SOCIAL MEDIA FOR CORPORATE COMMUNICATIONS

A REVIEW OF CORPORATE SOCIAL MEDIA USE IN THE US AND THE UK

2015

Foreword

Every day of our working lives, large companies are confronted with a new and, for some, uncomfortable reality. The nature of their communication with customers and suppliers, with investors and employees, has changed out of all recognition from the norms of just a few years ago.

An increasingly connected world and the smartphone revolution has meant that social media is impossible to ignore for any substantial business. The growth of social media over the past decade has created many new opportunities for companies. They can talk to their customers directly, showcase their products and career possibilities with captivating videos, and respond in real time to emerging issues and crises.

For many businesses, these new platforms have also created unfamiliar challenges and risks. We all know of examples where well-intentioned engagement over social media has led to mishap and embarrassment.

These are the teething problems that you should expect when undertaking a new form of communication. Yet many companies are clearly crying out for guidance, keen to understand the best practice among their peers.

It is here where we at Investis have performed a valuable service with this, our review of social media as it is used for corporate communications. We believe this to be the most extensive such study conducted to date, assessing more than 500 companies in the United Kingdom and the United States in their use of eight leading social media platforms.

As CEO of Investis, I'm encouraged to see that so many companies have already risen to the challenge of mastering these new communication channels. The leaders are confidently deploying a wide variety of techniques and content to engage their customers, employees and investors in ways that are most appropriate to them and their needs.

The Investis IQ review describes how many of the world's leading companies have responded to the new possibilities. In doing so, we provide a valuable guide to emerging use and best practice.

What seems to work best is the variety of content that companies use to engage their audiences. While it might be assumed that consumer-facing companies would be best placed because of the depth of their marketing materials, our findings show that there is a strong appetite for corporate information - for investors, on career opportunities and about companies' social responsibility programmes.

There are no simple answers here but nor should we expect them. Social media platforms offer more vibrant and diverse ways to reach an audience, but that brings some degree of complexity. Some experimentation is necessary to identify what is the right approach for your business. However, for those prepared to embrace social media, the rewards are considerable.

Helen James - CEO Investis

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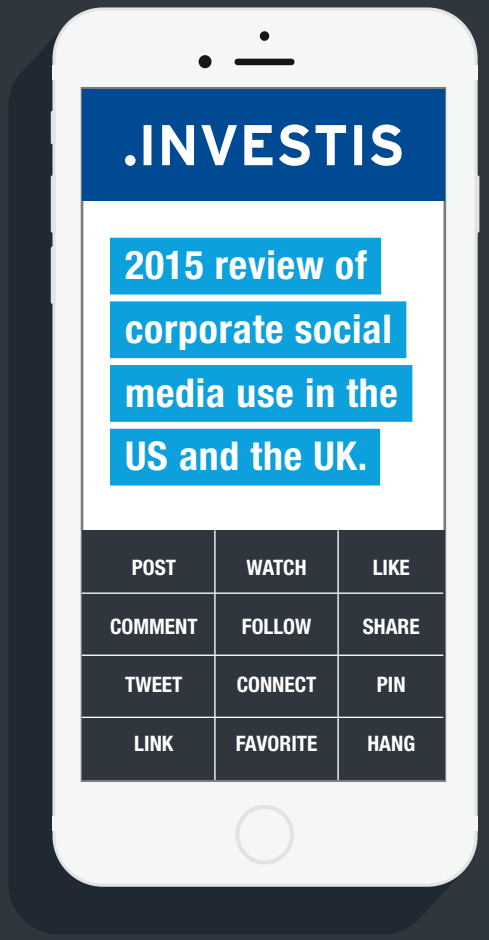
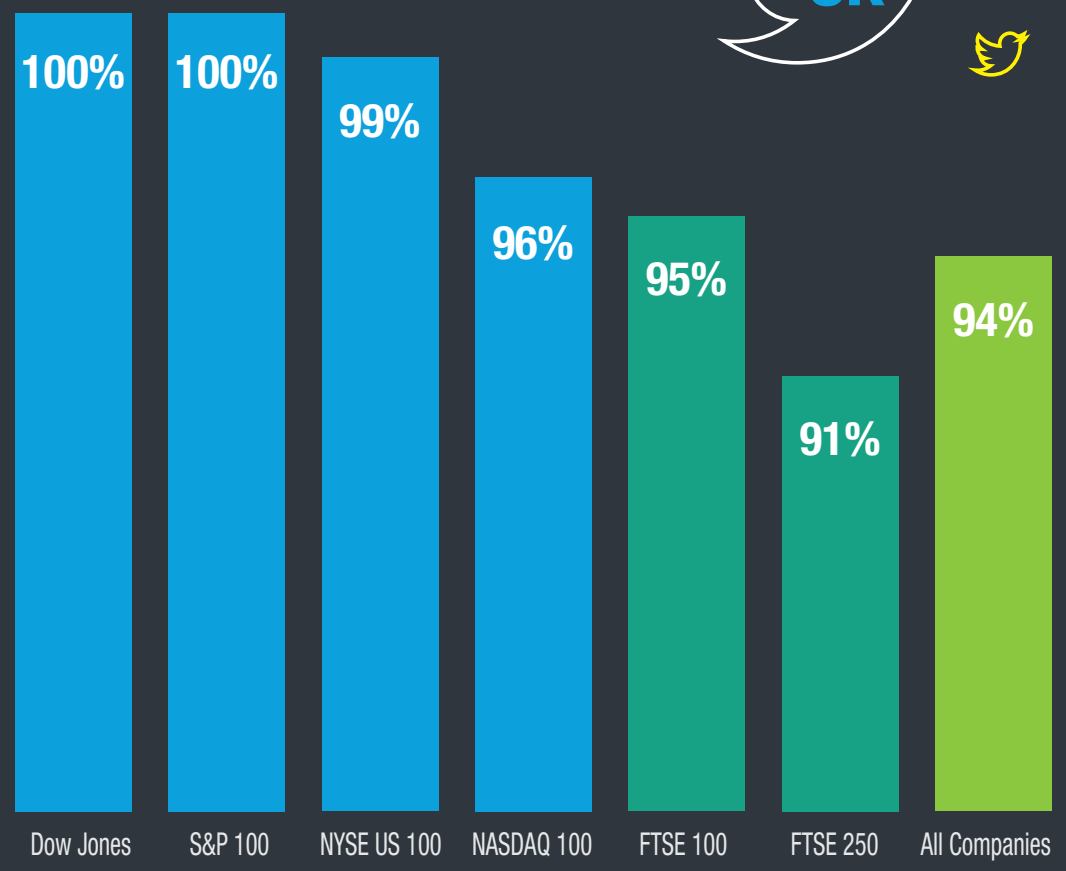


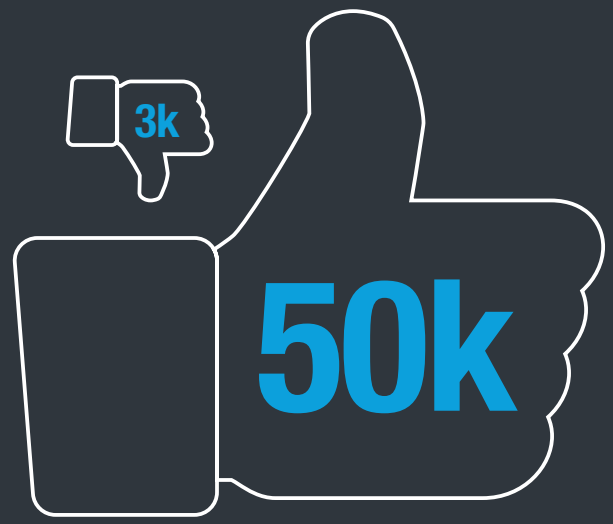


94% of companies reviewed use social media for corporate communications.

Companies that post IR content on Twitter have

60% MORE FOLLOWERS

than companies that don't.



Companies that respond to Facebook wall posts receive

17x MORE LIKES

than companies that don't.

2 billion[i]
active social media users.

1.6 billion people using smartphones.[ii]

77% of social media accessed via mobile devices.[iii]

Over 3 billion active internet users.[iv]

= 10,000,000 people

Over 1 billion[v]
people visit YouTube each month.

Introduction

The rise of social media and mobile has radically changed the way people consume information online. The global audience now seeks and expects to find information on the social networks it frequents and expects that most written content will be presented in bite-sized chunks, while images and video will feature heavily.

This shift means that businesses are no longer able safely to ignore social media as a means of communicating with their corporate and wider audience. Regulators, such as the SEC in the United States and the FCA in the United Kingdom, have recognised this, publishing guidance designed to make it easier for public companies to use social media. Simultaneously, Twitter feeds and social sentiment analysis tools have been integrated into trading terminals.

Three years ago, just 35% of the UK FTSE 100 and 61% of the US S&P 100 linked from their corporate website to a social media account used at least in part for corporate communications. Today 72% of the FTSE 100 and 89% of the S&P 100 do so.

Furthermore, 95% of the FTSE 100 and all of the S&P 100 have a social media account used for corporate communications (even if some of them are not linked to from their corporate websites).

Most companies' corporate communications teams now accept that they need to be on social media – but many of these companies are still not confident or adept at using it. Companies that do not provide the content their audience want in the right format and style are failing to attract and retain the interest of their audience. A huge gulf has opened up between companies that half-heartedly post the occasional update and those that are using social media for corporate communications effectively.

The first approach is simply a box-ticking exercise or one that only sees social media in terms of crisis management. The second approach understands social media as something that can both protect and enhance corporate reputation; as a powerful tool to communicate and engage with a broad corporate audience; and as an integral part of an overall communications strategy rather than as a 'nice to have' bolt-on.

The review

Social media is a complex beast: it is hard for any company to know where to focus its efforts. Up until now, there has been little evidence on which to base decisions about where the corporate communications budget might best be employed.

This review has been designed to provide insight into how publicly listed companies are using social media for corporate communications. It is based on empirical research looking at some quarter of a million data points, collected manually. The review's methodology can be found at the end of this document.

The review offers insight into which types of content work where and what approaches work best. It delivers hard evidence of the value of sharing corporate content in addition to marketing or consumer content on social networks. It also reveals which companies are using social media to the greatest effect and provides best practice examples of how they are doing this.

The review covers over 500 of the biggest publicly listed companies in the US and the UK, including all constituents of the Dow Jones I.A., the S&P 100, the NYSE US 100, the NASDAQ 100, the FTSE 100 and the FTSE 250 (excluding investment trusts).

As such, it is the most thorough and up-to-date account available of how these companies are using social media for corporate purposes and of the state of corporate social media generally.

It is also the first review to look at social media for corporate communications from a global perspective, allowing public companies to assess their global rather than regional performance.

The most thorough and up-to-date account of the state of corporate social media available.

Why the review is important

A gap in quality and performance is opening up between public companies in terms of how they use social media.

This gap can be detected between US and UK companies; between large cap and small cap companies; and between different sectors.

Companies of all sizes, in all countries and in all sectors, are increasingly experiencing adverse effects when they fail to manage their social media presence effectively. This can be caused by the actions on social media of anyone ranging from shareholder activists and non-financial interest groups to employees and the general public.

Numerous, high-profile incidents have demonstrated that when a company is not in control of its social media presence, the company is at risk: for some companies, the effect has been calamitous. Yet many companies only invest seriously in social media after a bad experience – and even then, they may persist in seeing it as a damage limitation tool.

The benefits of using social media well are real – although not as immediately felt as its drawbacks. Social media is not just useful for repairing reputation. It is a uniquely powerful tool for enhancing and maintaining a corporate reputation on an ongoing basis; for reinforcing (both overtly and subliminally) a company's ethics, approach, strategy and outlook; for reaching out to new, undiscovered audiences who will disseminate the company's message ever further; and for underpinning a company's existing, wider communications.

By shedding light on how social media is currently being used for corporate communications, this review seeks to help companies improve their approach to corporate social media and decide how best to allocate their communications resources.

A company that is not in control of its social media presence is playing fast and loose with its reputation.

What the review tells us

At its simplest, this review demonstrates why a haphazard, sporadic approach will never result in strong engagement from the audience. A consistent approach is essential as is a commitment to genuine engagement and a regular, high-volume output.

The review provides hard evidence that those companies that genuinely engage with the social audience and that commit to a regular, high-volume output are rewarded by higher views and greater engagement and interaction on their accounts and channels.

One of the most dramatic illustrations of this is on Facebook. We found that companies that do not respond to wall posts receive an average of 3,137 likes but that companies that do respond get an average of 52,544 likes. Similarly, Twitter accounts that tweeted 30 or more times each month averaged 20,800 followers while those that tweeted fewer than 30 times a month averaged just 2,546 followers.

Who is following an account is clearly more important than how many people are doing so. Nevertheless, the review shows that more content and more engagement leads to more people responding.

These companies will also reap the benefit of having their content shared more widely, both proactively by the individual user and by the social channel's newsfeed algorithms.

The review shows where companies are failing to maximise the impact of their social activity, either through not using all of the functionality available on a given channel or through failing to promote the account to their corporate and wider audience.

The review reveals which networks are most commonly used for which type of corporate content or combination of content types. It shows that most companies have stuck to the larger, more established networks such as Twitter or Facebook, rather than experimenting with networks such as SlideShare, despite its obvious corporate uses.

Companies that respond to Facebook wall posts receive 17x more likes than companies that don't.

The importance of corporate content

The vast majority of the accounts in the review mix corporate with marketing content. The review demonstrates that corporate content helps to drive engagement.

It is tempting to assume that accounts that combine corporate and marketing content are successful only because the marketing content is picked up and followed by large numbers of consumers while the corporate content and the corporate audience are irrelevant.

Marketing content undoubtedly does drive engagement – but the review shows a correlation between corporate content and engagement as well. For example, Twitter accounts with no IR content average 4,921 followers but when IR content is included they average 7,963 followers. With CSR the rise is even more impressive: accounts with no CSR content average 2,974 followers but with CSR content they average 10,100 followers.

The siloed approach to corporate communications is no longer fit for purpose. The corporate audience is traditionally defined somewhat narrowly and there is a far greater appetite for corporate content than this audience definition allows.

Anyone who buys a company's product or service has effectively invested in that company – even if they don't own any shares. These people are just as likely to be interested in a company's growth or its approach to sustainability as the traditional corporate audience.

Recognition of this can be seen in the way that some companies are changing how they use certain networks. For example, LinkedIn, which used to be used almost entirely for job alerts is now being used by many companies to post wider corporate content about company practices and values which will still be of interest to job-seekers.

The public may not vote at an AGM but they vote with their wallets – which ultimately proves far more effective. Social media has given the public a powerful way of gathering and sharing information – and the public will do this even if a company itself stays silent. More than ever, social media forges and breaks corporate reputations: companies would be well advised to take part in the conversation.

Twitter accounts with no IR content average 4,921 followers. When IR content is included they average nearly 8,000.

Social media usage by channel

% split by channel

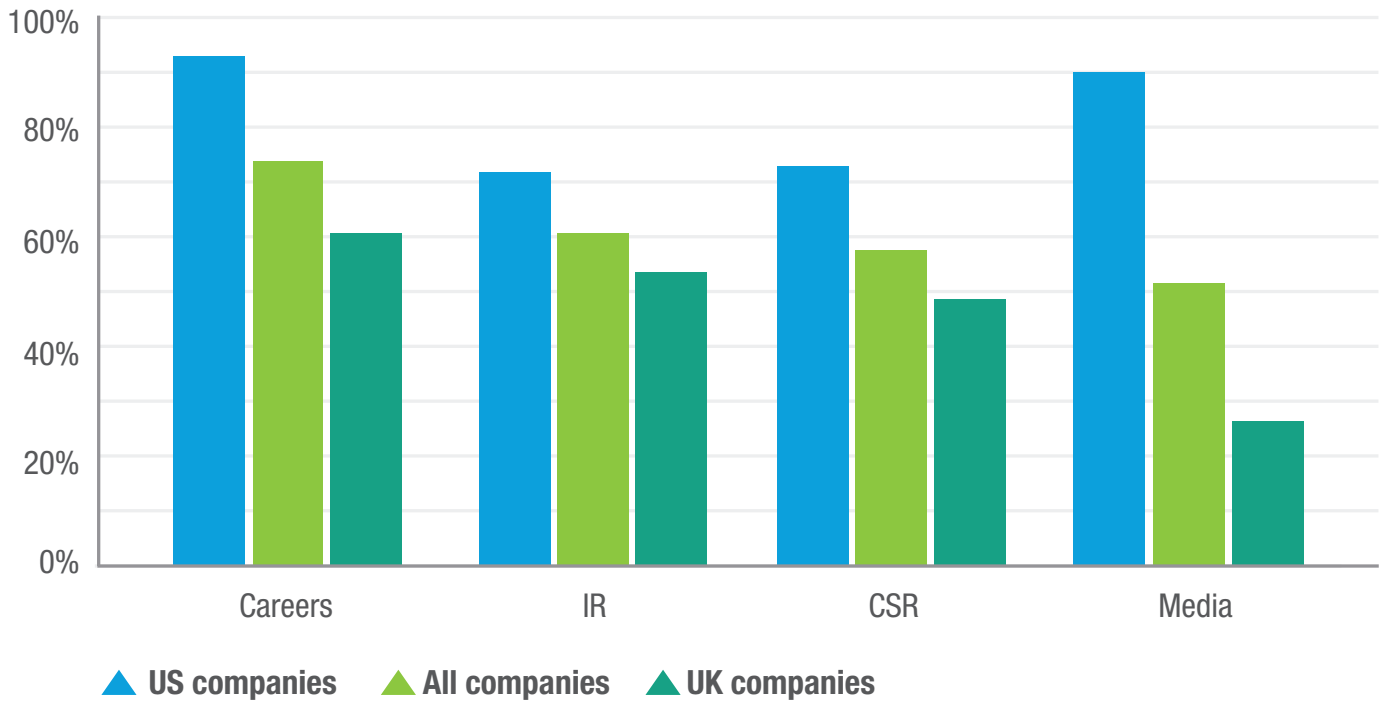
LinkedIn is the most popular social channel, with 93% of all companies actively maintaining a LinkedIn account used for corporate purposes. This figure rises to 97% of US companies but falls to 90% for UK companies.

