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[How Social Are You?](#)

October 30, 2008

A question on everyone's mind – how social am I? Or, more to the point, how social is my product or brand? Vitruve has a [social media index](#) that assesses a name's or brand's strength across the internet's social media outlets by measuring conversations about the name, brand or product. Conversation-mining locales include social networking sites, video sharing sites, micro-blogs, photo sharing sites and the general blogosphere. Basically, anywhere that conversations are taking place is fair game. Vitruve compares two or more terms to determine which term commands more conversation time, e.g. comparing Apple to Microsoft. Yet another marketing tool to measure your power in the virtual marketplace!

[The Business Card – 21st Century Style](#)

November 4, 2008

Do you blog? Do you have a web site? Are you a member or user in multiple social media, file sharing, bookmarking and other interactive sites? Would you like to collapse all of this web content onto a single "card" that displays information and active links more effectively than the traditional paper card? Many thanks to Susan Cartier Liebel (check out her blog [here](#)) for turning me on to [retaggr](#), a web "profile card" that permits you to automatically display relevant information on sites that are retaggr-enabled. According to the site, you can include your name, bio, links to your websites and widgets including recent blog posts, recent tweets from twitter, photos and communication information for MSN/Gtalk/Skype and more. On retaggr-enabled sites, the profile card is left automatically when you comment. You also can embed the card into your web page or include it in your email signature.

"Mr. Tweet", At Your Service

November 30, 2008

The Twitter experience definitely overwhelms, particularly if new to the game. If you have begun the process of identifying who you are interested in following, say lawyers or legal marketers, you can easily enhance that experience by employing "[Mr. Tweet](#)." Mr. Tweet reads your follower and following lists and compiles a report of who among your followers and the broader network of influencers you should follow. The process is simple: on the site simply click the "Follow Mr. Tweet" button and in a few days, you will receive a direct message that Mr. Tweet is ready to compile your report. The report allows you to select "influencers beyond your network" and "followers you are not following" with a descending list ranked by popularity, relevance to you and likelihood of reciprocity. The individual entries show others who follow them, their profile description, number of followers & following, the ratio between those two numbers, reciprocity, frequency of updates and information.

I found the list helped me to flesh out my network of lawyers, legal professionals, legal marketers and social media experts, many of whom I was already familiar with from my blog reading. Mr. Tweet provides a nice quantitative / qualitative means of improving your on-line microblogging connections, which in turn improves your overall social experience and viral marketing plan. And, Mr. Twitter's creators are promising new features and applications to improve the connections even more. What more can the social media swimmer ask for?

Everything You Ever Wanted To Know About Social Media, But You Know The Rest

December 12, 2008

Whew! There is a lot of social media out there these days. Places to do it, articles written about it, consequences of messing it up to think about. So, we should all consider thanking Tamar Weinberg for clearly putting a great deal of time and effort into writing the [Ultimate Social Media Etiquette Handbook](#). Because if you are going to take the time to jump into this bottomless pool, you might as well make an attempt to do it correctly and with good manners.

Girding Facebook for Business

January 23, 2009

Just today, I was talking about how Facebook is not my favorite site for business networking, but that it appears to be working hard to change that impression. Lo and behold, my FeedDemon reader contained a handy article from Josh Peters over at Mashable! listing [30 Apps For Doing Business On Facebook](#). I use many of the applications featured, although I admit there is more than a little overlap in the thirty apps featured. Consequently, there may be ten or so truly distinct tools for business promotion. No matter, though, as there is nothing wrong with options when it comes to utilizing social media for marketing!

Peters breaks the apps into categories - blog promotion; business / self-promotion; communication; networking; collaboration; audio / visual; and the ubiquitous miscellaneous bucket. Under blogs, you can find: [Networked Blogs app](#); [Notes \(Default App\)](#); [RSS Connect](#); and, [Simplaris BlogCast](#).

Under business & self promotion, you can find: [Define Me](#); [GLPrint Business Cards](#); [IEndorse](#); [My BusinessBlinkWeb](#); [Professional Profile](#); [Posted Items \(Default App\)](#); and, [Testimonials](#).

For communication, there is: [CalliFlower](#); [Smart Phone](#); [SmartMessage Center](#); [Telephone](#); and, [Voice Mail](#).

Networking apps are: [Introductions](#); [My LinkedIn Profile](#); [SocialFly](#); [Tag Biz Business Network](#); [Workin' It!](#); and, [Xing](#). Facebook members can collaborate using: [Huddle by WorkSpaces](#); and, [My Office](#).

