to name companies with the best social media presence and explain what sets them apart from others.

The companies that consumers rate highest on social media engagement are shown in Figure 1. Netflix was consumers' top choice for best social media presence, rating highest with 5% of the sample – outpacing perennial online powerhouse Google (Note: L.E.K.'s survey was conducted prior to Netflix's announcement it would spin off its DVD business as Qwikster, a move that angered customers and was eventually retracted by the company).

What makes these companies the best? Our findings reveal that winning M&E brands share three defining characteristics:

- 1. Consumer Voices:** First, like retailers, winning M&E companies amass large amounts of user content (reviews, comments, pictures, etc.).
- 2. Frequent and Fast Responses:** Second, winners are adept at interacting with social media users, including quick responses to their comments and needs.
- 3. Fresh, Daily Content:** Finally, top M&E brands provide new content of their own each day, keeping consumers well-informed of upcoming things that will be released.

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Figure 2
What Makes These Companies Stand Out in Social Media?

Company	Quick response to customer posts and feedback (% of mentions)	Great user reviews/ feedback tools through social media (% of mentions)	Great videos, games, contests or fresh daily content (% of mentions)	Exclusive deals offered to followers on social media (% of mentions)	Great LinkedIn profile (% of mentions)	Great blogs by employees (% of mentions)	Great Twitter tweets (% of mentions)
Netflix	43%	45%	29%	45%	6%	16%	8%
Google	43%	61%	32%	29%	21%	43%	32%
Sony	48%	56%	37%	48%	7%	33%	15%
Disney	40%	52%	60%	32%	12%	20%	8%
Apple	58%	75%	38%	21%	25%	17%	29%
Fox	32%	42%	32%	16%	5%	32%	16%
ABC	31%	38%	38%	6%	6%	13%	19%
Microsoft	44%	44%	63%	44%	25%	56%	44%
Xbox	80%	73%	87%	87%	47%	60%	73%
Amazon	50%	57%	21%	29%	0%	21%	21%
Yahoo	50%	30%	40%	30%	10%	20%	20%

Source: L.E.K. Analysis

In Figure 2, we reveal the data behind these findings for top M&E companies, which shows how winners score highly across these three key criteria.

M&E companies that offer strong user review and feedback tools are highly rated by consumers. Forty-five percent of respondents said Netflix's customer review tools, which allow users to rate movies and shows on a 1-5 scale and offer direct feedback on its website, set it apart from other companies. Fifty-six percent said Sony's social feedback tools help make it a winning company, while 75% said Apple's efforts in this area make it stand out. These companies are also winners due to their quick responses to customer feedback and posts; 48% of social media users praised Sony for doing this well while 58% said Apple also excels with this strategy.

Brands seen as social media leaders also consistently provide fresh content and information about products or services to their fans and followers. Sixty percent of respondents say Disney stands out because of the high-quality content it shares, including frequent "Disney Facts," photos of scenes from iconic movies, and themed desktop wallpapers released via Twitter and Facebook. Electronics and gaming companies also score well here, with 63% of consumers touting Microsoft and 87% saying Xbox (a Microsoft brand) stands out for its content.

The companies we highlight are setting the standard for social media use in consumers' eyes. Other M&E brands should model some of their strategies after these "best-in-class" companies; however, companies should closely examine what is working in their particular industry segment to determine the right social strategy for them.

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