On every channel covered by the review, a higher percentage of US companies have an account than do the UK companies.

Success on one channel is not dependent on the successful use of another channel. However, engaging on multiple channels increases the likelihood of content being found.

Social media usage by content type

% of companies posting specific content



73% of the companies reviewed post careers content on one or more their social media accounts (although just 60% of UK companies do compared to 92% of US companies).

60% of all companies post IR content, making it the second most common content type found on corporate social media accounts. In the UK, 53% of companies post IR content whereas in the US 71% of companies do.

On average, companies post corporate content on three social media channels – although US companies average four channels.

Average channel scores

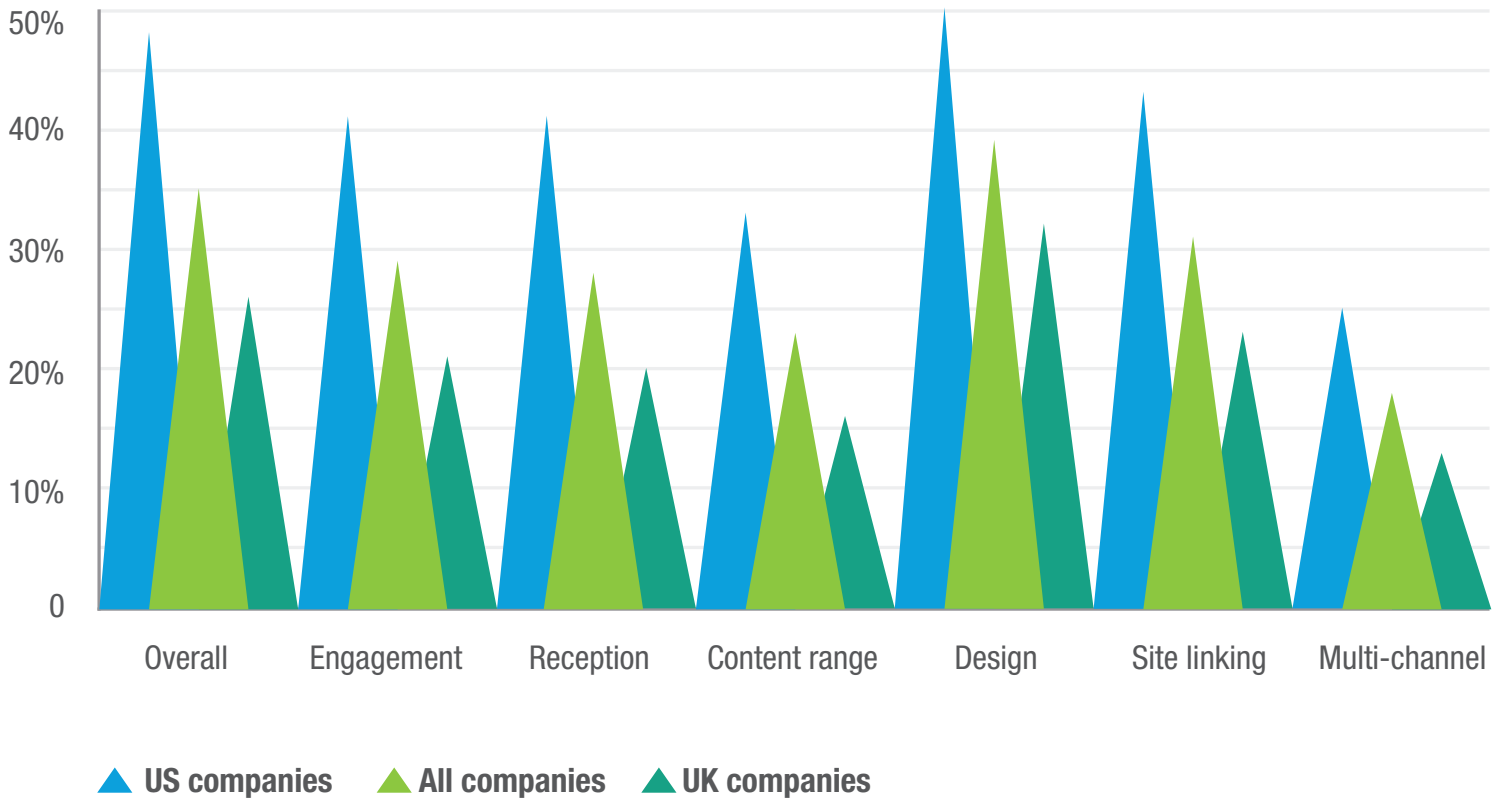
US companies outperform UK companies on every social media channel.

The biggest disparity is on Facebook, where the average score for US companies is 29 points higher than the UK average.

Apart from on LinkedIn, Twitter and Flickr, average scores for US companies are at least twice as high as the average scores for UK companies.

Averages are higher for the bigger, longer-established channels – indicating that few companies are using the smaller networks.

Average category scores



US companies significantly outperform UK companies for social media overall, averaging 48% compared to the UK average of 26%.

US companies also perform better than UK companies in every category we measure (see Methodology for an explanation of categories).

The biggest disparity is in terms of Reception, where the average score for US companies is 20 points higher than the UK average.

However, US company averages are around twice as high for all categories, except for Design.

Executive summary

Overall

The average company scores 35%.

10 companies of the 514 reviewed recorded no score while Cisco Systems, the highest ranked company, scored 86%.

US companies significantly outperform UK companies for social media overall, averaging 48% compared to the UK average of 26%.

Engagement

- US companies post far more content than UK companies.
- There is little regional variation when it comes to interacting with users. For example around 59% of all companies respond to direct queries on Twitter.

Reception

- US companies are followed by far more users than UK companies.
- This is due to a combination of frequency and volume of updates, the length of time that the accounts have been running and the relative size of the companies.

Design

- Many companies (particularly in the UK but also in the US) are failing to take advantage of all the design elements available on social media channels.
- Logos and avatars often fail to match corporate branding.
- Biographical information is sometimes lacking.

Site linking

- 89% of companies link to their Twitter accounts from their corporate websites but other channels are less well-promoted.
- Linking from social media channels to corporate websites is good.

Executive summary

Content range

- 73% of the companies reviewed post careers content on one or more their social media accounts (although just 60% of UK companies do compared to 92% of US companies).
- IR content is the next most popular content, with 60% of all companies posting this on one or more channels (53% of UK companies and 71% of US companies).
- UK companies are slightly more likely to publish IR content on Twitter than US companies – but the overall average for tweeting IR content for all companies with corporate Twitter accounts is 70%.
- US companies tend to use Facebook and YouTube most for media content while UK companies use these channels most for CSR and careers content.

Multi-channel

- US companies tend to have far more other regional and consumer accounts across many of the channels than UK companies do – except on LinkedIn and Flickr where UK companies have more accounts.

Use of social media on the corporate website

- 43% of US companies link to a blog compared to 23% of UK companies.
- 71% of US companies have home page links to their social media accounts compared to 53% of UK companies.
- However, 30% of UK companies have social sharing on their share price charts – compared to just 3% of US companies.

Overall social media score by sector

Technology companies are the best performing sector for social media, averaging 56% overall and also leading in every category.

- 7 out of the top 10 highest scoring companies overall are in the technology sector.
- Networking equipment manufacturer, Cisco Systems (Dow Jones / S&P / NASDAQ) scores 86%, the highest recorded in the review.

Banks are the second-best performing sector, averaging 49%.

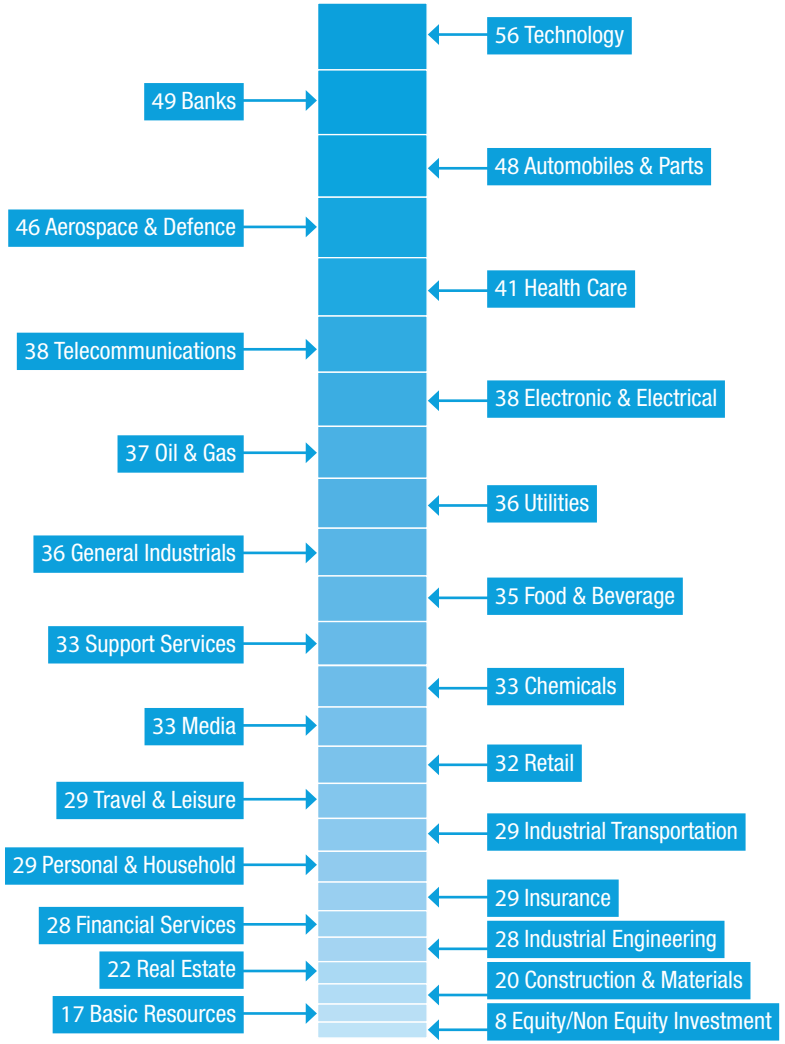
Real Estate (22%), Construction (20%) and Basic Resources (17%) are among the lowest scoring sectors.

- Considering the reputational challenges faced by Basic Resources companies in particular, it is surprising that these companies are not trying harder (as, for example, the banking industry has done). However, there are exceptions, with the FTSE 100's Anglo American scoring an impressive 75%.

Consumer-facing sectors, such as Food & Beverage, Retail, Travel & Leisure and Personal & Household Goods tend to cluster in the middle of the table.

- Many of these companies have an extensive consumer presence on social media – but do little from the corporate perspective, perhaps for fear of muddying the waters.

Average score out of 100



Region and index comparison

Companies scored an average of 35 out of 100.

There is a huge regional variation – with US companies averaging 48% and UK companies just 26%.

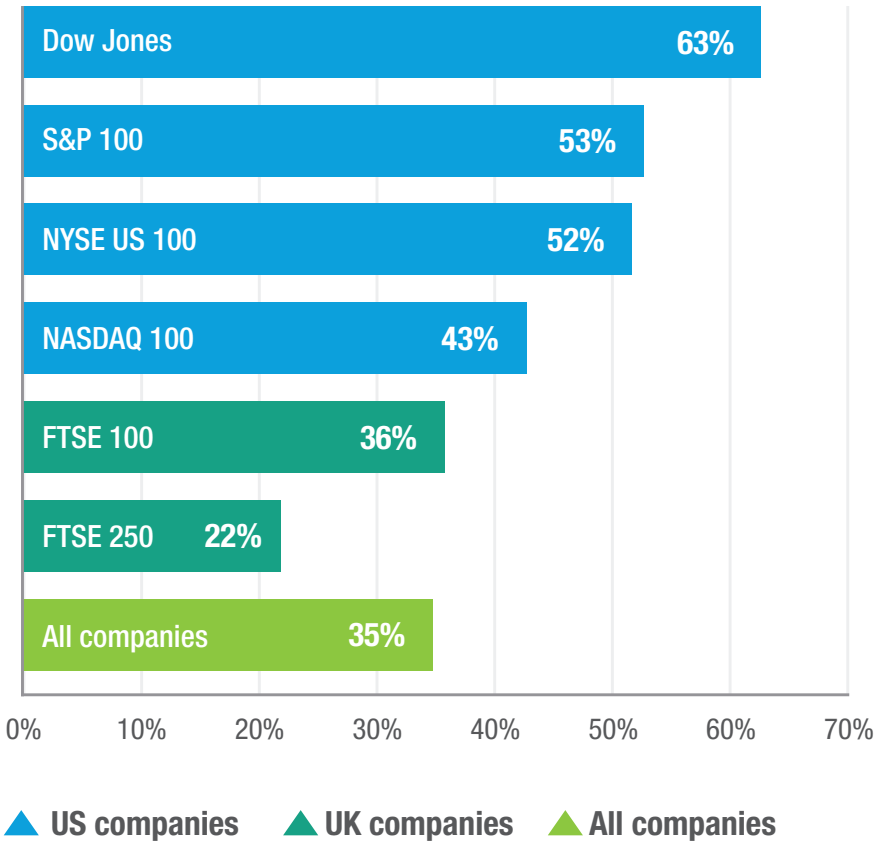
The UK average overall score is dragged down by the FTSE 250.

- While 91% of the index do have one or more social media accounts used at least in part for corporate communications, many FTSE 250 accounts are poorly managed, resulting in an average index score of just 22% compared to the 36% managed by the FTSE 100.
- Basic Resources, Banks and Utilities sectors record particularly low averages in the FTSE 250.

The NASDAQ 100 is somewhat off the pace in the US.

- This is surprising given that 36% of the NASDAQ 100 are technology companies as technology companies tend to perform best overall for social media. However, 9 of the top 20 companies scored for the review are NASDAQ 100 technology companies and within this index the technology sector averages 57%. When technology companies are excluded from the NASDAQ 100, the index scores the same as the global average (35%).
- The Personal & Household Goods, Retail and Media sectors in particular are lowering overall NASDAQ 100 averages.

Overall social media score by index



Executive summary – the top 100

#	Company	Sector	Index	Score
1	Cisco Systems	Technology	Dow Jones / S&P / NASDAQ	85.82
2	Hewlett-Packard	Technology	S&P / NYSE US	82.17
3	Citrix Systems	Telecommunications	NASDAQ	80.97
4	Royal Dutch Shell	Oil & Gas	FTSE 100	80.63
5	CA Technologies	Technology	NASDAQ	78.46
6	Symantec	Technology	NASDAQ	76.07
7	Automatic Data Processing	Technology	NASDAQ	76.04
8	Cognizant Technology Solutions	Technology	NASDAQ	75.71
9	NetApp	Technology	NASDAQ	75.66
10	BP	Oil & Gas	FTSE 100	75.50
11	Adobe Systems	Technology	NASDAQ	75.35
12	IBM	Technology	Dow Jones / S&P / NYSE US	75.06
13	NVIDIA	Technology	NASDAQ	75.03
14	General Electric	General Industrials	Dow Jones / S&P / NYSE US	74.94
15	Anglo American	Basic Resources	FTSE 100	74.93
16	Pearson	Media	FTSE 100	74.90
17	Accenture	Support Services	S&P / NYSE US	74.63
18	eBay	Technology	S&P / NASDAQ	74.40
19	Qualcomm	Telecommunications	S&P / NASDAQ	74.20
20	Oracle	Technology	S&P	73.96
21	UPS	Support Services	S&P / NYSE US	73.04
22	Ford Motor Company	Automobiles & Parts	S&P / NYSE US	72.63
23	Akamai Technologies	Technology	NASDAQ	72.18
24	Wal-Mart Stores	Retail	Dow Jones / S&P / NYSE US	72.18
25	SanDisk	Technology	NASDAQ	72.12

#	Company	Sector	Index	Score
26	Atkins	Support Services	FTSE 250	71.83
27	McDonald's	Retail	Dow Jones / S&P / NYSE US	71.67
28	GlaxoSmithKline	Health Care	FTSE 100	71.53
29	Citigroup	Banks	S&P / NYSE US	71.07
30	Johnson & Johnson	Health Care	Dow Jones / S&P / NYSE US	70.70
31	Marriott International	Travel & Leisure	NASDAQ	70.34
32	Wells Fargo	Banks	S&P / NYSE US	70.26
33	FedEx	Support Services	S&P / NYSE US	69.73
34	Autodesk	Technology	NASDAQ	69.51
35	Intel	Technology	Dow Jones / S&P / NASDAQ	69.04
36	BAE Systems	Aerospace & Defence	FTSE 100	68.98
37	EMC	Technology	S&P / NYSE US	68.96
38	Intuit	Technology	NASDAQ	68.49
39	Coca-Cola	Food & Beverage	Dow Jones / S&P / NYSE US	68.41
40	Equinix	Telecommunications	NASDAQ	68.29
41	Dow Chemical	Chemicals	S&P / NYSE US	68.20
42	Standard Chartered	Banks	FTSE 100	67.61
43	Mitie Group	Support Services	FTSE 250	67.46
44	Balfour Beatty	Support Services	FTSE 250	67.31
45	Microsoft Corporation	Technology	Dow Jones / S&P / NASDAQ	67.31
46	Unilever	Food & Beverage	FTSE 100	67.26
47	Henry Schein	Health Care	NASDAQ	66.96
48	General Motors	Automobiles & Parts	S&P / NYSE US	66.94
49	Reckitt Benckiser	Personal & Household	FTSE 100	66.93
50	Carillion	Construction	FTSE 250	66.88

