

Are Marketers Struggling To Keep Up With Social Trends?

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Marketers are challenged to stay up to date on the latest developments

Social media is no longer new, but it's still a turbulent space.

Just a couple years ago MySpace was on top of the world, only to be ousted unceremoniously by crowds flocking to Facebook.

Twitter crept onto the scene and then exploded with growth in 2009, putting itself on every marketer's radar.

New trends are developing in the social location-based area, and that's not counting the seemingly constant mergers, acquisitions, startups and failures.

Little wonder that marketers find it difficult to stay on top of the hottest social media trends.

A May 2010 survey from staffing firm The Creative Group found that 65% of US marketing executives considered it at least somewhat challenging to keep up.

"Marketing has always been a field with a constant learning curve, but the shifts taking place today are occurring more quickly, making it especially challenging to keep pace," said Donna Farrugia, executive director of The Creative Group, in a statement.

Most marketers rely on in-house staff to handle their social efforts, but employees still require adequate training and also the time to keep up with the latest developments and trends among both consumers and their competitors.

The Creative Group found marketing executives relied most on conferences and seminars along with industry networking events to learn about social trends.

Relatively few depended on actual social sources such as Twitter, Facebook or LinkedIn, and just 7% said they kept up to date through blogs.

"Networking becomes even more important during periods of rapid change," said Farrugia. "Many marketers are aware of broad social media trends, but they need nuts-and-bolts information on how to most effectively use new channels. That's where insight from peers on what worked and did not work for them can be most valuable."

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