

# Growing Pains

A new ANA survey finds that usage of social, video, and mobile platforms continues to rise, but measurement remains a concern **By Willette Francis**



**THE NEWER MEDIA** craze remains strong, as the rapid creation of innovative platforms gives consumers more and more ways to stay connected — and marketers are joining the frenzy. According to the 2012 ANA Digital/Social Media Survey, two out of three marketers are reaching their customers by using newer media platforms, with social media, viral video, and mobile marketing taking the lead.

“I’ve seen a steady trend over the past decade toward greater precision in marketing and a greater ability to understand

your customers,” says Danielle Gustafson, vice president and director of digital and social media at CIT Group Inc., a leading bank holding company. “These new media platforms are the current manifestation of that trend.”

Indeed, in the past five years, social media, viral video, and mobile marketing all have grown significantly — a trend not overlooked by marketers. According to the ANA survey, 90 percent of respondents are currently taking advantage of social media, 80 percent are employing viral

video (namely, YouTube), and 74 percent are using mobile marketing.

“Social media platforms and content delivery standards will keep evolving, and businesses like CIT will take advantage of those that allow them to accurately reach potential customers and serve them better,” Gustafson says.

### Social Status

On the social media front, marketers are mostly using Facebook (96 percent) and Twitter (89 percent), with LinkedIn

# MEDIA TRENDS

(49 percent) and Pinterest (33 percent) not very far behind. “For a b-to-b brand like CIT, there is no more powerful social media tool than LinkedIn,” Gustafson says. “Twitter and Facebook aren’t even close.”

As a recognized thought leader in the commercial finance sector, CIT finds LinkedIn invaluable when it comes to “providing direct amplification of our earned media around CIT thought leadership publishing and social media positioning to key prospects and constituents,” Gustafson says.

While social media and mobile marketing usage among marketers has steadied since 2011, viral video has shot up 16 percent, with 80 percent of marketers utilizing the platform this year compared to 64 percent a year ago. “The engagement benefits of shareable video are immense for brands like CIT,” Gustafson says. “YouTube is the CIT video delivery platform of choice.”

Not only does CIT aim to make its content mobile-friendly and socially shareable, but also as video-based as possible. “There is no more powerful referral than a viewer sharing a video into

their network because of the ‘edutainment value,’” Gustafson says.

While business-to-business marketers are utilizing newer media platforms like webinars, RSS feeds, podcasts, video-on-demand, and wikis, the ANA survey found that business-to-consumer marketers favor interactive/addressable TV, location-based apps (e.g., Foursquare, SCVNGR), social media, and gaming — platforms geared to providing entertaining content, which might be more effective for brand-building purposes. Twenty-six percent of all marketers surveyed are currently using gaming to reach customers, and 74 percent are using mobile platforms, such as branded mobile apps, to engage consumers.

## Measuring Efforts and Effectiveness

There is little doubt that marketers are integrating a greater number of newer media platforms into their marketing strategy, but they continue to face many obstacles with social media/word-of-mouth marketing — specifically, the absence of a

standardized process for measuring effectiveness. Social media, viral video, and mobile are lagging behind other newer media platforms when it comes to effectively measuring return on investment (ROI).