Executive summary – the top 100

#	Company	Sector	Index	Score
51	DuPont	Chemicals	NYSE US	66.75
52	Bank of America	Banks	S&P / NYSE US	66.59
53	General Mills	Food & Beverage	NYSE US	66.22
54	PepsiCo	Food & Beverage	S&P / NYSE US	66.22
55	National Grid	Utilities	FTSE 100	65.96
56	Baker Hughes	Oil & Gas	NYSE US	65.92
57	Lockheed Martin	Aerospace & Defence	S&P / NYSE US	65.87
58	Caterpillar	General Industrials	Dow Jones / S&P / NYSE US	65.46
59	AT&T	Telecommunications	Dow Jones / S&P / NYSE US	65.40
60	ARM Holdings	Technology	FTSE 100	64.77
61	Union Pacific	Industrial Transportation	S&P / NYSE US	64.76
62	Duke Energy	Utilities	NYSE US	64.70
63	American Express	Financial Services	Dow Jones / S&P / NYSE US	64.37
64	Google	Technology	S&P / NASDAQ	64.34
65	Honeywell International	Aerospace & Defence	S&P / NYSE US	64.31
66	Seagate Technology	Technology	NASDAQ	64.30
67	AstraZeneca	Health Care	FTSE 100	64.14
68	Procter & Gamble	Personal & Household	Dow Jones / S&P / NYSE US	64.14
69	RSA Insurance	Insurance	FTSE 100	63.68
70	Chevron	Oil & Gas	Dow Jones / S&P / NYSE US	63.32
71	Fiserv	Technology	NASDAQ	63.15
72	InterContinental Hotels	Travel & Leisure	FTSE 100	62.84
73	Monsanto	Food & Beverage	S&P / NYSE US	62.76
74	Lilly	Health Care	S&P / NYSE US	62.72
75	C.H. Robinson Worldwide	Industrial Transportation	NASDAQ	62.60
76	Broadcom	Technology	NASDAQ	62.48
77	Pfizer	Health Care	Dow Jones / S&P / NYSE US	62.33
78	TUI Travel	Travel & Leisure	FTSE 100	62.13
79	Spirent Communications	Technology	FTSE 250	61.91
80	Mondelēz International	Food & Beverage	S&P / NYSE US / NASDAQ	61.87
81	SABMiller	Food & Beverage	FTSE 100	61.75
82	Boeing	Aerospace & Defence	Dow Jones / S&P / NYSE US	61.64
83	Rolls-Royce	Aerospace & Defence	FTSE 100	61.45
84	Whole Foods Market	Retail	NASDAQ	61.27
85	Royal Bank Of Scotland	Banks	FTSE 100	61.25
86	Aviva	Insurance	FTSE 100	61.21
87	Kimberly-Clark	General Industrials	NYSE US	61.08
88	Verizon	Telecommunications	Dow Jones / S&P / NYSE US	61.00
89	Target	Retail	S&P / NYSE US	60.91
90	Norfolk Southern	Industrial Transportation	S&P	60.89
91	Renishaw	Electronic & Equipment	FTSE 250	60.49
92	Cerner Corporation	Technology	NASDAQ	60.15
93	Applied Materials	Technology	NASDAQ	60.01
94	F5 Networks	Technology	NASDAQ	59.87
95	JPMorgan Chase & Co.	Financial Services	Dow Jones / S&P / NYSE US	59.79
96	Merck & Co.	Health Care	Dow Jones / S&P / NYSE US	59.78
97	Centrica	Utilities	FTSE 100	59.72
98	3M	General Industrials	Dow Jones / S&P / NYSE US	59.63
99	Halliburton	Oil & Gas	S&P / NYSE US	59.58
100	The Home Depot	Personal & Household	Dow Jones / S&P / NYSE US	59.36

LinkedIn

Summary

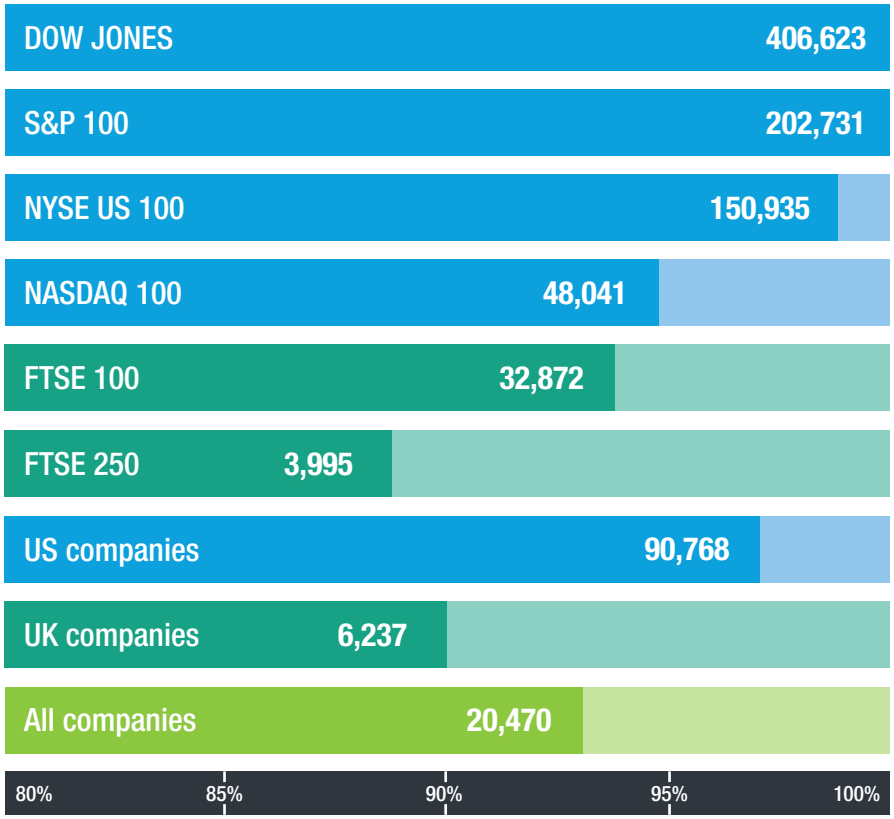
Companies in the Technologies sector tend to make the best use of LinkedIn, averaging 72%. BP (FTSE 100) is the best performing company on 98% with eBay (S&P / NASDAQ) the best US company on 96%.

BP tops the rankings for every LinkedIn category except for Engagement, where it is just edged out by Cognizant Technologies (NASDAQ) and Micro Focus (FTSE 250), simply by virtue of the huge number of posts they make each month.

#		Company	Sector	Index	Score
1		BP	Oil & Gas	FTSE 100	97.52
2		eBay	Technology	S&P 100 / NASDAQ	95.87
3		Accenture	Support Services	S&P / NYSE US	95.04
4		Unilever	Food & Beverage	FTSE 100	95.04
5		Cognizant Technology Solutions	Technology	NASDAQ	94.21
6		Cisco Systems	Technology	Dow Jones / S&P / NASDAQ	94.21
7		SABMiller	Food & Beverage	FTSE 100	94.21
8		Marriott International	Travel & Leisure	NASDAQ	94.21
9		Microsoft Corporation	Technology	Dow Jones / S&P / NASDAQ	93.39
10		IBM	Technology	Dow Jones / S&P / NYSE US	93.39

Companies with LinkedIn accounts

93% of companies have a LinkedIn account used for corporate purposes – making it the most commonly used channel. The UK averages 90% while the US is on 97%.

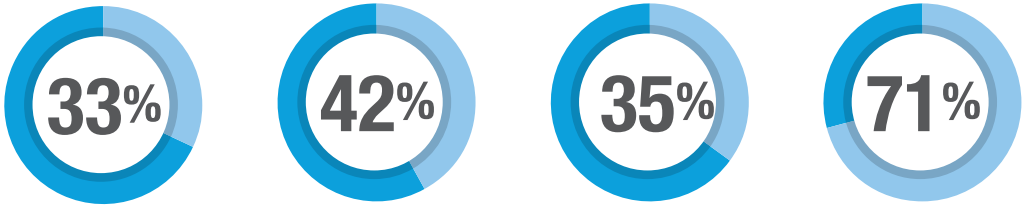


US companies | UK companies | All companies

The figures in the bars show the median number of followers per account.

332 million professionals in over 200 countries.[vi]

Content mix on main corporate accounts



IR | Media | CSR | Careers

Of the 71% that post careers content, 68% also have a careers tab but 32% do not, meaning nearly a third of companies are happy to use LinkedIn for recruitment purposes but they do not wish to pay for the pleasure.

53% have a careers tab: Of these, 92% also post careers content on the home page while the remaining 8% prefer to keep the careers content separate from the IR, CSR and media content posted on the home page.

Unsurprisingly, careers content is far and away the most popular type of corporate content on LinkedIn accounts.

Just a third of companies post IR content on LinkedIn.

Careers content is rarely kept separate from other content (in its own tab to the exclusion of posting updates on the home page).

98% of S&P 100 use LinkedIn for recruitment.

LinkedIn quick facts

23% of companies with LinkedIn accounts had posted an update on their homepage on the day of the review; 56% had posted within the previous week and 78% in the previous month.

18% of companies had been inactive and never posted an update on their home page.

Companies post a median average of 11 times per month – but US companies post 15 times per month; UK companies just 5 times.

54% of companies link to their account from their corporate website while 96% link from their account to their corporate website.

22% have no banner image, only 45% use video; and only 29% link to other social media accounts.

The average # of followers is 117,000 and the average # of employees is 20,000 – but this is skewed by huge brands like Google (2.5 million followers). The median average is 20,470 followers and 3,674 employees.

LinkedIn

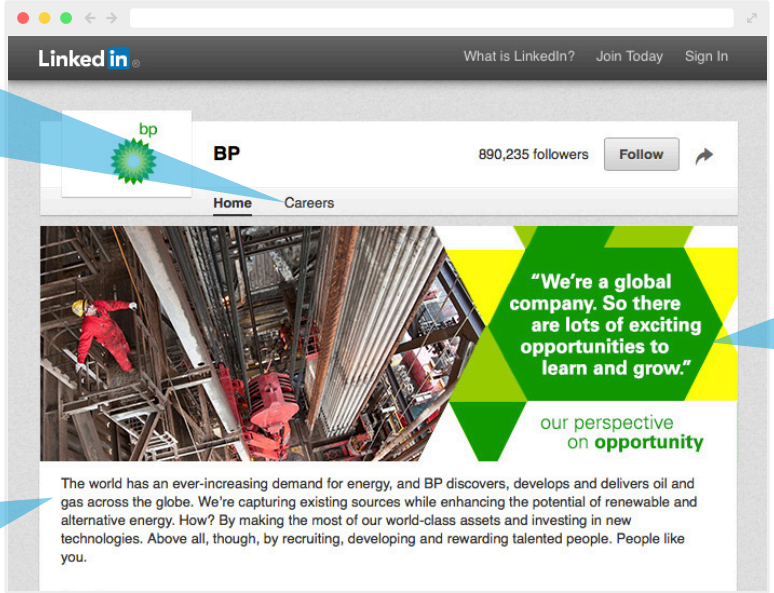
LinkedIn best practice

BP covers corporate, IR, CSR, careers and media content on its LinkedIn account. It also has a well-populated careers tab, with employee testimonials and case studies, current job openings, corporate videos and links to other social media channels.

It averages around 55 LinkedIn updates each month and is followed by over 760,000 users and 60,000 employees.

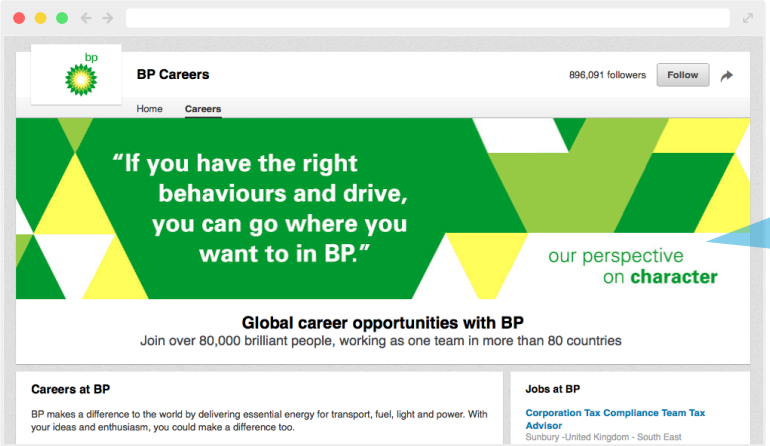
The account is linked to and from BP's corporate account and they have availed themselves of every design aspect possible – except for the use of showcase pages. On top of this BP runs a number of groups, which are primarily aimed at current and former employees.

Active careers tab



Compelling banner image

Biography geared towards job seekers



Content-rich careers tab, highlighting company ethos

LinkedIn

Analysis and recommendations

- Careers content dominates, but LinkedIn should be used for much more than this, not least because it is the biggest social referrer to corporate websites[vii].
- Some LinkedIn users are active job-seekers but most are looking to learn, network and engage with others: LinkedIn can be used to target these passive candidates as well.
- Even job-seekers are looking for more information than just job posts.
- BP's content reflects this. From sharing maths questions to animations and short, easy-to-read posts, the content is focused on its audience's needs and interests. BP is demonstrably seeking engagement from them.
- Showing your followers what sets you apart, explaining what you do and what your values are will have a direct impact on both the engagement you see from your general followers, and the quality of candidate referrals you see from LinkedIn.

LinkedIn is the biggest social referrer to corporate websites.

Twitter

Summary

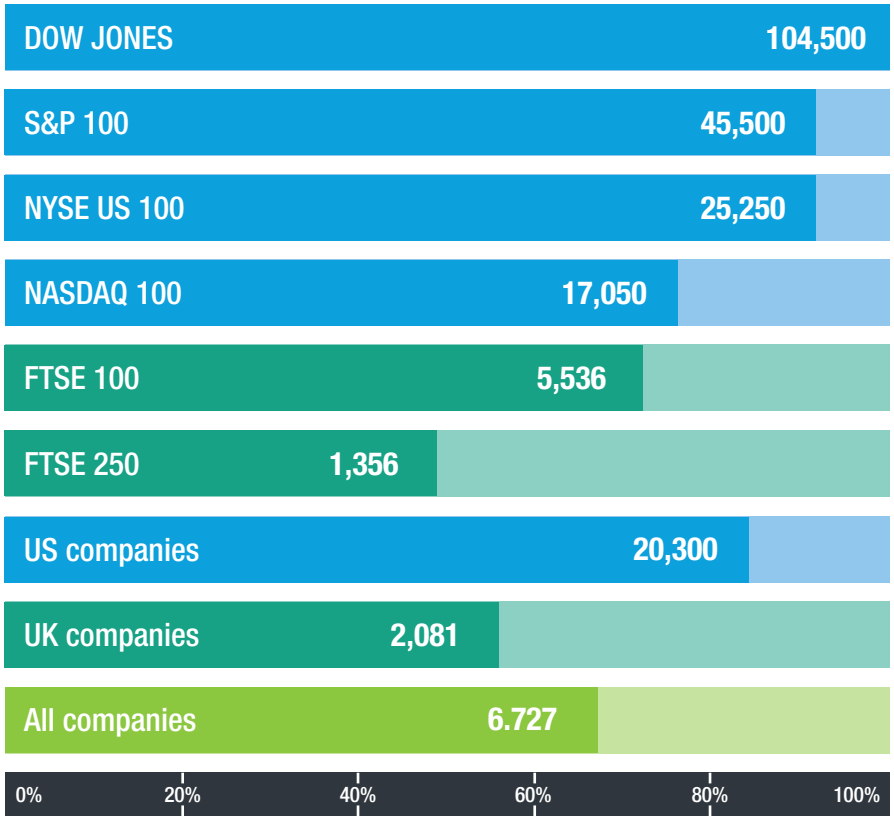
Companies in the Automobiles & Parts sector tend to make the best use of Twitter, averaging 70% – but led by Ford on 90%.

Ford (S&P 100 / NYSE US 100), Marriott International (NASDAQ 100) and Pearson (FTSE 100) take the top score for Twitter – all level on 90%. There's little to choose between them and all three top the rankings for every Twitter category we measure (Pearson scores higher for its corporate website use of social media and thus comes first overall).

#		Company	Sector	Index	Score
1		**Pearson**	Media	FTSE 100	**90.08**
2		**Marriott International**	Travel & Leisure	NASDAQ	**90.08**
3		**Ford Motor Company**	Automobiles	S&P / NYSE US	**90.08**
4		**General Motors**	Automobiles	S&P / NYSE	**89.26**
5		**IBM**	Technology	Dow Jones / S&P / NYSE US	**89.26**
6		**Cerner Corporation**	Technology	NASDAQ	**88.43**
7		**Citrix Systems**	Telecommunications	NASDAQ	**88.43**
8		**Seagate Technology**	Technology	NASDAQ	**87.60**
9		**Johnson & Johnson**	Health Care	NYSE	**87.60**
10		**Atkins**	Support Services	FTSE 250	**87.60**

Companies with Twitter accounts

67% of the companies reviewed had a corporate Twitter account – although only 56% of UK companies did, compared to 84% of US companies.

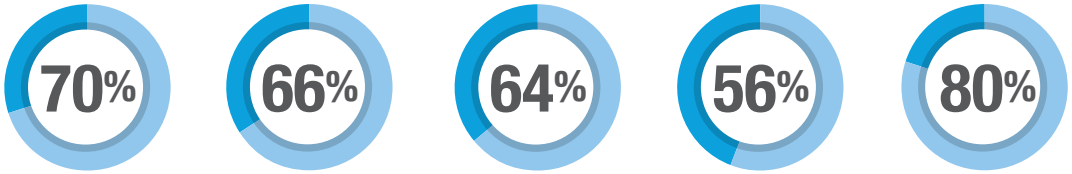


US companies | UK companies | All companies

The figures in the bars show the median number of followers per account.

500 million tweets are sent every day.[viii]

Content mix on main corporate accounts



IR content is the most popular type of content on corporate Twitter accounts.

Careers content is generally kept separate to other corporate content but when it is included, it is most commonly mixed with CSR content.

Only 20% of the Twitter accounts used for corporate communications do not include consumer marketing content.

83% of the FTSE 100 with corporate Twitter accounts tweet IR content.

Twitter quick facts

47% of companies with Twitter accounts had tweeted on the day of the review, 81% had tweeted within the previous week and 95% in the previous month.

Companies tweet a median average of 30 times per month – but US companies tweet 38 times per month; UK companies just 15 times.

Average # of followers is 113,000 – but this is skewed by some huge consumer brands, particularly in the NASDAQ 100, with followers in the millions (e.g. Starbucks with 6 million followers). The median average is just 6,727.

