

Research Brief: Employer Survey on Social Media Marketing Certificate Program

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Key Findings

- Of the 40 survey respondents, about 58% worked in an organization with 10 or fewer Southern California employees.
- The majority of the organizations, about 70%, had one to three staff people spend any portion of their time dedicated to social media marketing.
- About 50% of respondents marked that their organization uses social media for marketing either “very much” or “quite a bit”.
- 52.6% of respondents marked Facebook as the most important social media platform their organization uses.
- About 78% of respondents anticipate their organization “will implement new social media marketing initiatives/policies” in the next five years.
- The two potential courses respondents marked as most important for potential job candidates were “Social Media Content Management” and “Writing for Social Media”.

Introduction

In the summer of 2012, the Business Department at Santa Monica College (SMC) administered an online survey to businesses with employees in the Southern California area. The purpose of the 18 question survey was to assess the level of interest in a social media certificate that could be offered by the college. A total of 40 local businesses responded to the survey. This document contains a summary of the results of the survey.

Background Questions

1. *Please estimate the total number of employees working for your organization in the Southern California region:*

Number of Employees	Count of Responses	Percent
0-10	23	57.5%
11-100	11	27.5%
101-500	2	5.0%
501-5,000	4	10.0%
5,001-10,000	0	0%
Over 10,000	0	0%
Total	40	100%

2. *Type of organization (Check all that apply):*

Type of Organization	Count of Responses	Percent
Construction	1	1.9%
Consulting Services	5	9.6%
Education	3	5.8%
Energy / Utilities	0	0.0%
Entertainment / Arts / Media	1	1.9%
Government	1	1.9%
Health care / Social services	2	3.8%
Hospitality / Tourism	2	3.8%
Manufacturing	0	0.0%
Nonprofit Organization	9	17.3%
Office / Clerical	2	3.8%
Retail / Wholesale	2	3.8%
Service Provider	5	9.6%
Transportation / Logistics	0	0.0%
Research / Development	1	1.9%
Other	18	34.6%
Total	52	100%

The majority of the respondents, about 58%, worked in an organization with 10 or fewer employees. The most common description for the respondents' organization, that was not other, was Nonprofit Organization with 17.3%.

3. *Estimate your organization's total number of staff positions (in the Southern California region) that spend any portion of their time dedicated to social media marketing:*

Number of Staff Positions*	Count of Responses	Percent
1	12	30.0%
2	10	25.0%
3	6	15.0%
0	5	12.5%
4	2	5.0%
10	1	2.5%
14	1	2.5%
4100	1	2.5%
45	1	2.5%
6	1	2.5%
Total	40	100.0%

*Respondents manually inputted numbers

4. *What department/position in your organization handles social media functions? (Check all that apply):*

Department	Count of Responses	Percent
Marketing	22	24.4%
Public relations	8	8.9%
Promotions	8	8.9%
Technical operations	3	3.3%
Digital media	10	11.1%
Communications	9	10.0%
Owner/CEO	20	22.2%
Other	10	11.1%
Total	90	100%

A majority of the survey respondents, 55%, marked that their organization had either one or two staff positions that spend a portion of their time dedicated to social media marketing. The most common department in charge of social media functions was marketing with 24.4% followed by owner/CEO with 22.2%.

5. *Rate the extent to which you, personally, are familiar with social media platforms:*

	Count of Responses	Percent
Very familiar	16	40.0%
Familiar	10	25.0%
Somewhat familiar	7	17.5%
Somewhat unfamiliar	5	12.5%
Unfamiliar	1	2.5%
Very unfamiliar	1	2.5%
Total	40	100%

About 65% of the respondents marked that they were either “very familiar” or “familiar” with social media platforms.

Questions on Social Media Usage

6. *Rate the extent to which your organization uses social media platforms for marketing and other business purposes:*

	Count of Responses	Percent
Very much	12	30.0%
Quite a bit	8	20.0%
Some	11	27.5%
Very little	8	20.0%
Unsure	1	2.5%
Total	40	100%

7. *Rate the extent to which you use social media for the following purposes:*

	Very much	Quite a bit	Some	Very little	Unsure	Total
Marketing (general)	14	9	9	5	0	37
%	37.8%	24.3%	24.3%	13.5%	0.0%	100%
Advertising	8	8	8	13	0	37
%	21.6%	21.6%	21.6%	35.1%	0.0%	100%
Promotions	11	6	5	13	2	37
%	29.7%	16.2%	13.5%	35.1%	5.4%	100%
Branding	13	5	9	9	0	36
%	36.1%	13.9%	25.0%	25.0%	0.0%	100%
Public relations	8	11	9	7	2	37
%	21.6%	29.7%	24.3%	18.9%	5.4%	100%
Securing new business	4	7	7	16	1	35
%	11.4%	20.0%	20.0%	45.7%	2.9%	100%
Customer relationship management	6	7	11	12	1	37
%	16.2%	18.9%	29.7%	32.4%	2.7%	100%
Networking	9	6	12	8	1	36
%	25.0%	16.7%	33.3%	22.2%	2.8%	100%
Sales	6	4	6	19	0	35
%	17.1%	11.4%	17.1%	54.3%	0.0%	100%
Other	2	2	5	4	10	23
%	8.7%	8.7%	21.7%	17.4%	43.5%	100%