Audio / visual apps offer: [Facebook Video \(Default App\)](#); [PodCast Player](#); and, [SlideShare](#). Finally, miscellany includes: [JD Supra Docs](#); [Memorable Web Addresses for Profile, Page or Group](#); [My Money](#); [Page Maps](#); and, [Static FBML](#).

With a tool box like this, Facebook certainly might give LinkedIn a run for its money. Someone, somewhere, once said: "leave no stone unturned." I might modify that to read: "leave no social networking outlet untouched by the imprint of your business and brand." Facebook now gives you the where-with-all to do just that.

[Tweepz Gives Up The Goods on Twitter User's Profiles](#)

May 2, 2009



Image via [CrunchBase](#)

Tweepz is a search engine for Twitter profile data, offering filtering and sorting of results. According to its site, the engine currently is crawling 3,542,165 accounts (at the time of writing). It is powered by [Exalead](#), a global software provider for enterprise and Web search with semantic tendencies. You can search by bio, location or name. You can filter results by number of follows, language and "extracted entities" – objects aligned with a particular twitter profile. You also can set up RSS feeds of specific query results.

Tweepz offers a nice "honing" tool for your twitter experience, allowing more tailored following aligned with your specific Twitter interests.

Hat tip to Resource Shelf

[Zensify: Track Social Media Trends With Ease On Your iPhone](#)

May 28, 2009

A large part of leveraging the Web for marketing, research and information-gathering lies in the ability to track trends across social network "hangouts." Much is made of real-time searching, trending topics and hashtags. It can get more than a little confusing to chart out and implement a tracking strategy.

Enter Zensify: a free (yes, I said free) app for the iPhone which streams information from various social media sites, like Twitter, Facebook, YouTube, Flickr, Digg, Delicious, Photobucket and 12seconds, and offers up the goods via a tag cloud. The cloud can show topics gleaned from the people you follow as well as the people they follow. You can also update or upload to your social media sites from the app and share it all on Twitter. Save and reuse searches across your networks and even watch video from YouTube and 12seconds.

Zensify is looking to open itself up to other developers and offer more social services in the future. It is currently in "preview" mode and the full launch of the app is slated for June.

Just another tool to add to your belt!

[All A-Glitter And Not Twitter? Welcome to The Facebook](#)

September 11, 2009



Image via [CrunchBase](#)

[Twitter](#) – the buzzword among the general populace for all things social media and [social networking](#) – also appears to be the measuring stick against which all other services are judged. This is not surprising when the likes of Oprah and [CNN](#) are extolling your benefits. The why of it has to reside, at least in part, in its novelty among services – a simple interface and easy-to-grasp concept – micro proclamations in 140 characters or less. There are few bells and whistles, practically none developed by Twitter itself. With the help of third party applications, Twitter can be experienced virtually real-time and offers a platform for broadcasting and a tool for fishing for new connections. Love it or hate it, Twitter has all the goods for expanding your on-line kingdom, in both a professional and personal sense.

Readers of the Studio will know how I feel about rival [Friendfeed](#) – a much smarter, better-equipped pipeline for aggregating in one space the social content developed elsewhere (as well as on Friendfeed itself). The news of Friendfeed's sale to a bigger fish in the proverbial

ocean brought to my mind images of Darwinism and feelings of cautious pessimism . Who was going to replace Friendfeed and offer a viable, attractive alternative to the rabble-ous din of the Twitter-verse?

Hello [Facebook](#). Twitter-fast interaction and Facebook would not have been my word pair of choice in the association game even a week ago. But developments over the past few months, peaking with Friendfeed's acquisition a little more than a month ago, and a trio of interesting announcements yesterday have given Facebook a game-changing presence.

Many presumed Facebook's purchase of Friendfeed was about snaring its all-star team of developers responsible for its smart, real-time experience. Today it is clear that Facebook is rolling out changes that herald the duel and draw the line between the two giants of the on-line social world.

Facebook is the brainchild of Harvard alum [Mark Zuckerberg](#). It started as student network, with a walled garden approach and invitation-only mechanism for connecting. In the early days, you had to be a member of a recognized school, with a valid e-mail ID associated with the institution. Facebook garnered impressive numbers nonetheless: in 2005, studies showed 85% of students had accounts with 60% of them logging in daily.