Twitter is the most commonly linked-to social media channel from corporate websites.

Companies have tweeted a median average of 1,357 times. The most prolific tweeter is Whole Foods Market with over 140,000 tweets while in the UK Domino's Pizza Group has tweeted over 90,000 times.

93% of companies use hashtags; 90% retweet third party comments; and 59% respond to direct queries – with no discernible regional variation.

Twitter

Twitter best practice

Ford covers corporate, IR, CSR, careers, media and consumer content on its @Ford Twitter account. It averages 2 tweets per day and has tweeted over 14,000 times to over 500,000 followers.

They themselves follow 32,000 users and both respond to tweets and retweet third-party tweets. The account is linked to and from their corporate account and they have availed themselves of every design aspect possible.

On top of this they have a couple of dedicated corporate accounts (for CSR and careers), over a dozen regional accounts, and various product and other consumer accounts.

Ford Motor Company @Ford · Sep 25
Ford created 14,000 U.S. hourly UAW jobs since 2011, announcing today 1,200 new jobs at Kansas City Assembly: ford.to/1muD1LG
49 48

Media content

Ford Motor Company @Ford · Sep 17
Thx for the great Qs! We're working to understand mobility issues across the globe & find solutions: ford.to/1r1lqtN #FordInnovate
3 9 View summary

Ford Motor Company @Ford · Jul 24
CFO Bob Shanks will answer a select number of submitted questions on @StockTwits this afternoon #FordEarnings
6 12

IR content promoting presence on another channel

Twitter

Analysis and recommendations

- Twitter is seen as a 'safe space'; it is the most commonly linked to channel for corporate websites, and almost two-thirds of companies are responding to their audience on Twitter.
- This is reflected in the high levels of IR content shared, from live-tweeting results to senior management Q&As.
- SEC and FCA guidance has had an impact on Twitter use while the influence of financial journalists, analysts and high-profile shareholders should not be underestimated.
- Be aware of Twitter's immediacy and its transient nature; posts are soon lost in the noise of a user's home feed. Varied and plentiful content which makes good use of images, videos and infographics helps cut through this.
- Tone of voice is also crucial; Ford leverages quotes from directors and employees to position itself as a market leader, while talking about what they know best – cars and commercial vehicles. Don't jump on a topical bandwagon: stick to what you know and be authentic.

Stick to what you know and be authentic.

YouTube

Summary

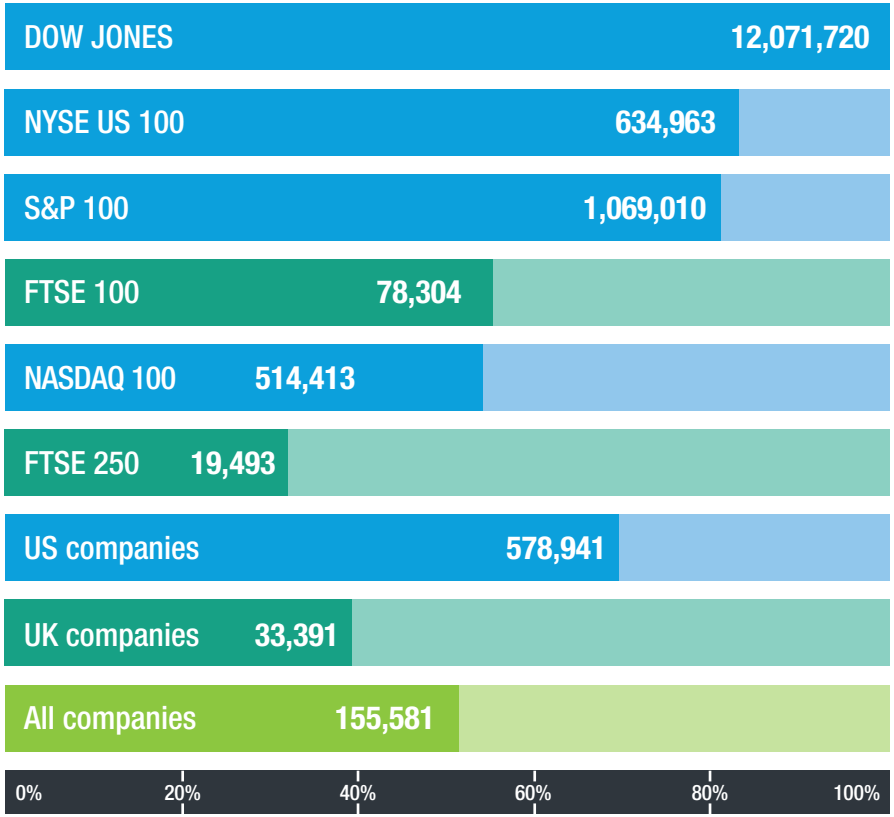
Companies in the Technology sector tend to make the best use of YouTube, averaging 63%, exemplified by Cisco Systems.

Cisco Systems (NASDAQ 100 / S&P 100 / Dow Jones) performs best on YouTube, on 97%. Cisco tops the rankings for every YouTube category except for Multi-channel: many companies have more secondary channels while Cisco Systems does not appear to have any dedicated corporate channels outside of its main global one. The highest scoring UK company is BP on 95%.

#		Company	Sector	Index	Score
1		**Cisco Systems**	Technology	Dow Jones / S&P / NASDAQ	**96.69**
2		**BP**	Oil & Gas	FTSE 100	**95.04**
3		**Wal-Mart Stores**	Retail	Dow Jones / S&P / NYSE US	**95.04**
4		**Intel**	Technology	Dow Jones / S&P / NASDAQ	**93.39**
5		**American Express**	Financial Services	Dow Jones / S&P / NYSE US	**93.39**
6		**Procter & Gamble**	Personal & Household	Dow Jones / S&P / NYSE US	**93.39**
7		**Royal Dutch Shell**	Oil & Gas	FTSE 100	**92.56**
8		**Accenture**	Support Services	S&P / NYSE US	**92.56**
9		**Hewlett-Packard**	Technology	S&P / NYSE US	**91.74**
10		**General Electric**	General Industrials	Dow Jones / S&P / NYSE US	**91.74**

Companies with Youtube accounts

51% of the companies reviewed had a corporate YouTube channel, although only 39% of UK companies did compared to 69% of US companies.

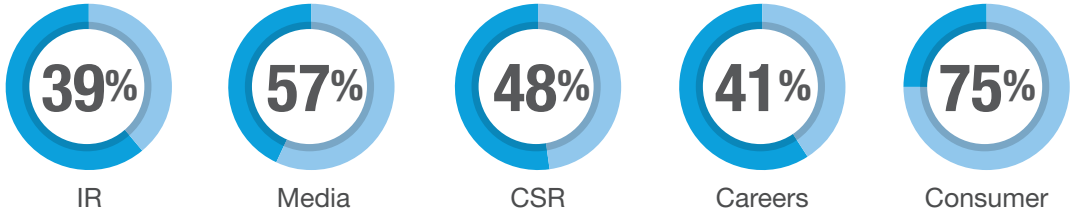


US companies | UK companies | All companies

The figures in the bars show the median number of video views per channel.

6 billion hours of video are viewed on YouTube every month.[ix]

Content mix on main corporate accounts



On average, media content is the most popular type of content on corporate YouTube channels with IR the least popular.

However, the situation is different in the UK, where CSR is the most common content, closely followed by IR content, while careers content is the least popular.

Three quarters of the accounts used for corporate communications are also used for consumer marketing purposes.

Dow Jones corporate videos 550,000,000 Views

The videos across all of the Dow Jones corporate YouTube channels have been watched 550 million times.

YouTube quick facts

11% of companies had posted a video on the day of the review, 51% had posted within the previous week and 82% in the previous month.

Companies post a median average of 5 videos per month – but some companies such as Cisco way exceed this with up to 180 videos per month.

The average # of views of videos is nearly 7.4 million – but this is skewed by some huge consumer brands (e.g. Procter & Gamble's videos have been viewed over 76 million times). The median average of views is 155,581 – which is still an impressive degree of engagement.

90% of companies use playlists; 69% have an introductory video trailer; and 89% have let their channels be comment-enabled.

UK companies have a median average of 161 subscribers while US companies have a median average of 1,928.

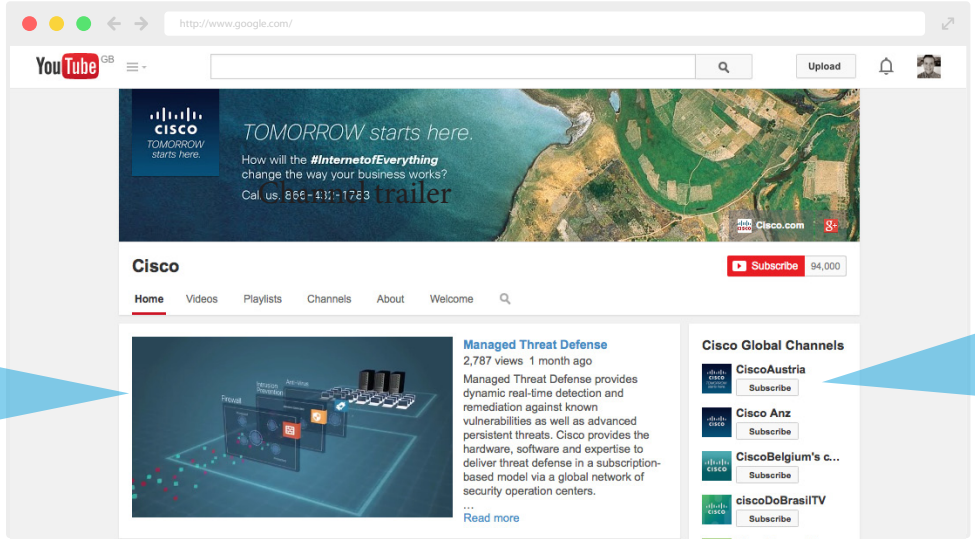
Companies have posted a median average of 76 videos. The most prolific poster is Intel, with over 5,000 videos while in the UK Shell and ARM Holdings each have over 1,000 videos.

YouTube

YouTube best practice

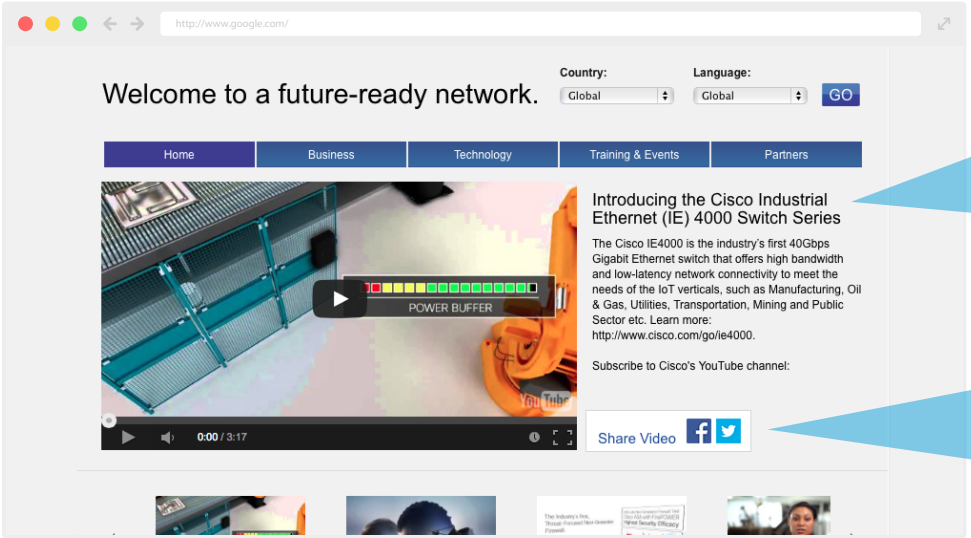
Cisco covers corporate, IR, CSR, careers, media and consumer content on its YouTube channel. The corporation has posted nearly 5,000 videos and is currently posting about 180 videos per month. 85,000 users have subscribed to Cisco's channel and its videos have received over 16 million views.

The account is linked to and from Cisco's corporate account, they allow comments on their videos and they have availed themselves of every design aspect possible including a welcome page and a Twitter feed. Their use of playlisting is clear and intuitive. On top of this they have over 20 regional channels and various product / consumer channels, many of which are linked to from the main channel.



Channel trailer

Clear signposting to their other YouTube channels



Bespoke Welcome page

Integration of other networks

YouTube

Analysis and recommendations

- The huge viewing figures demonstrate the appetite for corporate video. With YouTube seeing over a billion unique visitors every month, companies, particularly those in the UK, need to wake up to the potential of video on social.
- Video is an ideal format to communicate complex ideas, enabling companies to show, rather than tell, their ideas, stories and more.
- Users search for content as they would on a regular search engine, so proper tagging, descriptions and links are vital for ensuring maximum reach. Understanding how your audience discusses a given topic is as important as creating the video content in the first place.
- Video content is not just favoured by the general public: 59% of senior executives would rather watch video than read text[x], and the preference for video is reflected in the high number of companies linking YouTube content to and from their corporate websites.
- Cross-population of content is a must. Sharing YouTube videos to other social channels, using segments of videos and integrating other channels into YouTube channels drives engagement and raises your profile.

59% of senior executives would rather watch video than read text.

Facebook

Summary

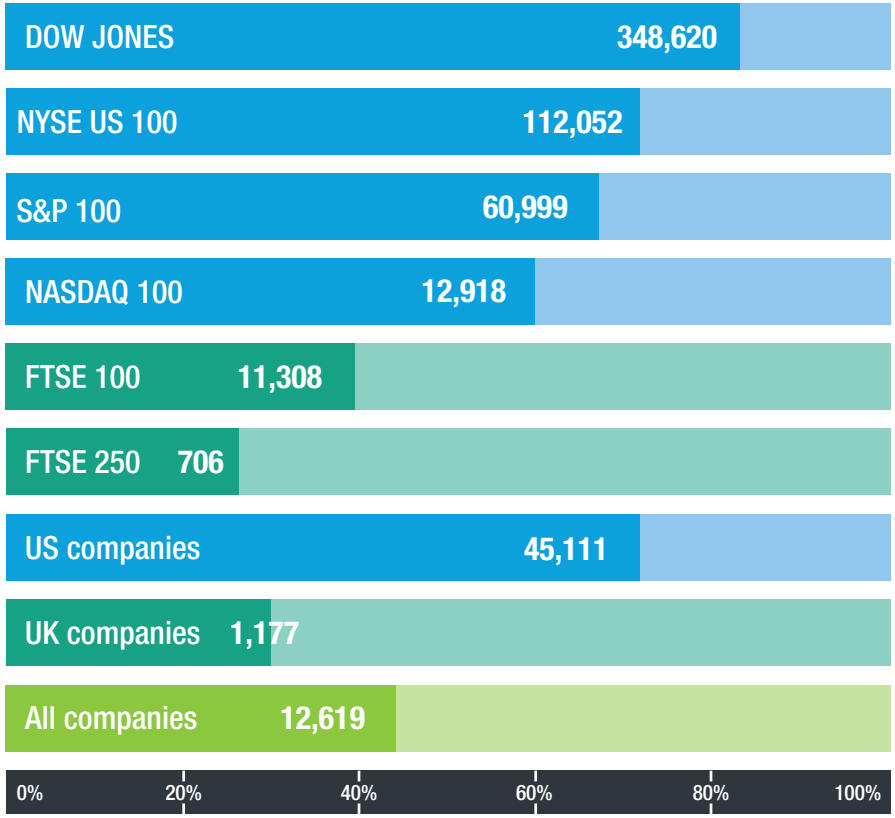
Banks tend to score highest on Facebook, averaging 56%, led by Bank of America on 88%. On 93%, BP scores the highest globally for its use of Facebook.

The highest scoring US company is Johnson & Johnson, which is fractionally behind BP.

#		Company	Sector	Index	Score
1		**BP**	Oil & Gas	FTSE 100	**93.39**
2		**Johnson & Johnson**	Health Care	Dow Jones / S&P / NYSE US	**92.56**
3		**Marriott International**	Travel & Leisure	NASDAQ	**92.56**
4		**Hewlett-Packard**	Technology	S&P / NYSE US	**90.08**
5		**Wal-Mart Stores**	Retail	Dow Jones / S&P / NYSE US	**89.26**
6		**The Priceline Group**	Support Services	NASDAQ	**89.26**
7		**GlaxoSmithKline**	Health Care	FTSE 100	**88.43**
8		**Kimberly-Clark**	General Industrials	NYSE US	**88.43**
9		**Ford Motor Company**	Automobiles & Parts	S&P / NYSE US	**87.60**
10		**Bank of America**	Banks	S&P / NYSE US	**87.60**

Companies with Facebook accounts

44% of the companies reviewed had a corporate Facebook account – although only 30% of UK companies did compared to 67% of US companies.



US companies | UK companies | All companies

The figures in the bars show the median number of likes per page.

700 million people access Facebook by mobile every day.[xi]

Content mix on main corporate accounts

On average, media content is the most popular type of content on corporate Facebook accounts.

IR content is the least popular corporate content to post on Facebook pages although 45% of UK companies with corporate Facebook accounts post IR content compared to 34% of US companies.

Careers content is most commonly mixed with CSR content.

63% of S&P 100 companies respond to wall posts

33% of FTSE 100 companies respond to wall posts

Facebook quick facts

43% of companies had posted on the day of the review, 85% had tweeted within the previous week and 96% in the previous month.

Companies post a median average of 14 times per month – but US companies post 15 times per month; UK companies just 11 times.

87% of companies link to their account from their corporate website and 96% link from their account to their corporate website.

Average # of likes is 718,000 – but this is skewed by some huge consumer brands, particularly in the US, with followers in the millions (e.g. McDonald's has a staggering 54 million likes). The median average is just 12,619.

The average # of people talking about pages at the time of the review is much more modest at just 3,670 – although even here certain companies buck the trend: McDonald's had 1.1 million people discussing their page. The median average for all companies is just 191.

71% of companies use hashtags (US 84% / UK 54%). Only 50% reply to wall comments. (US 56% / UK 43%).