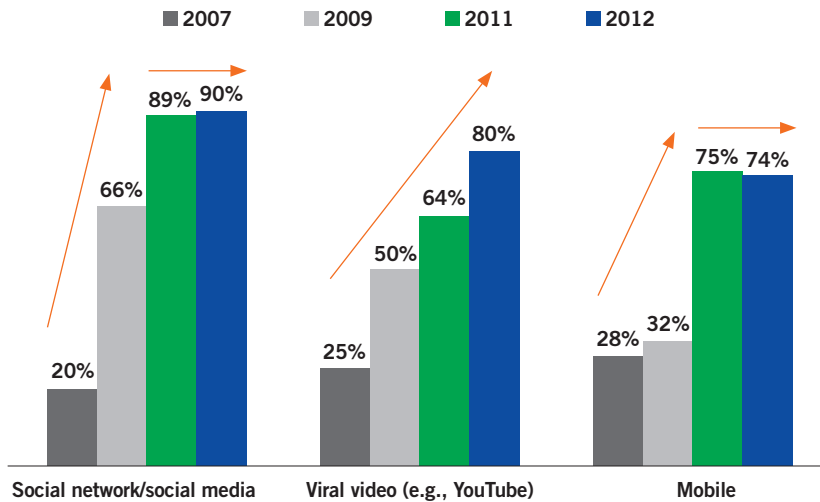
“I think the major social media platforms, such as Facebook and Twitter, will have to step up with their own robust analytics systems in order to have any kind of measurement process that could be considered ‘industry standard,’” says survey participant Eric Harris, art director at Medical Components Inc., a developer and manufacturer of cutting-edge vascular devices. “Right now the field is crowded with third-party vendors offering proprietary analytics packages they can’t really prove the value of. But once industry leaders step in and define what the key social metrics are, and with publicly available tools like Sprout Social supporting them, we’ll see things come together more.”

Today, 60 percent of marketers surveyed are currently measuring the ROI of their social media efforts, and 50 percent are doing the same for their

### ANA SURVEY RESEARCH

## NEWER MEDIA PLATFORMS CURRENTLY BEING USED — TIME COMPARISON

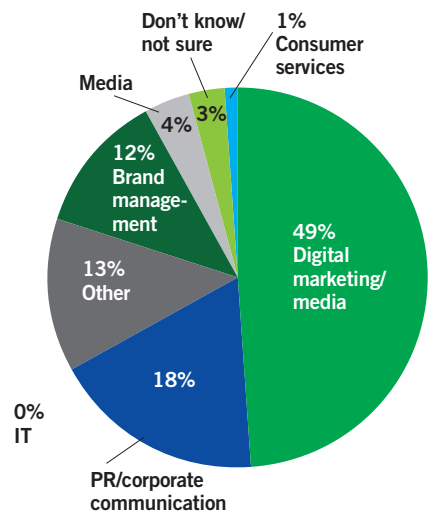
Bases: 2007 (326), 2009 (164), 2011 (92), 2012 (224)



**Q1.** Which of the following newer media platforms are being used (or are you planning to use) for the business you are managing to reach your customers? (Yes, currently using)