Fast-forward to 2009. Now, anyone age 13 and older can create a profile and join the fun and there are more than 250 million users doing just that, with more than a billion monthly visits across users.

So what is it that you do do on Facebook? You can join, connect with friends and peers and create groups. You can maintain your profile with information-building questions and ongoing content development, such as notes, photos, videos, and many other applications. You can join networks defined by school, geographic region, business, [non-profit organizations](#), etc. There are plenty of places for interaction on Facebook, including the Wall (a bulletin board for posting notes, either by the user or others), photo albums, status updates, an email-like inbox and chat. The News Feed offers a rolling, real-time highlights reel of friends' status updates, important events, profile changes and other information and often serves as the site's main hang-out. Add to this gifts, games, quizzes, bizarre applications, the Marketplace, advertising, and the experience becomes quite jarring.

Facebook has been sensitive to this impression and, over the past year, has been making changes to the interface to clean up the look. The consolidation of feeds and Wall on a user's profile, the introduction of real-time flow in the News Feed, the offering of URLs incorporating your user name have all improved the Facebook experience.

Facebook has quietly become a venue for business networking and development over the past year. A social media report I prepared for a client discussing the business applications and tools hosted on Facebook incorporates a healthy list of on-site features for improving relations and getting it done. A recent influx of legal professionals on Facebook extending invitations to connect tells me that people are noticing these changes.

Yesterday, Facebook started to roll out changes that give voice to its rationale for acquiring Friendfeed and its direction for the future. The most visible change is the introduction of Facebook Lite (www.lite.facebook.com), which streamlines the user experience immensely. Right now, it is only available in India and the [United States](#). Apps and extras are gone from the page. The navigation and information along the left column of the News Feed are gone and the

status box has been replaced with buttons. The new interface works on your profile page too. The only other options along the top are Events and Inbox. Four tabs along the left allow the user to select Wall, Info, Friends and Photos & Video.

The other announcements include a more obvious move: users can now "status-tag" other users with the familiar "@" symbol found on Twitter. Status tagging will allow you to link to a friend's profile. From the Facebook [blog](#):

Now, when you are writing a status update and want to add a friend's name to something you are posting, just include the "@" symbol beforehand. As you type the name of what you would like to reference, a drop-down menu will appear that allows you to choose from your list of friends and other connections, including groups, events, applications, and (fan) pages.

The third change is Facebook's announcement yesterday that it was open-sourcing Friendfeed's real-time technology, called Tornado, bringing its stellar tech to the world in an open-sourcing move. In a geeky, but fascinating read, [Bret Taylor](#), one of the main Friendfeed developers, describes Tornado and the move to [open source](#) in a post found [here](#).

They can't help it: the tech writers are throwing the Twitter comparisons around like so many feathers in the wind from an exploding pillow. Obviously, use of the "@" symbol is a direct shot across the bow. And Facebook Lite's interface **does** resemble Twitter's appearance, with its faster, cleaner, leaner, meaner look. Early reviewers seem to be positively embracing the new style and I count myself among them.

Tastes great? Less filling? More attractive to business networkers who cringed every time they were invited to take a quiz, quaff an imaginary beverage or don a "button"?

I think Twitter has much to think about in the wake of yesterday's news.

[Got Social Media Policy?](#)

September 22, 2009



Image by [glenn.batuyong](#) via Flickr

Are you an attorney or professional looking to develop a social media policy for your own enterprise or for that of a client? Do you know where to start?

At some point along your social media policy drafting journey, consider paying a visit to [Social Media Governance](#) where you will find a sizeable list of links to social media policies in actual use at various commercial and non-profit institutions and political subdivisions. The site is maintained by Chris Boudreaux, a former Naval officer who has led product development and business transformation initiatives at many large companies.

Check out this great list and stay up to date on the intersection of social media and business.