Facebook

Facebook best practice

Johnson & Johnson covers corporate, IR, CSR, careers, media and consumer content on its verified Facebook account. They average 50 posts per month and for their efforts they have received well over 600,000 likes while over 2,500 people were talking about the page at the time of the review.

They reply to posts on their wall (even when they are negative or aggressive), employ hashtags and have used every design feature possible.

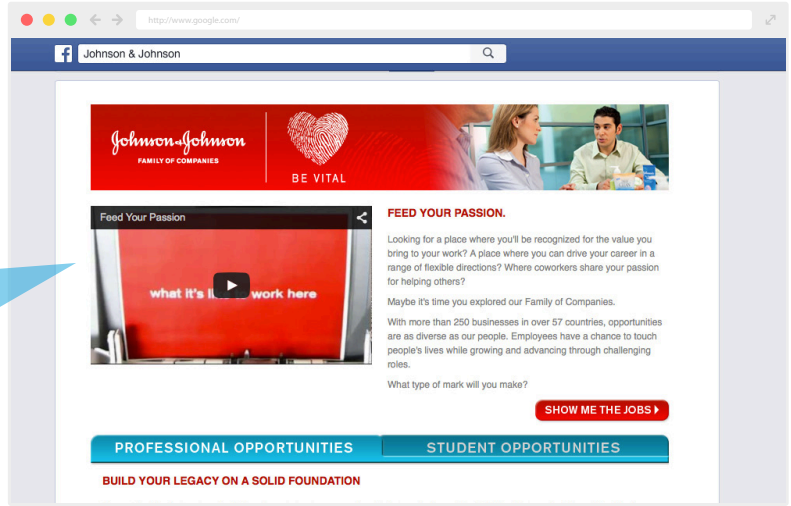
The account is linked both to and from their corporate account. They have included clear community guidelines and further apps offer multiple videos (including a YouTube feed) while a careers app gives detail about possible career options before linking through to their careers site.

On top of this they manage a number of other regional and consumer pages, which are generally well maintained and well received.

Verified account

Detailed community guidelines

Multiple apps



Dedicated careers app

Facebook

Analysis and recommendations

- Fear of negative commentary is one of the most commonly voiced concerns for companies hesitant about social media. The high scores achieved by many banks on Facebook show that there is no need to avoid social media just because you operate in a controversial sector.
- By replying to wall posts, even when they are negative or aggressive, it is possible both to mediate issues as they arise and engage followers in a meaningful dialogue. A clear commenting policy is also helpful.
- Facebook has the largest audience of any social network, and is an excellent place for targeted content thanks to its apps, particularly for CSR and careers content.
- Facebook's informal feel makes it the perfect channel to experiment with the types of content you share – provided you use an authentic tone of voice.
- Encouraging engagement will increase a company's reach. Emotive posts resonate particularly well on Facebook, as do those which seek involvement from their audience. Keep posts short, and use plenty of images and video.

There is no need to avoid social media just because you operate in a controversial sector.

Google+

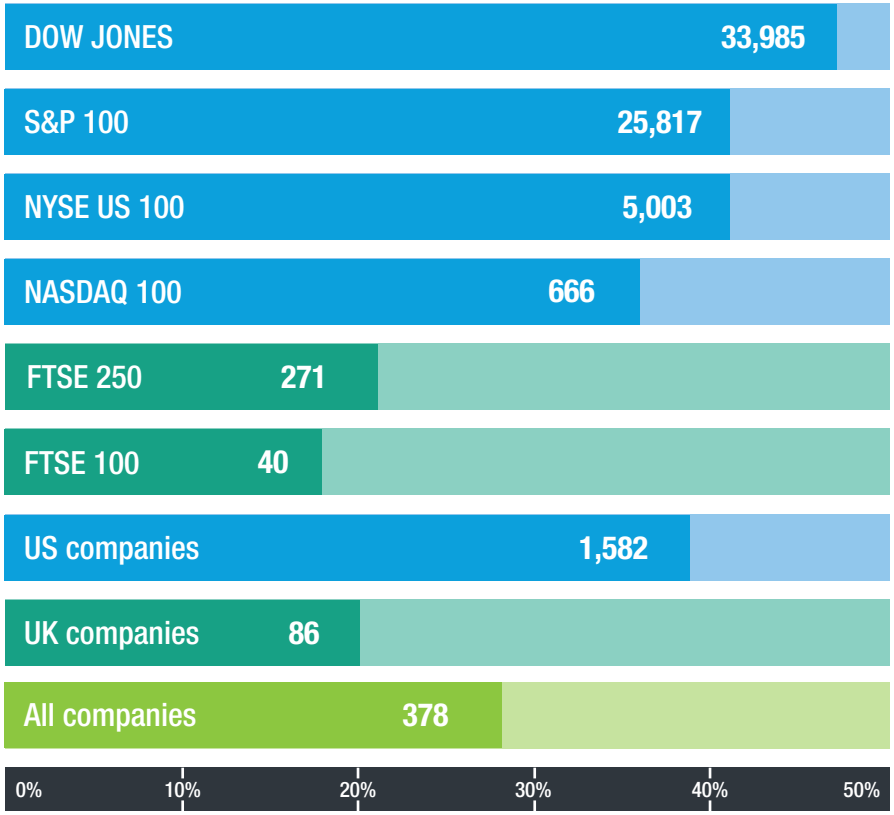
Summary

Technology tends to be the best user of Google+, exemplified by Adobe. Adobe scores 94% while BP is the highest scoring UK company on 89%.

#		Company	Sector	Index	Score
1		**Adobe Systems**	Technology	NASDAQ	**94.21**
2		**Hewlett-Packard**	Technology	S&P / NYSE US	**92.56**
3		**General Electric**	General Industrials	Dow Jones / S&P / NYSE US	**91.74**
4		**AT&T**	Telecommunications	Dow Jones / S&P / NYSE US	**90.91**
5		**Google**	Technology	S&P / NASDAQ	**89.26**
6		**NVIDIA**	Technology	NASDAQ	**89.26**
7		**BP**	Oil & Gas	FTSE 100	**89.26**
8		**Raytheon**	Aerospace & Defence	S&P	**89.26**
9		**Goldman Sachs**	Financial Services	Dow Jones / S&P / NYSE US	**88.43**
10		**Bank of America**	Banks	S&P / NYSE US	**88.43**

Companies with Google+ accounts

28% of the companies reviewed had a corporate Google+ page – however, 39% of US companies did compared to 20% of UK companies.

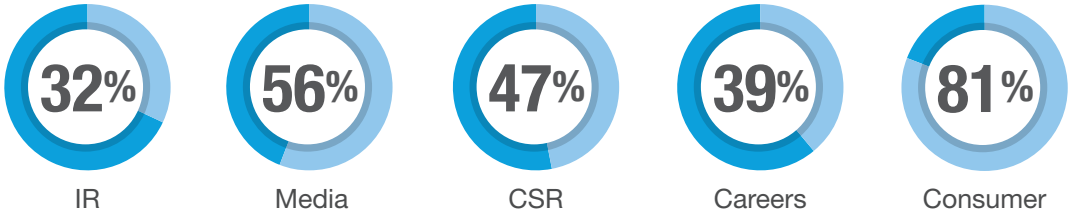


US companies | UK companies | All companies

The figures in the bars show the median number of followers per account.

350 million active monthly users.[xii]

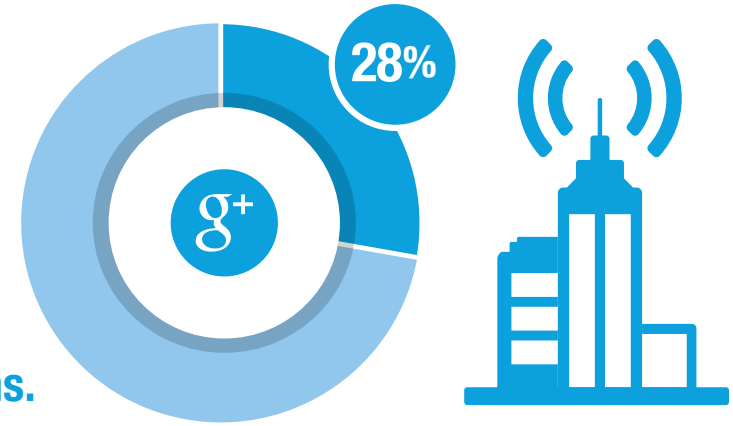
Content mix on main corporate accounts



Media content is the most popular type of corporate content on Google+ accounts and IR the least popular (although for the FTSE 100 careers content is the least popular and half of all corporate Facebook accounts post IR content).

CSR and careers content is the most common content combination.

Only 28% of companies reviewed use Google+ for corporate communications.



Google+ quick facts

Average # of followers is over 130,000 – but this is once again skewed by some huge consumer brands (e.g. General Motors have over 2 million).

The median average of followers is less than 400 – suggesting that Google+ still has a long way to go if it is to challenge the more established networks, particularly in the UK.

12% of companies had posted on the day of the review, 66% had posted within the previous week and 85% in the previous month.

Companies post a median average of 11 times per month – but US companies post 15 times per month; UK companies just 5 times.

56% of companies link to their account from their corporate website and 89% link from their account to their corporate website.

Corporate Google+ accounts have a median average of 400 followers.

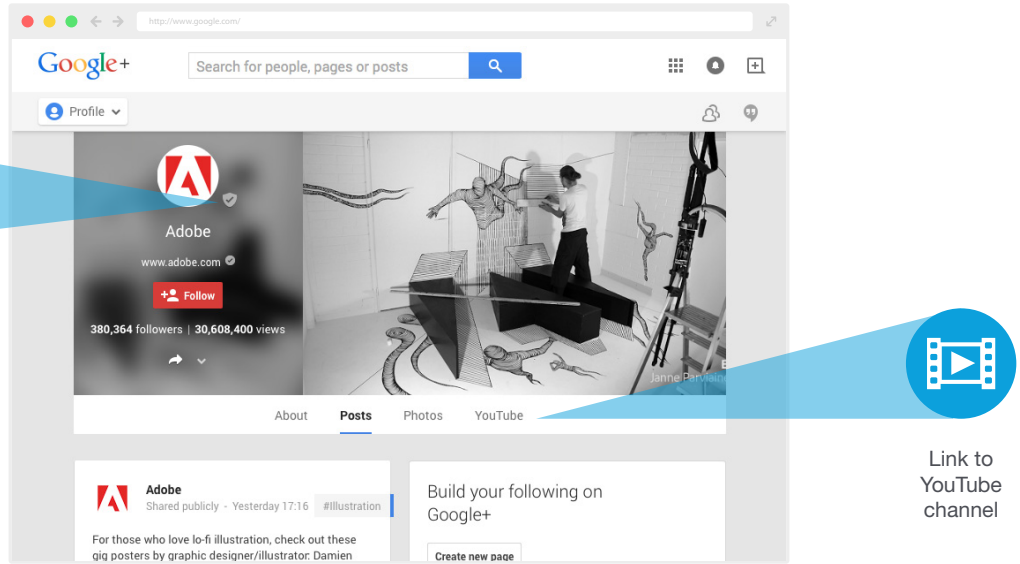
Google+

Google+ best practice

Adobe covers corporate, CSR, careers and media content on its Google+ page – but does not post IR content.

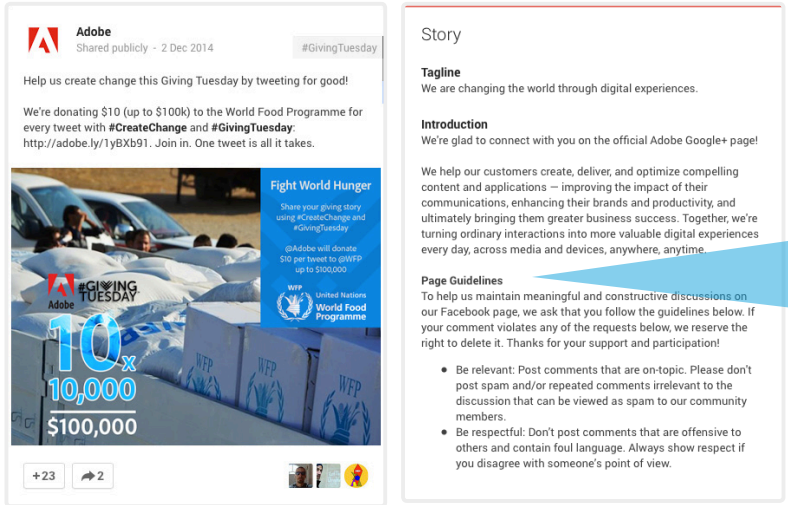
Adobe averages around 30 updates each month; has some 300,000 followers; and has received over 27 million views.

The account is linked to and from the corporate account and Adobe has availed itself of every design aspect possible. The About page contains community guidelines and links to the YouTube channel.



Verified account

Link to YouTube channel



Detailed community guidelines

Google+

Analysis and recommendations

- Google+ is one of the big four networks in terms of membership and active user base[xiii]. However, it has struggled to prove its relevance to corporate communications. Genuine engagement by corporates on Google+ is rare and average follower numbers are negligible.
- Google+ accounts need to be established to allow companies to fully brand YouTube pages. This explains many of the partly populated accounts and barely used accounts found in the review.
- Engagement rates from users outside of the United States and Europe are much higher[xiv] so companies operating in these regions may still wish to consider using Google+ for posting media and CSR content.

Google+ accounts need to be established to allow companies to fully brand YouTube pages.

Flickr

Summary

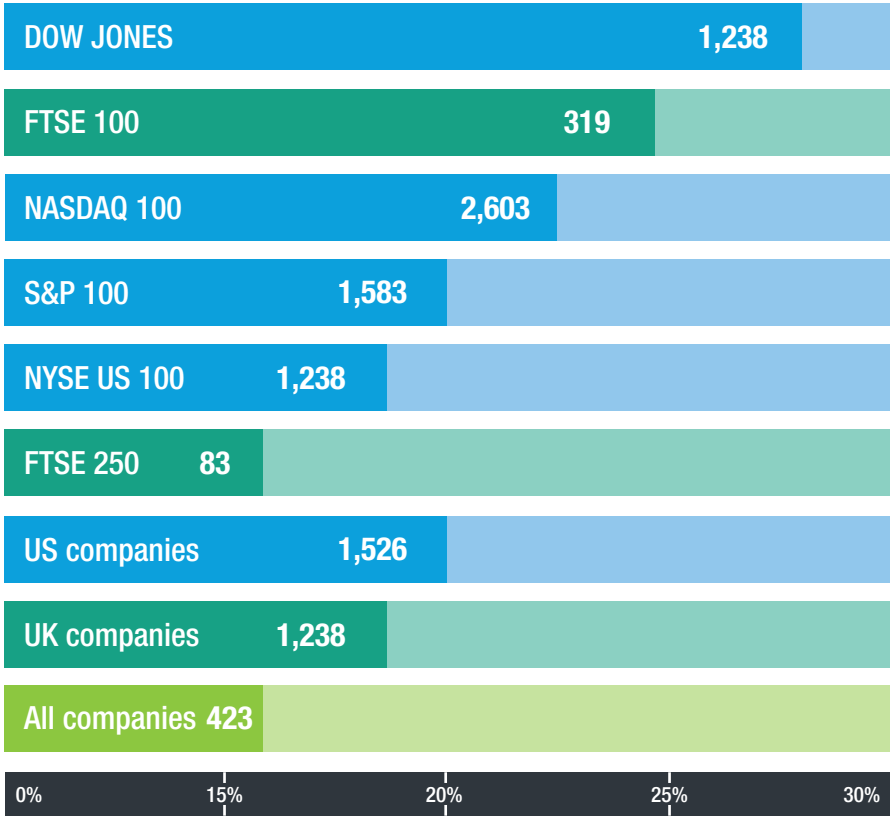
Companies in the Aerospace & Defence sector tend to make the best use of Flickr, averaging 26% – but led by Boeing on 73%.

Cisco Systems (Dow Jones / S&P 100 / NASDAQ 100) score highest in the US on 88% while Sainsbury (FTSE 100) is best in the UK on 87%.

#		Company	Sector	Index	Score
1		Cisco Systems	Technology	Dow Jones / S&P / NASDAQ	87.60
2		Sainsbury (J)	Retail	FTSE 100	86.78
3		Pearson	Media	FTSE 100	82.64
4		Symantec	Technology	NASDAQ	81.82
5		EMC	Technology	S&P / NYSE US	80.99
6		Yahoo	Technology	NASDAQ	80.17
7		Whole Foods Market	Retail	NASDAQ	79.34
8		AT&T	Telecommunications	Dow Jones / S&P / NYSE US	78.51
9		Rio Tinto	Basic Resources	FTSE 100	77.69
10		Garmin	Technology	NASDAQ	74.38

Companies with Flickr accounts

18% of the companies reviewed had a corporate Flickr account (20% US – 16% UK) although its popularity amongst FTSE 100 companies over most US indices bucks the usual trend.