## RESPONSIBILITY OF SOCIAL MEDIA INITIATIVES

Base: 142



**Q8.** Where in your organization do responsibilities for social media sit?

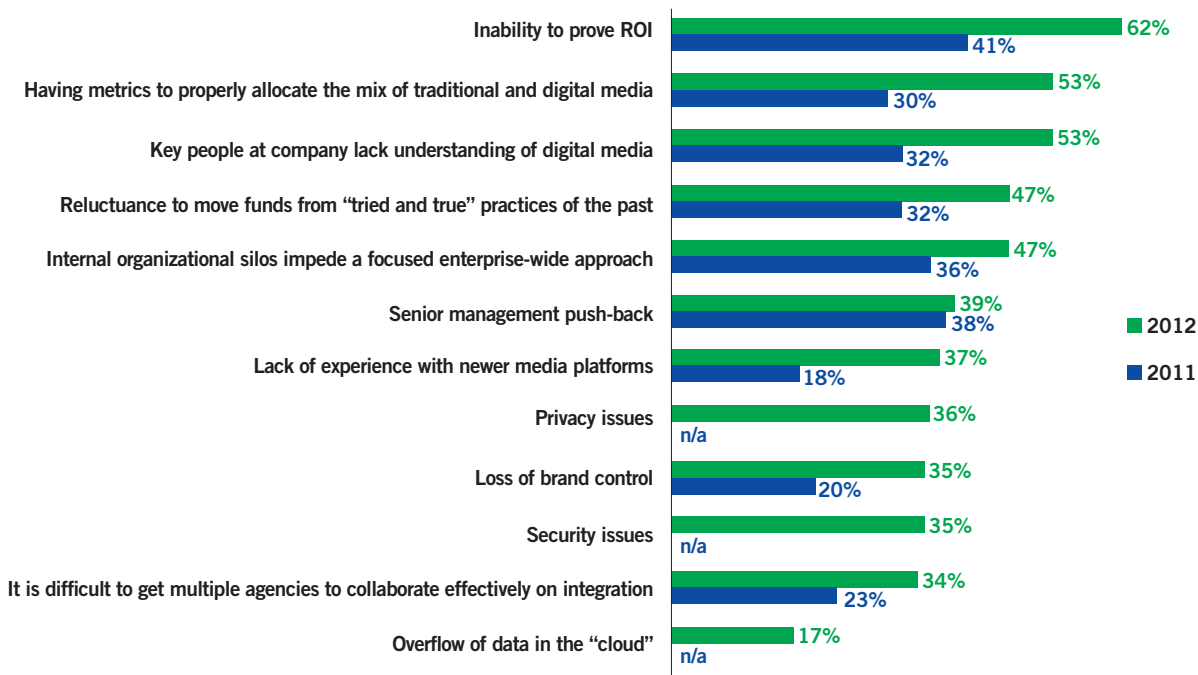
# MEDIA TRENDS

ANA SURVEY RESEARCH

## KEY CONCERNS WITH NEWER MEDIA PLATFORMS

(Top 3 Box Ratings on a 10-Point Scale)

Bases: 2011 (56), 2012 (133)



**Q7.** When adopting or considering adopting any of the newer media platforms, how concerned are you with each of the following items? Please rate your degree of concern with each item on a 1–10 scale, where 1 = not at all concerned and 10 = extremely concerned.

viral video marketing. Of the three leading newer media platforms, mobile marketing has the highest percentage of marketers (70 percent) measuring ROI effectiveness.

The survey also found that more than 80 percent of survey respondents are measuring their efforts in search engine marketing (i.e., paid keyword), website marketing, email marketing, online advertising on third-party websites, and search engine optimization. Because these newer media platforms have been around the longest, they are more likely to have a measuring process in place.

### In-house Analytics

Although improvement is needed in measuring social media and word-of-mouth effectiveness, marketers nonetheless consider these platforms valuable to the overall marketing mix. As evidence, social media monitoring is increasingly falling on all manner of in-house teams within an organization.

While 51 percent of marketers surveyed said their social media monitoring is done both in-house and externally, the percentage of respondents who claim those efforts are solely outsourced has decreased from 33 percent in 2011 to 26 percent this year.

At Medical Components, social media is handled by a few individuals from its in-house advertising and marketing departments. These departments took the initiative, Harris says, because no one else seemed to be paying attention. "The challenge of this arrangement hinges around the fact that social media is only part of our job," he points out. "But the good thing about this is it allows us to play around with different approaches in order to learn what works and what doesn't."

Overall, the ANA survey reveals that marketers no longer view newer media platforms as novelties but as must-haves. "We must learn how to integrate digital properly — at the strategic level —

instead of allocating 10 percent and calling it a day," says Tom Cunniff, chairman of the ANA Digital Marketing Committee. "Asking a half-dozen people to come up with individual strategies for each tactic guarantees disintegration. Integration is the job of the marketing department. We can't outsource it."

Cunniff is also adamant about banishing phrases like "new media" and "social media marketing" from our vocabularies. "There is no such thing," he says. "There is marketing strategy, and then there is the question of which media and tactics best serve that overall strategy." ■

*Willette Francis is a junior copywriter for the ANA.*

### NEXT STEPS

To learn more and read the complete 2012 Digital/Social Media Survey, visit [www.ana.net/2012DigitalSocialReport](http://www.ana.net/2012DigitalSocialReport).