Google Wave – For The Uninitiated

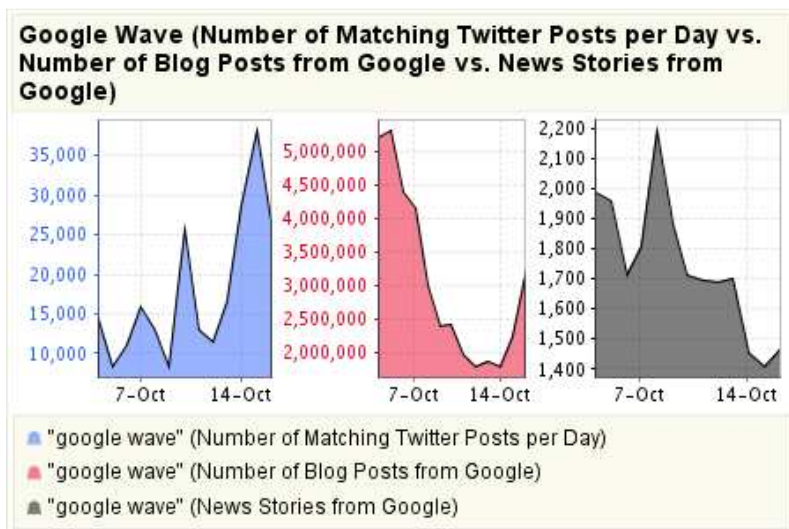
October 6, 2009



And that includes me. No, I do not have a Google Wave invitation yet. I have put in my application, pleaded with my friends, and even considered eBay (no, not really on that last one). I can't give you the hands-on review from the legal mindset that you all are looking for. Not yet, anyway.

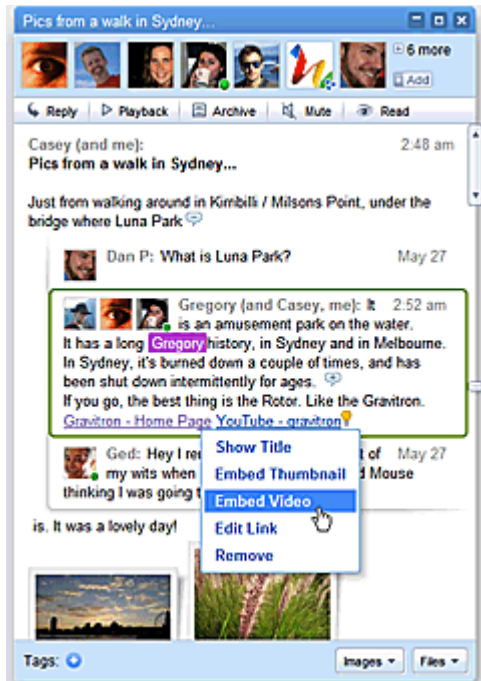
What I can do is provide you with some context if you are like me and have heard all about it, have gotten all excited to try it, but wonder what the heck it is and why should you even care.

Because I haven't done the hands-on, I can only provide you with the information I have culled from others among the scores and scads of on-line articles about it. Google, Apple, Twitter, Facebook and Microsoft need only hiccup to cause a social media riot. Wave is no exception, and maybe is even more tantalizing in that it has been the subject of the months of hype of tsunami proportion leading up to the limited edition 100,000 or so special, closed pre-beta invites that started trickling out last Thursday.



From Anthony Ha - Digital Beat

What **IS** it? At the core, Google Wave is a tool for online collaboration via real-time communication. According to the official Google word, the “communication” can be viewed as both a “wave” of conversation or a document. The participants in the wave or collaboration can utilize all sorts of media in the course of the conversation, offering rich, real-time sharing opportunity. Check out this screenshot of a wave here:



As you can see, waves look like threaded conversations, rather than the more traditional “back-and-forth” email model. Waves can constantly “crash” into your inbox, particularly if your box is open to all. Like a surfer confronted with too many possible rips, Google Wave certainly bears the potential to overwhelm the typical end user.

Another aspect that makes waves somewhat unique in the sharing world is their easy modification by participants, their ability to be played back at any time so that a new participant may be brought up to speed, and their fast transmission of information – you can see the other wave participants responses as they type them! The collaboration is real-time as well, due to some fancy “concurrency control technology” tools. Natural language features provide context and spelling correction. And, waves are embeddable, offering the ability to place the conversation and collaboration anywhere. Waves are amenable to the use of widgets for customizing and broadening the experience.

Without a doubt, Google Wave sounds like a might powerful tool, particularly in the enterprise arena. Imagine access to such a facile and speedy set of tools across departments or units – not only can the process be shared (like a wiki) but participants can get involved and see others' involvement in the process right here and right now.

Sounds great, right? Well, not everyone is buying the hype. Carmi Levy at BetaNews [has announced that he is sitting out the first “wave” of Wavers.](#) Levi believes that Wave won't be as big as Gmail, in large part due to the fact that “collaboration isn't the holy grail of productivity.” Levi also thinks that most collaborators are not yet ready for the rocket-powered Wave: even the relatively simpler Google Docs has not broken among Levi's peers and the emailing of

Microsoft attachments remains the most popular method of securing feedback and a team result.