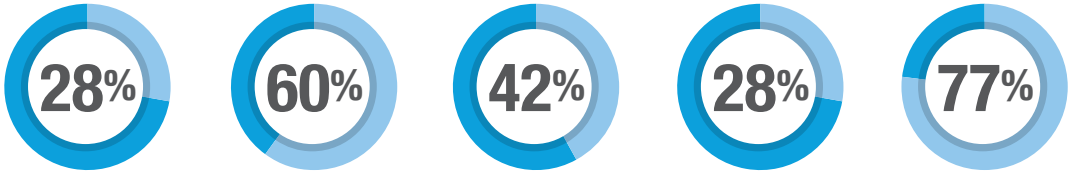


US companies | UK companies | All companies

The figures in the bars show the median number of images per account

92 million users in 63 countries.[xv]

Content mix on main corporate accounts

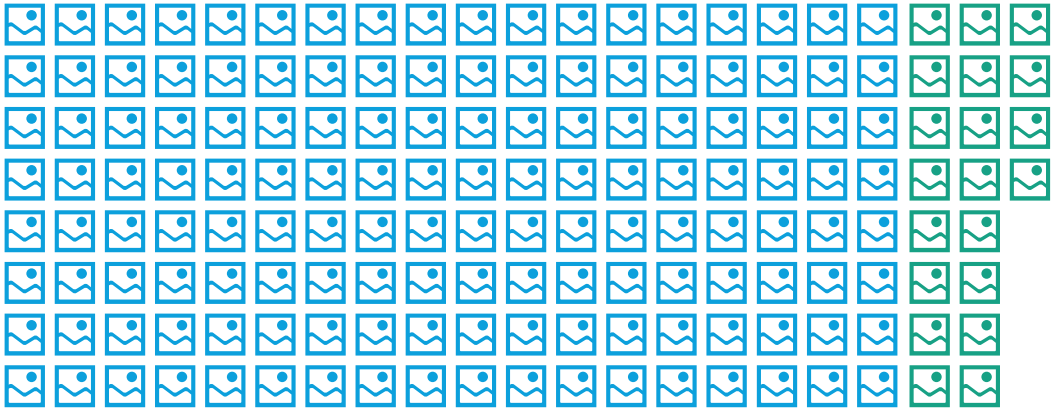


IR | Media | CSR | Careers | Consumer

Media content is the most popular type of Flickr content.
Over a quarter of companies (28%) combine both media and CSR content.
Careers content is thrown into the mix more frequently than IR content.

US companies host an average of 1500 corporate images on Flickr.

UK companies only host an average 200.



Flickr quick facts

5% of companies with corporate Flickr accounts had posted on the day of the review, 16% had posted within the previous week and 26% in the previous month. A third hadn't uploaded any new content in the past year and on (median) average, companies updated every 120 days.

57% of companies link to their account from their corporate website and 74% link from their account to their corporate website. Just 11% linked to other social media channels.

Average # of images is 1,623 – but this is skewed by some huge consumer brands – for example, Coca-Cola has nearly 25,000 images (although it hasn't updated its account for more than a year). The median average is just over 400.

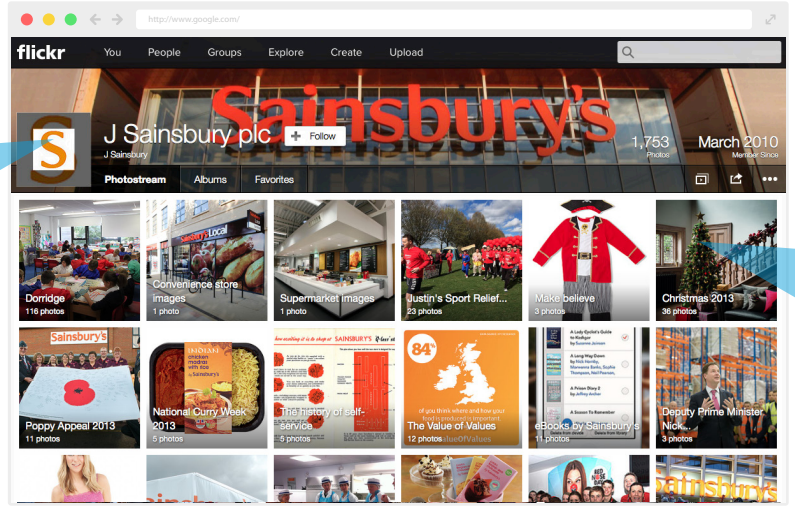
18% of companies are using corporate Flickr accounts.

Flickr

Flickr best practice

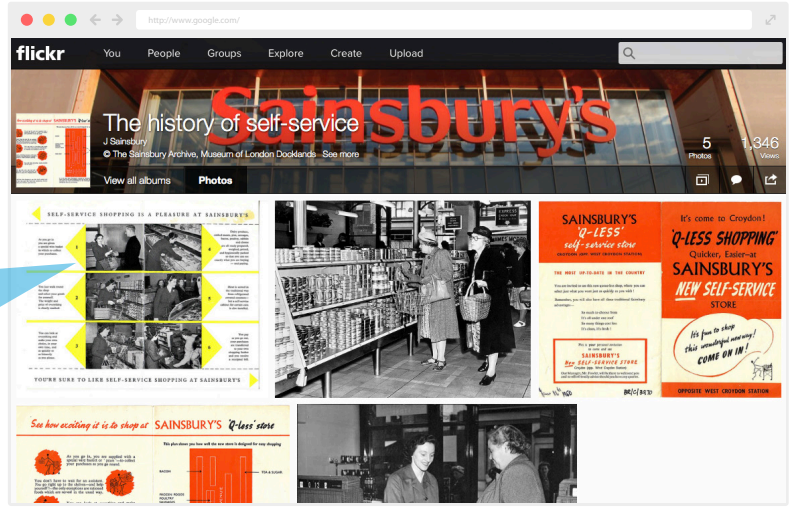
Sainsbury covers corporate, IR, CSR, careers and media content on its Flickr channel. The channel has over 1,700 images divided across some 75+ albums covering everything from images of the board, operational highlights, regional and CSR initiatives and useful press resources.

The channel is also well linked from the corporate site, where it is stated that Flickr is Sainsbury's official repository for images. The channel is updated at least monthly, links back to the corporate site and makes the most of Flickr's design potential.



Clearly branded account

Comprehensive tagging



Repository for archive material

Flickr

Analysis and recommendations

- Images and video can be shared on Flickr but it is not a true social channel as there is little sense of its being a community or network.
- Flickr's main use for corporate communications is as a repositiory for images, primarily designed for media use, or for populating websites through dynamic tagging – while Facebook is the obvious choice if the concern is merely to share images widely. However, other image repositories such as Pinterest and Instagram are now challenging Flickr.
- As with YouTube, content needs proper tagging and descriptions and should be placed in named albums. Think about how users are likely to search for content and make it clear in your corporate site's media section that images can be found on Flickr.

Flickr's main use is as a repository for images.

SlideShare

Summary

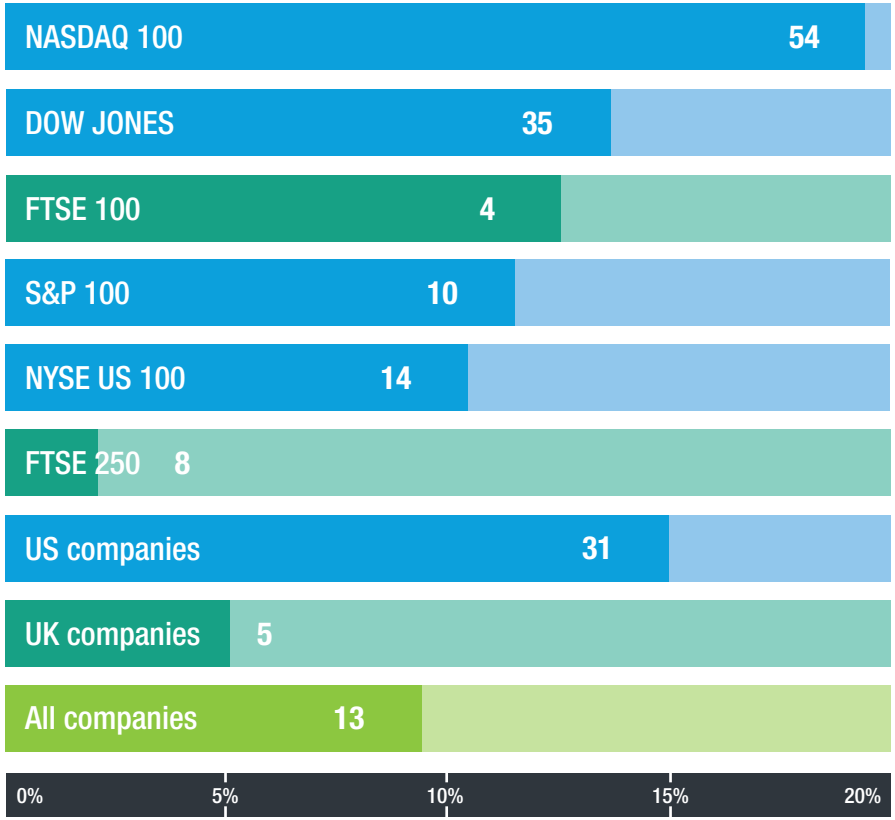
Companies in the Technology sector tend to make the best use of SlideShare, averaging 27%, as demonstrated by Cognizant and CA Technologies – however, SlideShare is something of a niche channel, with 9 out of 25 sectors making no use of it at all, while use is sparse in other sectors. Shell scores highest here, on 97%.

The best US companies are Cognizant and CA Technologies on 93%.

#		Company	Sector	Index	Score
1		**Royal Dutch Shell**	Oil & Gas	FTSE 100	**96.69**
2		**Cognizant Technology Solutions**	Technology	NASDAQ	**93.39**
3		**CA Technologies**	Technology	NASDAQ	**93.39**
4		**Symantec**	Technology	NASDAQ	**90.08**
5		**Cisco Systems**	Technology	Dow Jones / S&P / NASDAQ	**90.08**
6		**Automatic Data Processing**	Technology	NASDAQ	**90.08**
7		**Colt Group SA**	Technology	FTSE 250	**86.78**
8		**Anglo American**	Basic Resources	FTSE 100	**86.78**
9		**Akamai Technologies**	Technology	NASDAQ	**86.78**
10		**DuPont**	Chemicals	Dow Jones / S&P / NYSE US	**86.78**

Companies with SlideShare accounts

Just 9% of the companies reviewed had a corporate SlideShare account – although only 5% of UK companies did compared to 15% of US companies.

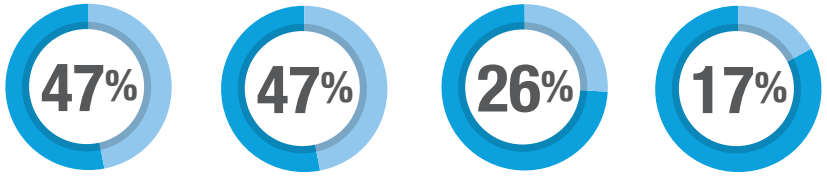


US companies | UK companies | All companies

The figures in the bars show the median number of presentations per account.

60 million unique monthly visitors.[xvi]

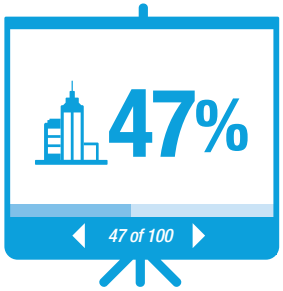
Content mix on main corporate accounts



IR | Media | CSR | Careers

IR and media content is the most popular type of SlideShare content although over a quarter of companies do post CSR content.

28% of companies mix IR and media content – although combinations of content are generally limited, suggesting that SlideShare does not have traction across many companies.



of companies post IR content on their corporate SlideShare accounts.

SlideShare quick facts

22% of companies with SlideShare accounts had posted a presentation or document within a week of the review and 74% in the previous month, suggesting that the limited number of companies with SlideShare accounts are at least using them.

89% of companies linked to their other social media channels and 94% linked back to their corporate website – although only 51% of the companies with SlideShare accounts linked from their corporate site to their SlideShare presence, meaning many accounts will simply not be found.

19% also failed to include a logo consistent with their standard corporate logo – which again makes it harder for users to know that the account is official.

The average number of presentations is 47 – but this is skewed by the likes of Cognizant, who are the most prolific SlideShare posters, with over 550 presentations or documents. The median average here is just 13.

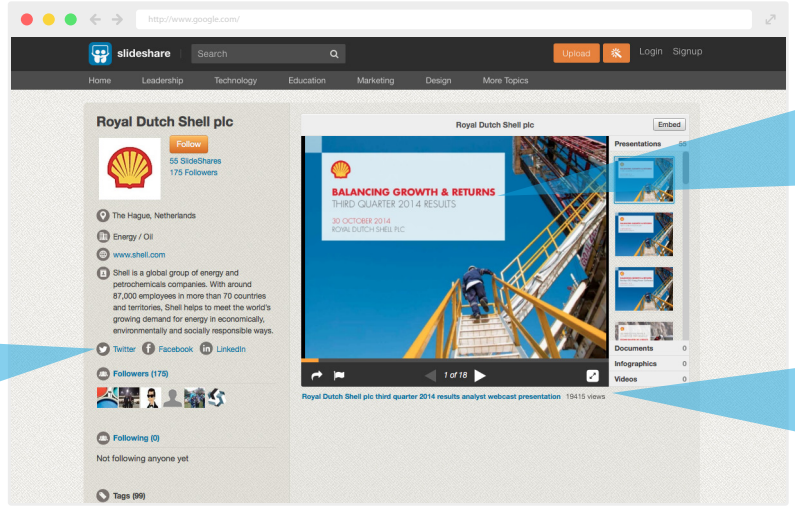
Cisco is the best received account, with nearly 14,000 followers – while the median average is a rather more paltry 35 followers.

SlideShare

SlideShare best practice

Shell covers corporate, IR, CSR, careers and media content on its SlideShare account. The account has over 50 presentations, including results webcast presentations for analysts, board presentations and more specific CSR based content.

The account is linked to and from the corporate website and makes use of all of the channel's design capabilities.



Clearly titled presentations

Links to other channels

Multiple views

Project-focused presentations

SlideShare

Analysis and recommendations

- SlideShare's ability to host presentations and other documents would suggest that it was a perfect fit for corporate communications: it is surprising how few companies use it.
- The high viewing figures for Shell's financial presentations on SlideShare demonstrate the site's potential.
- For best results, SlideShare presentations need to be embedded on the corporate site: promoting your SlideShare account there massively increases views and encourages exploration of your other presentations.

For best results, SlideShare presentations need to be embedded on the corporate site.

Pinterest

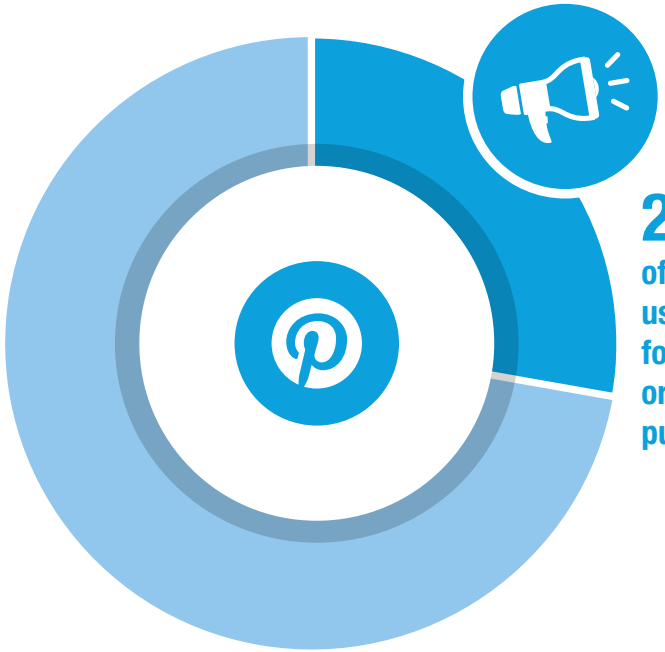
Summary

Companies in the Telecommunications sector tend to make the best use of Pinterest, averaging 24% – but led by Qualcomm on 79%.

Fewer criteria meant Autodesk, Cisco, Expedia and Target Corp all scored 100%. The best UK companies are Balfour Beatty and IHG on 79%.

49% of companies with corporate Pinterest accounts link to their account from their corporate website and 94% link from their account to their corporate website.

#		Company	Sector	Index	Score
1		**Cisco Systems**	Technology	Dow Jones / S&P / NASDAQ	**100.00**
2		**Target**	Retail	S&P / NYSE US	**100.00**
3		**Autodesk**	Technology	NASDAQ	**100.00**
4		**Expedia**	Travel & Leisure	NASDAQ	**100.00**
5		**Intel**	Technology	Dow Jones / S&P / NYSE US	**78.95**
6		**NetApp**	Technology	NASDAQ	**78.95**
7		**Qualcomm**	Telecommunications	S&P / NASDAQ	**78.95**
8		**PepsiCo**	Food & Beverage	S&P / NYSE US	**78.95**
9		**eBay**	Technology	S&P / NASDAQ	**78.95**
10		**Balfour Beatty**	Support Services	FTSE 250	**78.95**



28% of companies use Pinterest for corporate or marketing purposes.

Only 3% of the FTSE 350 use Pinterest for corporate communications.

