Social Media Analytics for the Automotive Industry

Through a look at the “German Big 3” Premium Car brands in Europe
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FOREWORD

Thank you for downloading this report. Digimind is constantly working to bring you useful and insightful content to make your job easier and help you navigate the complex world of social media.

With the launch of our next generation social media monitoring tool, Digimind Social, in October 2013, we are now better equipped than ever to assist you through these turbulent waters. Beyond our technology, our teams in North America, Europe, Asia and Africa are constantly gleaning the latest social media and digital marketing trends and insights and delivering them in easily digestible formats.

We are very happy to share our insights with you and we hope you find this eBook interesting and insightful. If you like what you see here, you’ll find many more similar resources and best practices on our website.

Enjoy,

Paul Vivant
2014 was a remarkable year for the “German Big 3”, with BMW, Audi, and Mercedes dominating the luxury car market worldwide. For BMW and Mercedes, it was the fourth and for Audi the fifth consecutive record year in terms of sales with each selling 1.8 million, 1.6 million, and 1.7 million cars worldwide respectively. In Europe, the race is tight: Audi is leading with 726,059 units, followed by BMW with 676,410 and Mercedes with 652,373 units sold in 2014.

We guide you through:

✓ how do these leading car brands perform on social media
✓ which social channels performed best in terms of engagement
✓ which publications perform best in terms of engagement
How do these leading car brands perform on social media?

Using Digimind Social Analytics, we studied the social media performance of each brand on Facebook, Twitter, Youtube and Instagram in three key markets: Germany, the UK, and France. The study is comprised of data collected from Digimind from February 8 through March 9, 2015.

Mercedes has the biggest share of publications on social media, followed by BMW and Audi. Interestingly, the brand has had by far the highest sales growth of the three in February: 14.6% (120,270 cars sold), still keeping third position after the sales leader BMW (131,416 cars sold, 5.2% growth), but getting closer to number two, Audi (120,270 cars sold, 4.2% growth). According to IDG Research’s 2014 Tech Marketing Priorities study, digital marketers are using more “owned media” in their marketing than ever before, which looks to be where Mercedes is heading at the moment with a 132% increase in publication frequency.
BMW is leading in both community size and interactions, which might be due to the fact that it is the main brand and namesake of the BMW Group, with brand communication taking place on both BMW Group as well as BMW’s brand Facebook pages.

We included 5 BMW Facebook pages in our analysis: BMW Group, BMW (global brand page), BMW Deutschland, BMW UK and BMW France.

In this breakdown, we see that the BMW Group Facebook community accounts for 181,444 followers and 5,327 interactions concerning the BMW brand. Even if we exclude the BMW Group account from the analysis, BMW remains the winner in terms of community size and interactions with 25,680,000 followers and 11,600,000 interactions.
Audi and Mercedes are both part of more diversified car manufacturing multinationals in terms of image and portfolio consistency which explains the fact that there are no animated Volkswagen or Daimler Group social media pages.

Mercedes has both a global brand Facebook page and country specific pages in Germany, France, and the UK.
Audi has only country specific Facebook pages.

We included Audi Deutschland, Audi UK, and Audi France in this analysis.
The strongest Facebook communities for all the three brands are in their home market Germany.

A Facebook and Instagram benchmark show the same ranking as in the global cross-channel comparison, with BMW in first position, followed by Mercedes and Audi.

As we can see, BMW focuses its social content efforts on Facebook but is also the biggest Instagramer.
However, when it comes to Twitter, Mercedes is the top performer of the “German Big 3”. Mercedes is by far the most frequent tweeter.

Audi is also focusing on Facebook in terms of publication frequency. The Volkswagen Group premium brand is the biggest Youtuber out of the three and is the winner in Youtube benchmarking.

This study is a snapshot of one month but you can see that there is a positive correlation between the frequency of publications, community growth, and engagement.
Which social channels performed best in terms of engagement?

Digimind Social Analytics uses interactions and interaction rate as engagement indicators in order to evaluate top publications.

**Interactions** represent total number of likes, comments, retweets, or shares. **Interaction rate** is a ratio of post interactions out of total subscribers and expresses the extent to which the brand community has engaged with the content.