About 50% of respondents marked that their organization uses social media for marketing either “very much” or “quite a bit”. The most common use of social media by the respondents themselves is also marketing, with about 62% of respondents marking either “very much” or “quite a bit”. Public relations

and branding followed with 51.3% and 50.0% respectively. The least common use for social media was sales, with only 28.5% marking “very much or “quite a bit”.

8. Describe the “other” purposes for social media:

Other purposes for social media*	Count of Responses	Percent
“Community information”	1	7.1%
“Finding/researching information on other events”	1	7.1%
“Infinite number of uses.”	1	7.1%
“NON”	1	7.1%
“News about new job starts and project progress updates.”	1	7.1%
“Research”	1	7.1%
“Staying up to date on industry-related news by following specific bloggers, news outlets, etc.”	1	7.1%
“advocacy for kids who need families”	1	7.1%
“direct quoting for insurance”	1	7.1%
“Fundraising”	2	14.3%
“keeping current with others quickly and efficiently”	1	7.1%
“updates on progress and wins”	1	7.1%
“wasting time”	1	7.1%
Total	14	100%

*Respondents manually inputted results

9. Rate the extent to which your organization uses the following social media platforms:

	Very much	Quite a bit	Some	Very little	Unsure	Total
Facebook	13	10	8	5	1	37
%	35.1%	27.0%	21.6%	13.5%	2.7%	100%
Twitter	8	8	8	10	3	37
%	21.6%	21.6%	21.6%	27.0%	8.1%	100%
Company blog (any platform)	8	2	3	17	5	35
%	22.9%	5.7%	8.6%	48.6%	14.3%	100%
YouTube	3	2	11	13	5	34
%	8.8%	5.9%	32.4%	38.2%	14.7%	100%
Foursquare	1	1	5	17	11	35
%	2.9%	2.9%	14.3%	48.6%	31.4%	100%
Pinterest	1	2	5	16	10	34
%	2.9%	5.9%	14.7%	47.1%	29.4%	100%
Other	2	1	7	4	6	20
%	10.0%	5.0%	35.0%	20.0%	30.0%	100%

10. Describe “other” social media platforms your organization uses:

Other social media platforms*	Count of Responses	Percent
LinkedIn	9	45.0%
Flickr	2	10.0%
Instagram	2	10.0%
Tumblr	1	5.0%
Yelp	2	10.0%
Local Search Directories	1	5.0%
N/A**	3	15.0%
Total	20	100.0%

*Respondents manually inputted results

**Respondents entered a non-social media platform such as “word of mouth”

The most common social media platform used by the respondents’ organization was Facebook. About 62% of respondents marked that they used it either “very much” or “quite a bit”. Twitter and company blog followed with 43.2% and 28.6% respectively. The most common social media platform not included in question 9 was LinkedIn.

11. Rate the level of importance of the following social media platforms for your organization:

	Important	Moderately Important	Of Little Importance	Not Important	Unsure	Total
Facebook	20	9	4	4	1	38
%	52.6%	23.7%	10.5%	10.5%	2.6%	100%
Twitter	10	12	6	8	1	37
%	27.0%	32.4%	16.2%	21.6%	2.7%	100%
Company blog (any platform)	7	12	4	11	1	35
%	20.0%	34.3%	11.4%	31.4%	2.9%	100%
YouTube	6	16	4	9	1	36
%	16.7%	44.4%	11.1%	25.0%	2.8%	100%
Foursquare	1	5	7	14	5	32
%	3.1%	15.6%	21.9%	43.8%	15.6%	100%
Pinterest	4	6	5	13	5	33
%	12.1%	18.2%	15.2%	39.4%	15.2%	100%
Other	3	4	4	5	6	22
%	13.6%	18.2%	18.2%	22.7%	27.3%	100%

The most important social media platform based on the responses in question 11 is Facebook, with 76.3% marking it as “important” or “moderately important”. The choices for Twitter and company blog followed with 59.4% and 54.3% respectively.