28% of Pinterest users have an annual household income of at least $100,000.[xvii]

IQ Score 90%

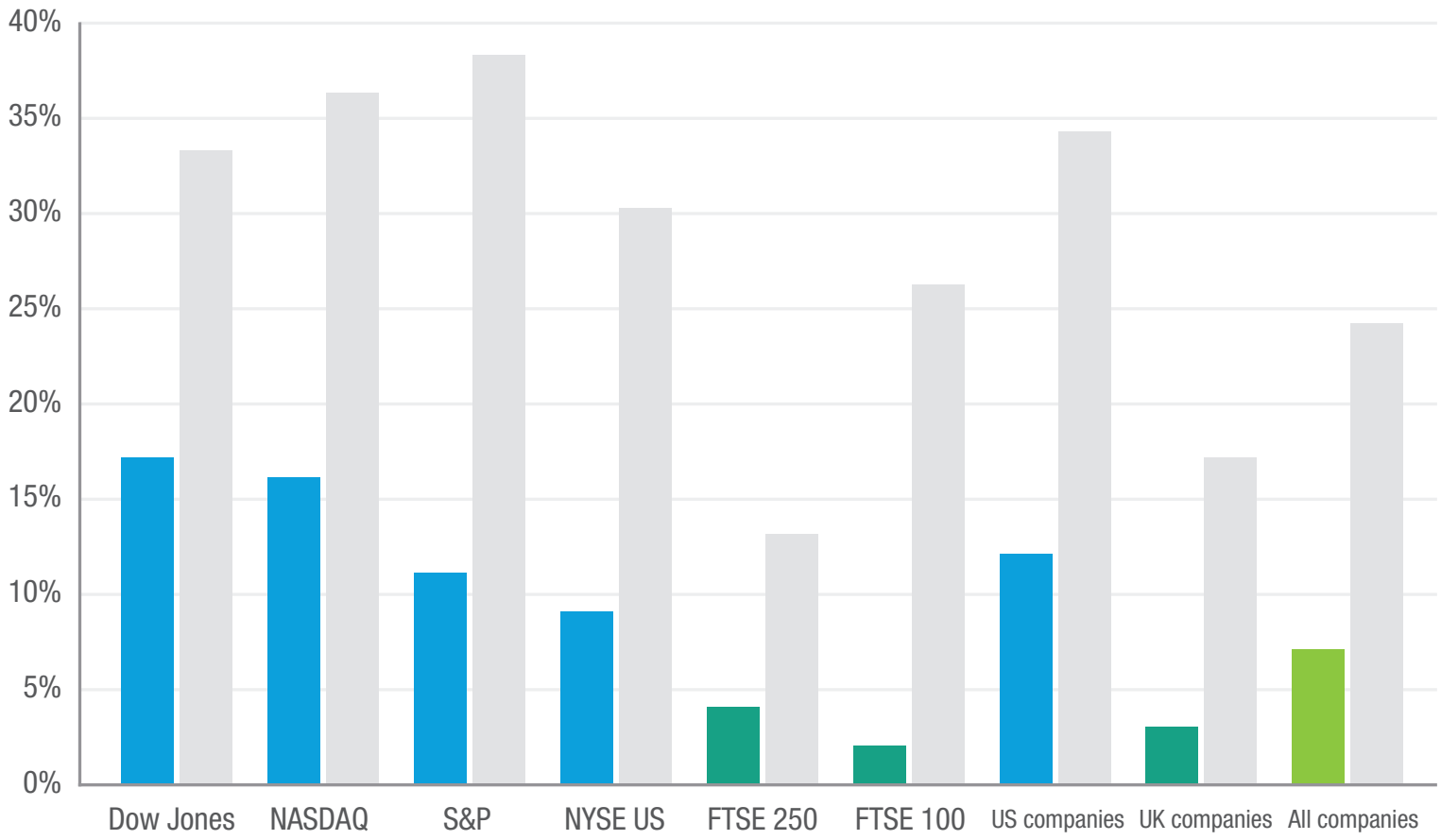
Companies with Pinterest accounts

7% of the companies reviewed had a corporate account: 12% of US companies did compared to 3% of UK companies. Non-corporate usage was much higher – with 24% of companies having an account (17% in the UK and 34% in the US).

US companies
UK companies
All companies

Corporate account
Non-corporate account

The figures in the bars show the median number of followers per account.



Pinterest

Pinterest best practice

The top-scoring companies all link to and from their corporate sites; they offer corporate content and they all run additional channels as well.

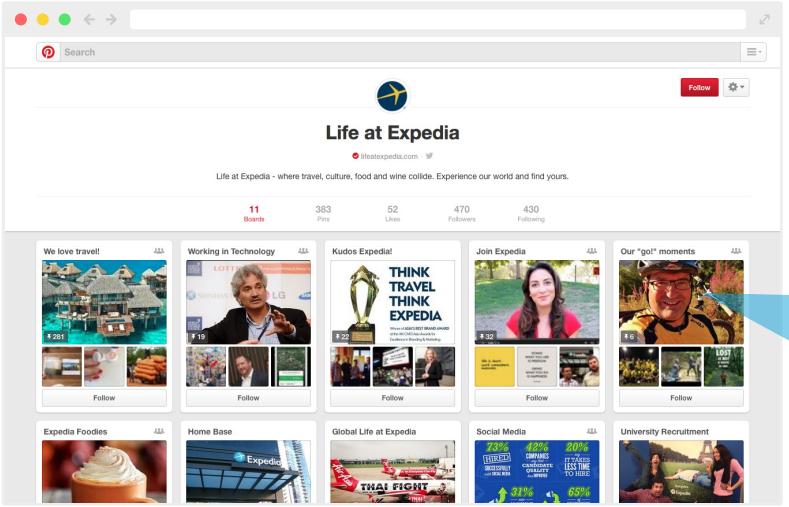
Target, as a retail company, has the most boards (98) and the most pins (over 57,000) – however, its corporate content is limited beyond a board that is vaguely CSR-related.

Cisco, the global leader for corporate use of social media, has an extensive presence on Pinterest: it's well organised and there are boards highlighting Cisco's products and events and CSR initiatives.

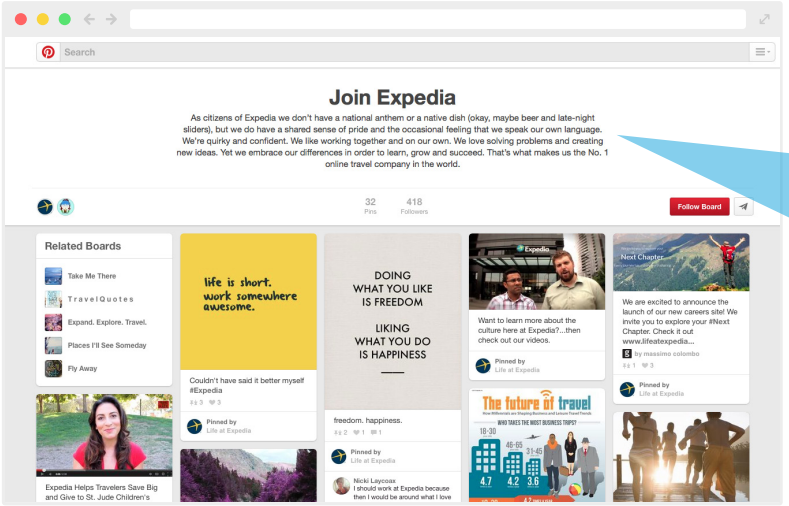
Autodesk is primarily product-focused. However, their pins do add colour to any corporate stakeholder wishing to understand more about what the company does.

However, the **Life at Expedia** channel is arguably the most focused. Its concern is recruitment and it achieves this with nearly 400 pins that taken together give an impression of what Expedia is about and, more importantly, what it might be like to work there.

There is a sense, however, that from the strictly corporate point of view, companies are still struggling to work out what Pinterest is for, with most companies seeing it solely as a marketing channel.



Comprehensive range of topics



Careers-focused board

Pinterest

Analysis and recommendations

- Pinterest is the least used social platform for corporate communications and is currently used primarily by the bigger B2C companies.
- However, Pinterest has a notably engaged and loyal following and other companies should consider using it for targeted campaigns and messaging.
- The platform is one of the fastest-growing, is popular amongst an affluent and digitally savvy demographic – and may yet replace Flickr as the image repository of choice.

Pinterest may yet replace Flickr as the image repository of choice.

Category comparison

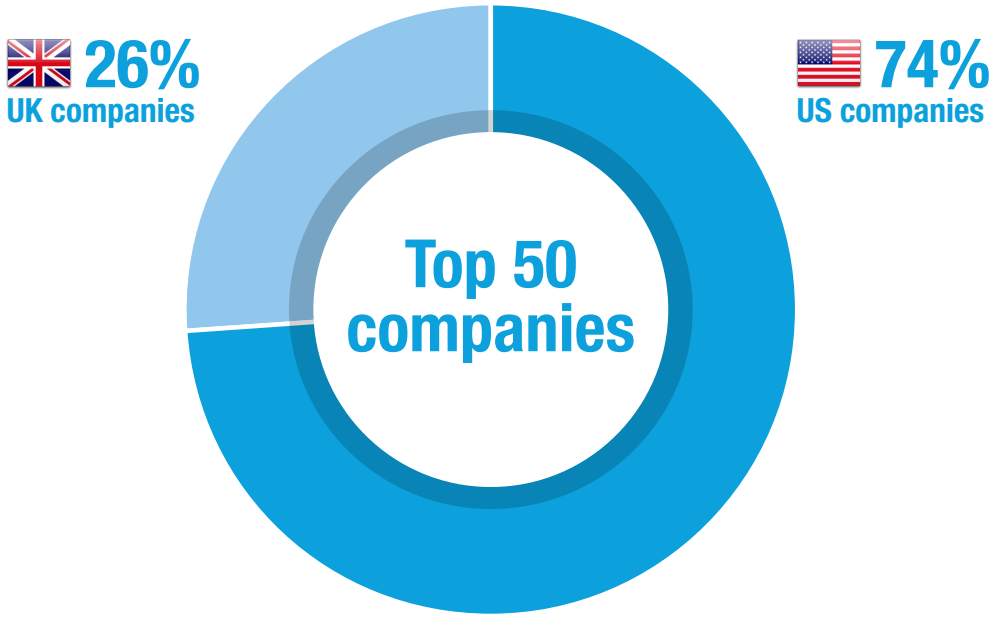
Overall

22 of the top 50 ranked companies are in the S&P 100.

Cisco Systems scores the highest globally on 86% while the FTSE 100's Royal Dutch Shell is the top-scoring UK company (and the fourth-highest globally) on 81%.

Both of these companies have a far-reaching and well-maintained social media presence. They post a wide range of corporate content on their accounts, and update these accounts frequently – and in many cases daily. Their social media presence is well promoted on their corporate websites and the branding is strong across all platforms.

The return on their efforts can be seen by the numbers of followers and views their accounts receive – as well as by the very real engagement that users have with these accounts.



37 of the top 50 companies are American; 13 are British.

Top US achievers		
#1	Cisco Systems	86%
#2	Hewlett-Packard	82%
#3	Citrix Systems	81%

Top UK achievers		
#4	Royal Dutch Shell	81%
#10	BP	76%
#15	Anglo American	75%

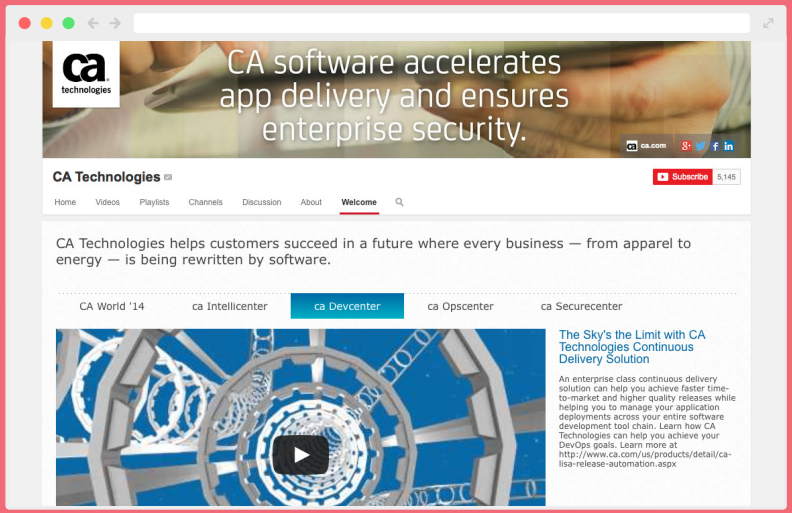
Category comparison

Engagement

90% of companies retweet third-party tweets.

Software giant CA Technologies score highest here (95%) while the highest scoring UK company is Shell on 87%.

CA Technologies has posted over 13,000 tweets on its Twitter account, averaging 30 tweets per month and following over 8,000 Twitter users. They make good use of hashtags, respond to direct queries and retweet third-party tweets. They reply to wall posts on their Facebook account and post an average of 20 times each month. There are over 500 videos on their comment-enabled YouTube channel; they post frequently on LinkedIn and Google+ (where they also respond to comments); they have over 80 presentations on SlideShare while they also have over 1,500 images on Flickr organised into 50-odd albums.



Key facts

- The difference in approach in the US and the UK is shown clearly by the amount of content companies publish.
- US companies with Twitter accounts have tweeted a median average of 2,979 times, compared to the UK median average of just 738.
- US companies with LinkedIn accounts update a median average of 15 times per month compared to the UK on just 5 updates.
- US companies have a median average of 141 videos on their YouTube channels; in the UK it's just 45.
- However, when it comes to interacting with users, there is less regional variation.
- 59% of all companies respond to direct queries on Twitter; 50% reply to wall posts on Facebook; and 32% reply to comments on Google+.
- 93% use hashtags on Twitter; 90% use playlists on YouTube; and 89% allow comments on their YouTube channel.

#		Company	Sector	Index	Score
1	US	CA Technologies	Technology	NASDAQ	94.84
2	UK	Royal Dutch Shell	Oil & Gas	FTSE 100	87.30
3	US	Symantec	Technology	NASDAQ	86.90
4	US	Citrix Systems	Telecommunications	NASDAQ	86.11
5	US	NVIDIA	Technology	NASDAQ	84.92
6	US	Hewlett-Packard	Technology	S&P / NYSE US	84.13
7	US	Akamai Technologies	Technology	NASDAQ	81.35
8	US	IBM	Technology	Dow Jones / S&P / NYSE US	80.56
9	UK	BP	Oil & Gas	FTSE 100	79.76
10	UK	Atkins	Support Services	FTSE 250	79.37

Category comparison

Reception

An average of 686 people are talking about US corporate Facebook pages at any one time. In the UK, it's just 44.

Cisco Systems scores highest here (95%) with the UK led by Shell (on 86%).

Cisco's efforts on Twitter are followed by over 400,000 users. Cisco has received nearly 650,000 likes on Facebook – at the time of the review over 5,000 people were 'talking about' them (i.e. interacting with the Cisco Facebook page). Their YouTube videos have been viewed a staggering 16 million times and 85,000 users have subscribed to the channel – clearly hungry for more. Well over 800,000 people follow them on LinkedIn – as do over 75,000 employees. They have 30,000 followers on Google+ and 14,000 on SlideShare.

Key facts

- The median average US Twitter account has 20,300 followers, compared to the UK average of just 2,081.
- Facebook pages are liked by a median average of 45,111 people for US sites, compared to 1,177 in the UK.
- US YouTube channels have received around 580,000 views. In the UK, the median average is under 34,000.
- UK companies are followed by a median average of 1,231 employees on LinkedIn, whereas in the US the median average is 14,975 employees.
- US companies on Google+ have a median average of 1,582 followers. In the UK it's just 90.

#		Company	Sector	Index	Score
1	US	Cisco Systems	Technology	Dow Jones / S&P / NASDAQ	94.64
2	US	Hewlett-Packard	Technology	S&P / NYSE US	85.71
3	UK	Royal Dutch Shell	Oil & Gas	FTSE 100	85.71
4	US	Symantec	Technology	NASDAQ	84.82
5	US	Adobe Systems	Technology	NASDAQ	83.93
6	US	NVIDIA	Technology	NASDAQ	82.14
7	US	IBM	Technology	Dow Jones / S&P / NYSE US	80.36
8	US	Oracle	Technology	S&P	80.36
9	US	Accenture	Support Services	S&P / NYSE US	79.46
10	US	SanDisk	Technology	NASDAQ	79.46

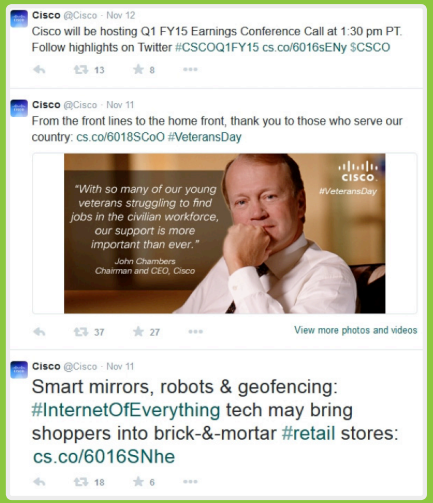
Category comparison

Content range

A third of companies post IR content on their LinkedIn pages.

Cisco Systems (on 82%) offers the greatest range of content on its main accounts across the greatest number of channels, while Shell is the best UK performer on 75%.

Cisco's main Twitter account (@Cisco) combines corporate, IR and media content. Their Facebook, LinkedIn and Google+ pages add careers content to the mix while their YouTube channel and Flickr page also have CSR content. Twitter, YouTube and Facebook also have consumer content. The fact that they are not simply replicating all of the same content across all of their available channels shows that they are thinking about the audience for each channel and serving up the most relevant content.



Key facts

- 73% of the companies reviewed post careers content on one or more their social media accounts (although just 60% of UK companies do compared to 92% of US companies).
- IR content is the next most popular content, with 60% of all companies posting this (53% of UK companies do compared to 71% of US companies).
- 70% of companies with Twitter accounts use it to publish IR content. UK companies are marginally more likely to publish IR content here (72% vs. 68%).
- IR content is also the most commonly found material on SlideShare, with 47% of companies using it for this purpose.
- Careers content is the most popular on LinkedIn, with 71% of companies using it for this purpose, although interestingly, while 91% of US companies do so, just 58% of UK companies do.
- UK companies are more likely to use Facebook for CSR and careers content, while media content is published by just 30% of companies. CSR followed by media is most prevalent on Flickr. YouTube is most used for CSR and IR content and Google+ again leads with CSR.

#		Company	Sector	Index	Score
1	US	Cisco Systems	Technology	Dow Jones / S&P / NASDAQ	81.73
2	US	Cognizant Technology Solutions	Technology	NASDAQ	80.77
3	UK	Royal Dutch Shell	Oil & Gas	FTSE 100	75.00
4	US	Citrix Systems	Telecommunications	NASDAQ	73.08
5	UK	BP	Oil & Gas	FTSE 100	68.27
6	US	eBay	Technology	NASDAQ	68.27
7	US	Akamai Technologies	Technology	NASDAQ	68.27
8	US	Dow Chemical	Chemicals	S&P / NYSE US	68.27
9	UK	Anglo American	Basic Resources	FTSE 100	67.31
10	US	CA Technologies	Technology	NASDAQ	66.35

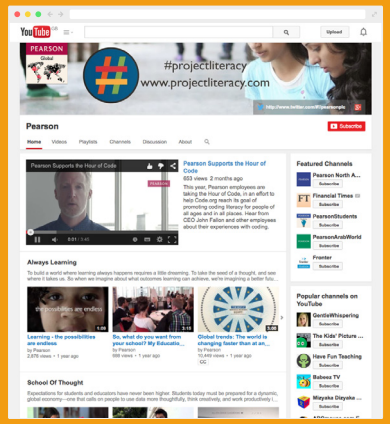
Category comparison

Design

Only 18% of corporate Facebook accounts have been verified.