**BMW** has been promoting its Instagram account on its Facebook page. Although those publications have had the highest number of interactions for the period (580,993), they have a lower interaction rate than the publications on Instagram which had less interactions but a higher interaction rate of 56%. This can be explained by the fact that the BMW Facebook community is much larger than its Instagram community, but the Instagram followers are engaging more frequently with the content than the Facebook followers.

<table>
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<th>DATE</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>BMW</td>
<td>FEB 28, 2015</td>
<td>580,993</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>BMW</td>
<td>MAR 07, 2015</td>
<td>580,993</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>BMW</td>
<td>FEB 21, 2015</td>
<td>576,688</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>BMW</td>
<td>FEB 14, 2015</td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>BMW</td>
<td>MAR 06, 2015</td>
<td>127,181</td>
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<tr>
<td>6</td>
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<td>MAR 06, 2015</td>
<td>122,171</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>BMW</td>
<td>FEB 18, 2015</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>BMW</td>
<td>MAR 06, 2015</td>
<td>114,451</td>
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Audi's focus on Youtube is paying off: the brand’s top four publications had the most interactions and highest interaction rates through these videos. The biggest hit was the presentation of the new R8 model (see below) released at the Geneva Motor Show in February.
Mercedes reached the highest interactions rate with the presentation of G-Class 500 4x4. While Audi attracts its audience with the elegant and speedy R8, Mercedes captivates people with the robustness of its ultimate off-road vehicle. Like BMW, Mercedes was promoting its Instagram account on its Facebook page.
Aesthetics play an important role in the automotive sector. Over time cars have transformed from a sheer means of transport to design objects. Concept cars and collaborations with artists have been multiplying in past years. This explains why cars brands are starting to grow their presence on such “visual” networks like Youtube and Instagram.
CONCLUSION

The overall comparison of all channels shows that BMW has the biggest community as well as the most interactions, and Mercedes has the most publications. The latter has by far the highest growth rates for interactions and community of three (321% and 10%), which means that BMW should watch out and accelerate its community and interactions growth in order to keep first position in the future. Thus, its focus on Instagram makes sense since BMW publications on the photo-sharing network show the highest interaction rates.

*Interactions represent total number of likes, comments, retweets or shares of publications.

This overview provides the global picture of how the brand performs across “owned social media” – all monitored platforms comprised.

OVERVIEW

between Feb 08, 2016 and Mar 09, 2016
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Social Media Survival Guide for the B2B ENERGY, AUTOMOTIVE & ENGINEERING Industry
http://www.digimind.com/resources/white-papers/social-media-survival-guide-for-the-b2b-energy-industrial-automotive-engineering-industry/

REPORT: Best Social Media Monitoring Platforms

Read our latest analyses and articles on our blog: http://digimind.com/blog/
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Superior Social Media Analytics

Managing many social accounts across different platforms is one of the biggest challenges for a social media manager. With loads of data coming from all these channels, analyzing social activities becomes the toughest part. Digimind Social Analytics allows you to measure performance on your social media accounts from one unique platform so you can optimize your social media strategy.

- We monitor the most impactful social media platforms
- Unlimited number of social accounts for your global brands
- Segment and filter data for custom analysis
- Analyse your competitors’ communities
- More than 80 dynamic dashboards available
- Full integration with our Digimind Social Suite

START A FREE TRIAL
ABOUT

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Digimind is a leading global social media monitoring and competitive intelligence company that provides businesses with unrivaled insights into their true standing in the market. Digimind’s proven intelligence technology has provided Fortune 500 brands around the world with critical information for their business for more than 15 years. Profitable since its founding, Digimind has a 92 percent customer retention rate and more than 100 employees across offices in North America, Europe, Asia, and Africa. For more information, please visit Digimind at http://www.digimind.com

**Digimind Services**
Digimind’s experienced consultants and analysts form the backbone of our Services Team, which helps our customers implement and succeed in their digital strategy. We provide a wide range of services, from working with you to build your digital strategy to providing fully outsourced analysis and reporting services.

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