

Social listening

MARK 360

Week 3

- What is social listening?
- Passive and active listening
- Tools
- Techniques – including software and constructing meaningful keyword searches

Don't be caught by surprise...

- The story of the 9 year old and her food blog
(first 1.5 minutes of Clay Shirky at TED 2012)
- “This brings up the question what made them think they could get away with something like that?” (Clay Shirky)
- They obviously hadn't realized that they had to listen.....

What is “social listening”

- “..using technology to assemble a collection of keyword-based searches online that help you locate mentions and instances of those keywords on the web”
- It is a market research tool...
- It is competitive intelligence
- It is a path to engagement

What are you listening *for*?

- What people are saying about your brand:
 - Your organization's name
 - Your social media username(s)
 - Your brand / product / service / organization
 - Specific campaign names or concepts
 - People or stakeholders in your organization
 - Nicknames, slang, abbreviations, acronyms, or misspellings of any of the above
- Competitor analysis
 - All of the above for your competitors
- General industry discussion

Passive versus active listening

- **Passive** listening is a *diagnostic* and *monitoring* exercise, an ear-to-the-ground
 - Are people talking?
 - What are they saying?
 - Where are they saying it?
- **Active** listening includes that constant monitoring but also includes *response and engagement* (we will look at that in more detail in another class)

How does social listening impact a business?

- Sales
- Promotion
- Marketing & PR
- Customer service
- Research and development

Sales

- Social media is not usually used as a direct sales channel (it just doesn't work)
- Listen for expressed need (people often ask for recommendations on social media, so offer information and assistance).
- Approach people *carefully* at the point they are ready for help
- Intelligence for sales people
 - [Microsoft Social Listening Spring '14 Sales Scenarios](#) (short video)

Promotion

- Track mentions of your product
- Assess sentiment around your brand
- Quantify and evaluate the success of current promotions
- Test ideas

Marketing & PR

- Listening helps you learn the language of your customers
 - Match your marketing communications to the way people talk about your product or service
 - Helps you to de-jargon-ify your marketing copy
- Example: American Red Cross noticed that people used the word “hope” a lot when talking about them
 - They wove that word into their own communications so they would resonate better with audiences

Customer service

- If you are listening you can respond fast and via the medium where your customers are (be careful not to creep people out though...)
- Concerns, questions, grievances
- Identify recurring customer service concerns then use them to build a FAQ on your website

Research & Development

- Innovation can come from your target market
- Try searching your company or competitor's name plus the terms "wish they had" or "really needs"
- Identify unmet needs
- Identify problem areas with products
- The big advantage of social listening is that these conversations are **unfiltered and unmediated** (very different from traditional survey research)

LISTENING MODELS

Resources: how much time does this take?

- You need to decide how much listening is worthwhile and whether you have the resources available to monitor and analyze the results
- Baer & Naslund identify 3 levels of listening that organizations can do

Level 1 Listening

- Dipping a toe into social media – information gathering and analysis only
- Typically one person using free or inexpensive software tools (often someone in a communications role)
- Usually passive listening only
- Activities:
 - Spending 2 – 4 hours per week aggregating information
 - Conducting searches focused on brand only
 - Maintaining information centrally as intelligence only
 - Spending 1 – 2 hours per week analyzing and reporting on findings

Level 2 Listening

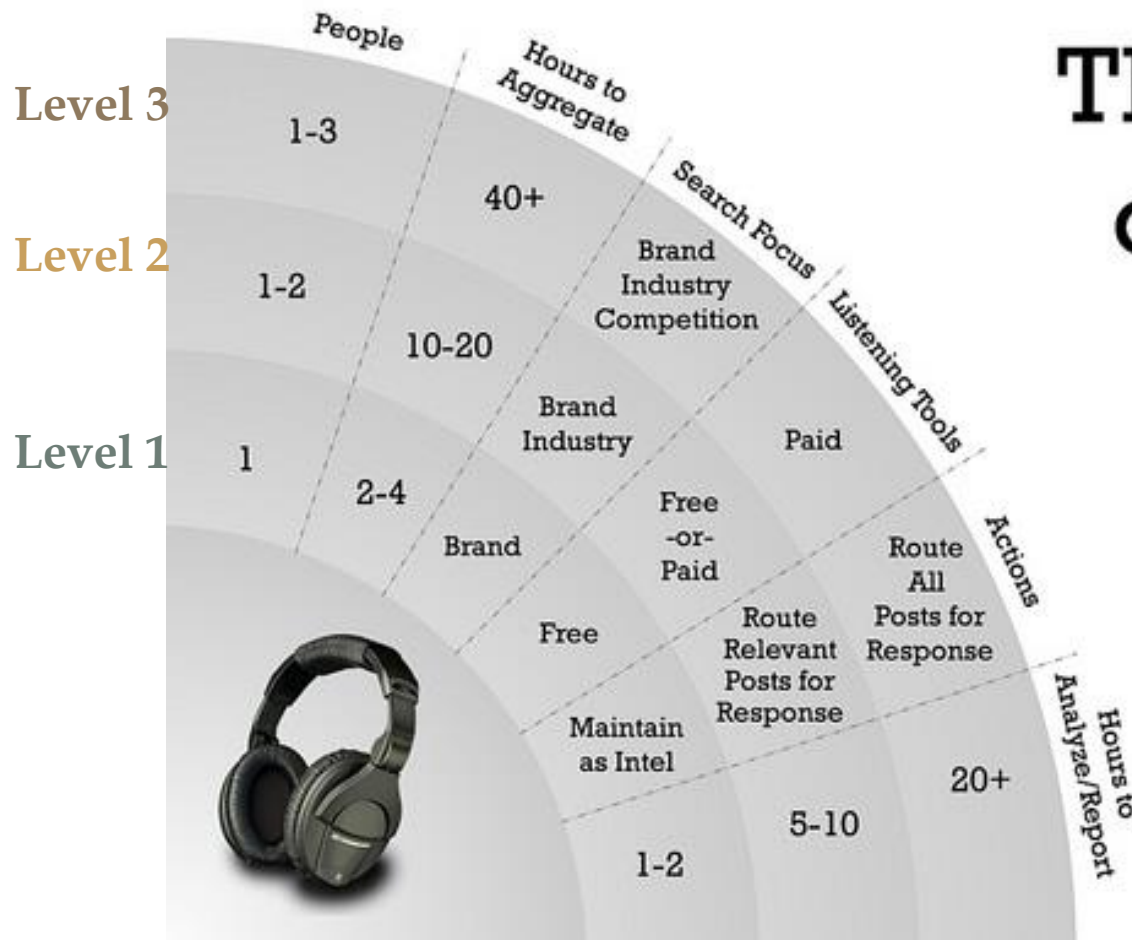
- Social media becomes more important to the organization but listening still centralized
- Intent shifts to include both passive and active listening
- Activities:
 - Monitoring by one or two individuals centralized in one department
 - Engaged in active listening and aggregation 10 - 20 hours per week
 - Using more advanced free dashboards or paid tools
 - Searches expanded beyond brand to include industry/opportunity
 - Routing relevant posts to key contacts in other departments for action / response
 - Spending 5 - 10 hours per week analyzing and reporting on information