Cisco Systems scores the maximum 100% possible for design. The highest scoring UK company is Pearson on 97%.

Design quality is of course somewhat subjective but what Pearson does well, aside from using all of the design features available, is to ensure that the various accounts look and feel consistent. The user is left in no doubt that they are engaging with the same corporate entity, regardless of which channel they are using.



Key facts

- The most common design failing is to not have a banner image on LinkedIn, which 8% of US companies and 32% of UK companies have failed to do. These only became universally available at the end of Q2 and we would expect this omission to be rectified by the time the companies are next scored.
- LinkedIn appears to cause other errors: while 95% of companies do include a logo or avatar, only 81% of companies have provided one that is consistent with the corporate logo or identity.
- 10% of companies fail to provide biographical information on Twitter and 10% also fail to have an avatar matching their corporate identity.
- Only 18% of companies have a verified Facebook account (27% of US companies and just 6% of UK companies).

#		Company	Sector	Index	Score
1	US	Cisco Systems	Technology	Dow Jones / S&P / NASDAQ	100.00
2	US	Hewlett-Packard	Technology	S&P / NYSE US	98.50
3	US	Citrix Systems	Telecommunications	NASDAQ	96.99
4	UK	Pearson	Media	FTSE 100	96.99
5	US	Equinix	Telecommunications	NASDAQ	96.99
6	UK	Royal Dutch Shell	Oil & Gas	FTSE 100	96.24
7	US	CA Technologies	Technology	NASDAQ	94.74
8	US	Cognizant Technology Solutions	Technology	NASDAQ	94.74
9	US	NVIDIA	Technology	NASDAQ	93.98
10	US	Symantec	Technology	NASDAQ	91.73

Category comparison

Site linking

89% of companies link to their Twitter accounts from the corporate websites – but only 54% link to their LinkedIn pages.

Cisco Systems top the table here on 96% while the best UK companies are Shell and the FTSE 250's Atkins, both on 88%

Atkins provides links from its corporate site to all of its main accounts on every possible channel – losing points just for failing to link to and from their (now dormant) Flickr account.

Twitter is the most common account to be linked to from the corporate site: 89% of all companies with Twitter accounts do so. Companies become more reticent about their social presence thereafter, with links from the corporate site falling away:

Twitter	89%	Google+	56%
Facebook	87%	LinkedIn	54%
YouTube	80%	SlideShare	51%
Flickr	57%		

Key facts

- 55% of the FTSE 100 link to their LinkedIn account compared to 76% of the S&P 100.
- Companies tend to be less shy about linking from social networks back to their corporate site.
- This may be because companies are more comfortable diverting attention from the social networks back to the controlled environment of the corporate site.
- For example, 95% of all corporate Twitter accounts link back to the relevant corporate site, while even Flickr (the lowest scoring) sees 74% of accounts linking back.
- However, it seems counter-productive to go to the effort of populating a social media account with corporate content if that account is not promoted on the corporate site.

#		Company	Sector	Index	Score
1	US	Cisco Systems	Technology	Dow Jones / S&P / NASDAQ	95.83
2	US	CA Technologies	Technology	NASDAQ	91.67
3	US	Symantec	Technology	NASDAQ	91.67
4	US	Cognizant Technology Solutions	Technology	NASDAQ	91.67
5	UK	Royal Dutch Shell	Oil & Gas	FTSE 100	87.50
6	US	NVIDIA	Technology	NASDAQ	87.50
7	US	Akamai Technologies	Technology	NASDAQ	87.50
8	UK	Atkins	Support Services	FTSE 250	87.50
9	US	Hewlett-Packard	Technology	S&P / NYSE US	83.33
10	US	Lockheed Martin	Aerospace & Defence	S&P 100 / NYSE US 100	83.33

Category comparison

Multi-channel

24% of companies have Pinterest accounts – but only 7% use Pinterest for corporate communications.

Cisco Systems comes first in this category on 82%, some way ahead of second place Pearson on 70%.

Cisco simply has a huge social media presence:

There are over 100 (we stopped counting) consistently branded accounts on Twitter alone, covering products, service, corporate issues, regions and much more.

On Facebook and YouTube, Cisco has upwards of 50 accounts and channels; there are a huge number of pages and groups on LinkedIn; and declining numbers on Flickr and Pinterest.

Key facts

- YouTube is the most likely channel to display links to other social media channels, with 91% of YouTube accounts doing so.
- 79% of companies link to other social media channels from Google+ but only 39% link from Facebook and just 29% from LinkedIn.
- There is no significant US/UK variation here as far as the FTSE 100 is concerned – however, the FTSE 250 (as ever) lags behind the global norm. FTSE 250 companies would do well to provide links to their other social accounts.
- US companies tend to have far more other regional and consumer accounts across many of the channels than UK companies do – except on LinkedIn and Flickr where UK companies have more accounts.

#		Company	Sector	Index	Score
1	US	Cisco Systems	Technology	Dow Jones / S&P / NASDAQ	82.14
2	UK	Pearson	Media	FTSE 100	70.24
3	US	Hewlett-Packard	Technology	S&P / NYSE US	69.05
4	UK	InterContinental Hotels Group	Travel & Leisure	FTSE 100	63.10
5	US	Microsoft Corporation	Technology	Dow Jones / S&P / NASDAQ	61.90
6	US	CA Technologies	Technology	NASDAQ	60.71
7	US	Intuit	Technology	NASDAQ	60.71
8	US	NetApp	Technology	NASDAQ	59.52
9	UK	GlaxoSmithKline	Health Care	FTSE 100	57.14
10	UK	BAE Systems	Aerospace & Defence	FTSE 100	57.14

Category comparison

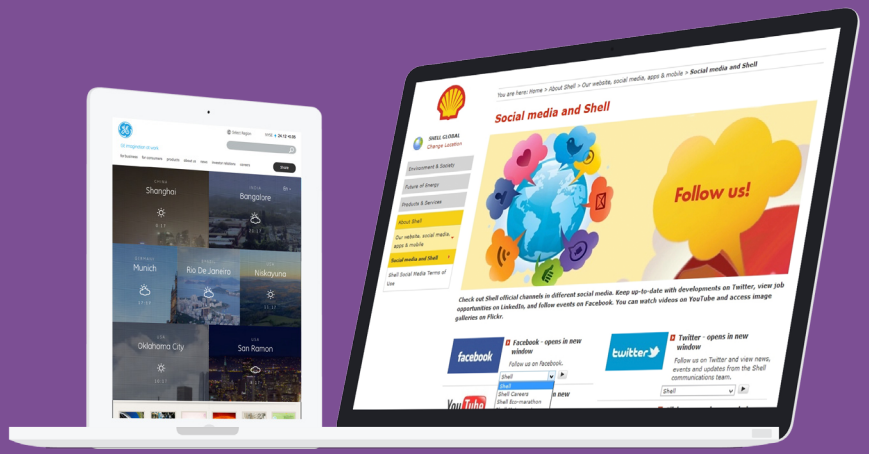
Use of social media on the corporate website

Shell takes the honours here, scoring 91%. The highest scoring US sites are General Electric and Hewlett-Packard on 90%.

Shell's website has a comprehensive social media page, providing links to Shell's extensive social media presence, as well as an explanation of its Terms of Use.

Many of the tools on its website are social media enabled (such as letting the share price charts be shareable). Videos and press releases can also be shared.

Shell also has a long-running blog looking at climate change and it is possible to connect with Shell on social media via its corporate/IR app.



Key facts

- 31% of companies reviewed linked to a blog from their corporate site (be that a senior management or employee blog). However, blogging is much more popular in the States where 43% of companies have a blog, compared to 23% in the UK.
- 45% of companies let the videos on their website be shared on social media while 41% do this for their press releases. The US leads as ever here, with 60% sharing video and 53% sharing press releases, compared to 35% for video and 33% respectively in the UK.
- UK companies tend to be reticent about their social media activities – of those with social media accounts, just 14% of UK companies have a dedicated social media page or gallery and 53% have links to their accounts on their home page compared to 39% of US companies with a dedicated social media page or gallery and 71% with links on their home page.
- However, 30% of UK companies have social sharing functionality embedded into their share charts – compared to just 3% of US companies.

#		Company	Sector	Index	Score
1	UK	Royal Dutch Shell	Oil & Gas	FTSE 100	91.30
2	UK	British Land	Real Estate	FTSE 100	89.57
3	US	General Electric	General Industrials	Dow Jones / S&P / NYSE US	89.57
4	US	Hewlett-Packard	Technology	S&P / NYSE US	89.57
5	UK	WPP Group	Media	FTSE 100	86.09
6	US	Intel	Technology	Dow Jones / S&P / NASDAQ	86.09
7	US	EMC	Technology	S&P / NYSE US	86.09
8	US	NetApp	Technology	NASDAQ	84.35
9	UK	QinetiQ	Aerospace & Defence	FTSE 250	84.35
10	US	Oracle	Technology	S&P	83.48

Conclusion

It's clear from this review that many companies are falling short when it comes to embracing and getting the most from social media. However, there are many reasons to be positive: overall company use of channels is high; those companies who are sharing quality content are being rewarded for their efforts; and we are seeing more than half of all companies actively engaging in social conversations with their audiences.

Social media, although constantly evolving, requires serious thought, resource and planning. There is a clear link between content range and frequency, and a company's engagement with and reception by its audience. To achieve a flow of relevant content in a sustainable way, companies need to focus on their overall communications strategy and learn to use those channels which they can operate authentically while committing to sincere, continuous engagement.

More than anything, the review reveals that companies need to move beyond seeing social media as an unruly beast, and embrace it for what it can offer: a powerful and effective way to broaden their engagement with key audiences. Companies like Cisco Systems and BP show this is entirely possible. Equally, social media should be something companies are proud to showcase on their corporate websites as a means to integrate exciting, dynamic content, and which genuinely involves their audiences in the ongoing evolution of their business.

Top 5 tips

1. Don’t underestimate the power of corporate content to drive engagement, further your reach and capture your audience’s attention.

2. Make the investment – to get the most from social media, you have to commit time and resource. The most effective accounts are those which post a varied range of content on a regular basis.

3. Don’t pigeonhole your audience, either in terms of the channels you use or the content you share. Embrace social media as an opportunity to tell your whole story in a variety of ways.

4. Treating social media in isolation is already an outdated approach: companies need to think socially across their corporate communications strategy as a whole – and ask themselves whether any information they are publishing through traditional channels could also be communicated on social media. Blogging CEOs and Twitter-friendly infographics are just the start.

5. Don’t be shy. It is staggering how many companies are not making the most of their social media presence within their corporate websites. Utilise what you have to create a dynamic, engaging and socially-friendly website and you will see the benefit across your social channels and your wider digital presence.

Who we score

This review has been designed to provide insight into how publicly listed companies are using social media to communicate and engage with their corporate stakeholders. It is not intended as a measure of how companies use social media for branding or marketing purposes.

For each company, on each channel, we select one English language account that best represents the company at a group or corporate level: this account is scored against all of the key criteria. However, secondary accounts will also be factored into the overall score for that channel, while not scored against all of the key criteria. For example, Pfizer have a main Twitter account (@pfizer) that is fully scored while their dedicated media account (@pfizer_IR) will also contribute to their overall Twitter score. If a company has two dedicated group accounts (for example one for IR and one for CSR) but not one that is a general company account, then the account with the most followers/likes will be chosen for the full score, while the company still receives points for the second account.

All companies were scored in Q3 2014, aside from the FTSE 250, scored in Q2 2014.

Companies whose social media accounts only contain consumer-focused content from over the previous three months of posts are not eligible for scoring against all of the key criteria. They will still receive points for these accounts but these companies will not score as highly as those companies offering corporate content (defined as being targeted towards IR, CSR, careers or media).

For example, Burberry, who are often cited as a best-of-class example of a corporate using social media, score very poorly for their @Burberry Twitter account, despite having over 3 million followers, because the account contains no content of a demonstrably corporate nature and is consumer-facing in tone and approach.

Furthermore, we only score accounts whose name directly relates them to the parent company. Consumer and regional accounts will be scored but not if the name of the account is markedly different to that of the parent company.

For example, we score Kingfisher for their @kingfisherplc Twitter account but not for their brand accounts, @BandQ and @Screwfix, as these will generally not be of concern to the corporate audience. On the other hand, we score AstraZeneca for their main Twitter account @AstraZeneca but also score them for their regional account @AstraZenecaUS and their consumer account AstraZeneca Helps (@AZhelps).

This is done in part to keep the size of the review manageable and in part because it is not possible to guarantee that all brand accounts and other accounts with names that are markedly different from the parent companies' have been captured, and so it is best that they are excluded altogether.

However, this practice is also followed because the corporate audience is equally unlikely to find these accounts when they are looking for corporate information – whereas there is a possibility that they may look at and engage with any account that contains the parent company's name and therefore these accounts may be considered as having an impact on corporate reputation even if they contain no specific corporate content.

What we score

The review is restricted to those social media channels most commonly used by publicly listed companies to communicate and engage with their corporate stakeholders:

- **LinkedIn**
- **Google+**
- **Twitter**
- **Flickr**
- **YouTube**
- **SlideShare**
- **Facebook**
- **Pinterest**

Detailed scores are available at an individual channel level. However, in calculating companies' overall social media scores, these channels are given different weightings, based on these channels' suitability for corporate communications and their popularity amongst the wider social media audience and take-up from publicly listed companies. A Twitter account used for corporate communications is therefore accorded a much higher score than a Pinterest account.

While occasional corporate use of other channels such as Instagram (http://instagram.com/shell) or Weibo (http://www.weibo.com/shellinchina) has been detected, for practical reasons the review limits itself to the eight channels listed above.

What we look for

The review scores eligible accounts across each of the eight channels on six key category areas.

Engagement

This category measures the effort which companies put into posting new content, enhancing the usability of an account and engaging with their audience on their main corporate account. Criteria in this category include:

- # of days since last post
- # of people followed
- Average # of posts per month
- Use of hashtags
- Replying to wall posts / comments

Reception

This category measures the user response to the main corporate account. Criteria in this category include:

- # of followers
- # of likes
- # of employees
- # of subscribers

Site linking

This category measures whether accounts link to the corporate website and whether the corporate website provides links to the accounts.

Content range

This category measures the range of content available on a company's main corporate account:

- General corporate content
- IR content
- Careers content
- CSR content
- Media content
- Consumer content

Accounts can be scored for some or all of these content areas. However, note that if an account is dedicated to one content area (e.g. a careers account) it will not be scored for General corporate content unless there is broader content posted outside of Careers content. IR, CSR, Careers and Media content on corporate accounts all receive equal weighting but Consumer content receives half of the weighting.

Design

This category measures whether full use is made of a channel's potential to customise an account and to project a company's image. Criteria in this category include:

- Biographical information
- Banner image
- Logo consistent with corporate website

Multi-channel

This category measures the number of accounts on a given channel in addition to the main corporate account and whether they can be reached from the main account. Criteria in this category include:

- **# of consumer accounts**
- **# of regional accounts**
- **# of dedicated corporate accounts**
- **Links to social media accounts from main corporate account**

Where it is not possible to score a criterion for a given channel (for example, hashtags are not used on YouTube), the remaining criteria are weighted so that each channel's maximum possible score in any given category is the same.

Use of social media on the corporate website

In addition, in calculating companies' overall social media scores we also consider the use of social media within the corporate website. Criteria in this category include:

- **Social media feeds within site**
- **'Follow us' links**
- **Dedicated social media page or gallery**
- **Links / signposting to company blogs**
- **Press releases shareable on social media**

Weighting

Individual criteria

The majority of criteria can only be given a binary score – i.e. a given criterion is either fulfilled or it is not.

These criteria are then given a fixed number of points, depending on its relative importance. For example, if IR, CSR, careers or media content is detected on the selected account on a given channel, the company will be awarded the same number of points for each content type – but it will only receive half this number for any consumer content as this is not valued as highly for corporate communications.

Certain criteria are scored according to a set range of points. For example, a company with very few Facebook likes will receive far fewer points than a company with tens of thousands.

The median average is frequently used in this review to report these figures, rather than the mean. This is because B2C companies that combine corporate content with marketing content tend to skew the figures disproportionately, for example with the number of followers on a given channel. However, unless explicitly stated, the mean average is used by default.

Methodology

Categories at individual channel level

Criteria are grouped into categories for each channel.

The total number of points for each category is the same for each channel even though the number of criteria may vary (for example, Facebook has four Engagement criteria while Twitter has seven).

This is achieved by awarding more points to a criterion on a channel where there are fewer criteria making up the category while the relative split between the criteria is maintained.

Different categories receive a different maximum of points, depending on their relative importance. For example, the Multi-channel category receives less than a third of the number of points that is awarded to the Engagement category.

The total number of points for all categories combined is the same for each channel (with the exception of Pinterest which is only scored for two categories).

Channel and category scores

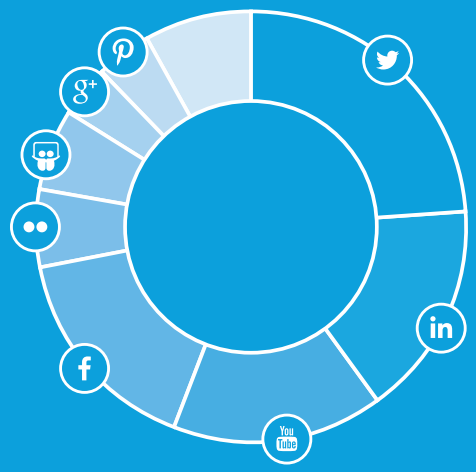
Individual channel and category scores are expressed as a percentage.

Overall scores

Overall scores are calculated by applying a weighting so that each channel score (and the Corporate Website Use score) contributes a different percentage of the final score.

This weighting has been determined by assessing the current trend of how much individual channels are used combined with their suitability for corporate communications.

If a company does not use a given channel, its overall score will fall – but this fall will be substantially less if it does not use Pinterest than if it does not use Twitter.



Twitter	24%
LinkedIn	16%
YouTube	16%
Facebook	16%
Flickr	6%
SlideShare	6%
Google+	4%
Pinterest	4%
Corporate Website	8%

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