12. In the next five years, do you anticipate that your organization will implement new social media marketing initiatives/policies:

Value	Count	Percent
Yes	31	77.5%
No	3	7.5%
Unsure	6	15%
Total	40	100%

Questions on SMC Course Offerings

13. SMC is considering offering a certificate in social media marketing which may include classes taught by experts across a number of different disciplines. Please rate the level of importance of each potential class for potential job candidates at your organization:

	Important	Moderately Important	Of Little Importance	Not Important	Unsure	Total
Introduction to Social Media Marketing: Broad theoretical overview of social media for business marketing.	13	18	3	4	2	40
%	32.5%	45.0%	7.5%	10.0%	5.0%	100%
Blogging Content Management: Focus on Wordpress as platform but produce skills transferable to other platforms.	11	17	5	4	3	40
%	27.5%	42.5%	12.5%	10.0%	7.5%	100%
Social Media Content Management: Focus on social networking platforms.	17	13	4	3	3	40
%	42.5%	32.5%	10.0%	7.5%	7.5%	100%
Video Production: Basic techniques of video content development including basic desktop video (webcams), script writing, repurposing, video production.	14	14	4	3	4	39
%	35.9%	35.9%	10.3%	7.7%	10.3%	100%
Writing for Social Media: Develop effective written communication skills for business applications and social media.	18	12	3	3	3	39
%	46.2%	30.8%	7.7%	7.7%	7.7%	100%

The “Writing for Social Media” course was considered the most important course for potential job candidates, with 46.2% of respondents marking it “important” and about 77% marking it either “important” or “moderately important”. At least 70% of respondents marked all of the potential courses as either “important” or “moderately important”

14. Please Rate the extent to which your organization values the skills of potential job candidates that relate to the following courses:

	Very much	Quite a bit	Some	Very little	Unsure	Total
Introduction to Social Media Marketing: Broad theoretical overview of social media for business marketing.	12	12	5	7	3	39
%	30.8%	30.8%	12.8%	17.9%	7.7%	100%
Blogging Content Management: Focus on Wordpress as platform but produce skills transferable to other platforms.	11	8	5	8	4	36
%	30.6%	22.2%	13.9%	22.2%	11.1%	100%
Social Media Content Management: Focus on social networking platforms.	15	9	5	6	3	38
%	39.5%	23.7%	13.2%	15.8%	7.9%	100%
Video Production: Basic techniques of video content development including basic desktop video (webcams), script writing, repurposing, video production.	6	13	9	6	3	37
%	16.2%	35.1%	24.3%	16.2%	8.1%	100%
Writing for Social Media: Develop effective written communication skills for business applications and social media.	15	9	7	4	3	38
%	39.5%	23.7%	18.4%	10.5%	7.9%	100%

According to 63.2% of the respondents, their organizations value the skills related to the “Social Media Content Management” course as “very much” or “quite a bit”. The “Writing for Social Media” course received the same percentage of “very much” or “quite a bit” responses, although had a slightly lower percentage of “some” responses. The “Video Production” course had the lowest percentage of “very much” or “quite a bit” responses with a sum of 51.4%.

15. Estimate the number of existing employees at your organization in the Southern California region who would benefit from the Social Media Marketing Program:

Number of Employees	Count	Percentage
1	10	38.5%
2	6	23.1%
3	5	19.2%
4	2	7.7%
10	1	3.8%
60	1	3.8%
100	1	3.8%
Total	26	100%

16. Is your organization planning to hire or retrain staff in the area of social media marketing in the next five years?

Value	Count	Percent
Yes	19	47.5%
No	11	27.5%
Unsure	10	25%
Total	40	100%

17. How influential will you be in making the hiring decisions in the area of social media marketing?:

Value	Count	Percent
Highly influential (or sole decision maker)	27	67.5%
Somewhat influential	9	22.5%
Not influential	4	10%
Total	40	100%

18. Are you interesting in receiving information and updates about the Business Department at SMC, including the potential Social Media Marketing program?:

Value	Count	Percent
Yes	28	70%
No	6	15%
Not at this time	6	15%
Total	40	100%

About 62% of respondents estimated that 1 or 2 employees in their organization would benefit greatly from the Social Media Marketing program. About 90% of respondents were either “highly influential” or “somewhat influential” in the hiring decisions in the area of social media marketing.

Summary of results

There were 40 respondents for the 18 question survey on a potential Social Media Marketing program certificate.

- The largest percentage of respondents, 17.3%, described their company as a non-profit organization.
- 62% of respondents used social media for marketing either “very much” or “quite a bit”.
- With about 62% of respondents answering that their organization used it either “very much” or “quite a bit” Facebook was the most common social media platform.
- About 78% of respondents anticipated their organization would implement new social media marketing policies or initiatives.
- 47.5% of the respondents’ organizations are planning to hire or retrain staff in the area of social media marketing.
- The potential “Writing for Social Media” course was considered the most important course for potential job candidates, with 77% of respondents marking it either “important” or “moderately important”.
- Overall, the survey results indicated that there is need in local businesses and organizations for training in social media, however, the results should be interpreted with caution as they are not representative of all types of businesses in the area.