Level 3 Listening

- Listening becomes a function of many parts of the business – fully wired active listening
- Activities:
 - Monitoring by 1-3 person teams in key business units. Overseen by social media leadership
 - Engaging in listening 40 hours or more per week (including outside business hours)
 - Using sophisticated paid tools
 - Conducting searches in brand, competition, and industry
 - Routing all posts to dedicated response teams
 - Spending 20 hours or more per week analyzing information; housed in individual business areas
 - Social listening data integrated into CRM, marketing automation systems, web analytics, and product management

Listening models

Three Levels of Listening



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How to get started

- Embrace the fact that listening is like answering phone calls – just the medium is new
- Determine first whether you are in passive or active listening mode
- Figure out what your goal is for listening. What do you hope to gain?
- Brainstorm brand-related keywords and terms you will use in searches
- Decide on your focus: just brand or expand into competitive intelligence
- Delegate the people who will do the front-line listening (number will depend on level of listening). Determine deliverables and time resources.
- Choose appropriate tools and software
- Route a flow of information inside the organization to the people who can use or act on it

CREATING A SOCIAL MEDIA LISTENING DASHBOARD

Software tools for listening

- As needed alerts – the simplest way
- Free social media monitoring software
- Paid social media monitoring software

As-needed alerts

- For use when brand / name / product mentions are relatively rare
- Set up [Google Alerts](#) to create a “push” notification whenever your keywords are mentioned (automatically emailed to you)
- Free service
- As many alerts as you like
- You need to be careful about crafting your alert (either too little or too few results) – so be really specific
- Not real-time – delay between mention and alert can be as long as 24 hours
- Alerts arrive individually, so harder to analyze

Free social media monitoring software

- There are quite a few to choose from, and you will probably need to use more than one to get good coverage. Some to try:
- [Hootsuite](#) (free and paid versions)
- [SocialMention](#)
- [Twitter](#) advanced search
- [Addictomatic](#)

Paid social media monitoring software – same tools as used for account management

- Fully featured dashboards, analytics, reports (aimed at the enterprise / large organizations)
- Can be used by teams / multiple clients
- Integrated with other metrics from across all marketing channels (eg. Web analytics, advertising metrics, etc)
- Examples:
 - [Salesforce Marketing Cloud / Radian 6](#) (demos – registration needed)
 - [SLD Social Intelligence Solutions \(was Alterian\)](#)
 - [Hootsuite Pro](#)
 - [WebTrends](#)

KEYWORD SEARCHING

Solving the problem of getting relevant results

- If your brand or company is a common word, or a word that is used with other meanings – you need to *disambiguate* by using techniques to get social listening results that are not full of “other” uses of the word
 - Search for mentions of Tide and see what you get....lots of time-wasting and irrelevant results
 - Think about phrases that are strongly associated with your brand – laundry, detergent, washing machines etc
 - Or exclude a term if you can

Boolean searching..AND...OR...NOT

- Search operator AND: narrows your search
 - Tide AND laundry gets results only where BOTH words occur
- Search operator OR: broadens your search
 - Tide OR laundry get results where both or either words occur (results where there are at least one of the words)
- Search operator NOT: excludes words from your results
 - Tide OR laundry NOT ocean

Other basic search modifiers

- Quotation marks – results include the exact phrase only
 - “Tide promotional code” – very exact results for people who are looking for this
- Parentheses – tell the search engine explicitly that you are using OR
 - (Tide OR laundry OR detergent)
- Asterisk – used for getting variants of a word by using just the stem
 - Manage* gets results for manage, managers, managers, management etc

All search engines implement this a bit differently in terms of defaults

- Some search engines default to OR, some default to AND, some provide specialist operators and modifiers
- Learn how your chosen social listening tools actually work so you can control your searches
 - Use [Google Advanced Search](#) for Google Alerts
 - [Hootsuite](#) also provides examples of how search works there
 - Add Stream > Search > Show examples
 - Important to also use [language codes](#) (short video)