Then there is the question of security – while a Waver must have permission to participate, allowing anyone to edit source data tends to offend every traditional data security principle.

Robert Scoble also [exhibits skepticism regarding the value of Wave](#) as a true productivity tool. Scoble suggests that Wave represents multiple layers of unproductive tools: email, topped with chat, topped with social media, topped with features that lack an intuitive interface, et cetera. Scoble also criticizes Wave for its lack of integration with Google Docs and Spreadsheets and its tortoise-like pace. Hit the jump above for his fleshed-out discourse as to why he is not ravin' 'bout the Wave.

[Steven Hodson at the Inquisitr seems similarly unimpressed](#), mostly due to the difficulty he experienced ramping up with Google Wave and getting even rudimentary controls under control. He is holding his conclusions in check until he can spend more time with the tool and, hopefully, “get” the hype.

[Steve Rubel opines](#) that Google Wave, as it currently stands, is not a Twitter, Facebook or even email killer, in large part due to its complexity. Rubel believes it solves a problem that doesn't exist, but is hopeful that Google Wave 2.0 addresses the concern and delivers on the promise.

Louis Gray's take is not as critical, as he offers [his personal experience with Google Wave here](#). He crafts a nice overview of the user experience, for those craving their own near-hands-on. But even he suggests that Google Wave will prove most useful for collaboration among small teams. And, reading between his lines, Gray appears to lament the fact that Google Wave is simply another place to check for conversations and information exchange, further burdening an already overburdened on-line network of email and social media outposts. It seems Wave may not be the ideal source for “crowd” conversations among large groups.

So, does my post sound a bit like the fox who couldn't reach the proverbial grapes, proclaiming them to be sour as he quits the quest? Maybe so. But I am still hot to try Google Wave and allow my own first-hand experience to be my guide. I am guarded, however, after reading the somewhat critical reviews from some of tech's elite. If these guys are having issues with Google Wave, how will the average tech-averse lawyer or business person manage its might? In any event, if a reader has an extra invite to pass along, I wouldn't turn it down and might even be your best friend. 😊

Maybe you are one of the lucky few already enjoying Wave and currently making up your own mind about its utility or lack thereof. I have something for you too: a [cheatsheet for Wave searching](#) from Google itself.

Personal Twitter Interface(s), i.e. “Twitter’action”

October 12, 2009

twitter



Following the introduction (and controversy) regarding iPhone Twitter client Tweetie 2 over the past several days, I thought I might share my own personal thoughts, feelings and preferences regarding my Twitter-interaction (contraction: twitter'action).

For, to best experience Twitter, especially when one has a large number of follows, one must consider using different tools for different jobs.

Louis Gray, whose own [post](#) on the subject inspired my post here, outlines why different clients work best for different uses.

First, consider the problems. Twitter, on its own, is a massive flood of sound-bites, bereft of organization, management or discipline. Twitter as a service is only now considering embedding some of the features that users have organically adopted and third party apps have made their mark with. First: how do you locate and attend to the information of interest? Next: how do you interact with that information, from following links to media to resharing it, from responding in the public time-line to engaging in one-on-one communications? Then: how do you take that information with you and access it on-the-go? Without even considering directories, analytics, fancy search functionality, bookmarklets, and other high-level applications, there are many options for managing Twitter and making it work for you.

Ultimately, your own preferences will dictate the services to which you regularly gravitate. Let me share the ones I use for Twitter'action. I am not including in this post the ways that I share into Twitter from outside of it. These are the apps I use for reading and interacting inside Twitter itself.

As a matter of background, I have tried most of the services available on my computer and several of the services available on iPhone, so please bear that in mind. Historically, I have tended to try services and then, after a while, gravitate back to the Twitter web because I value simplicity in my social web interactions.



Right now, though, I find that I am consistently using [Brizzly](#) for my web-based interaction with Twitter. Brizzly is a new service, still in beta, that incorporates many of the features users would like to see: multiple accounts; groups; autocomplete of contact names; an

IM-like direct message box; a mute button(!); in-line media, including pictures and videos; a URL expander; a list of trending topics with explanations as to why (and some are pretty darn funny); saved searches; and, an endless page. Brizzly auto-refreshes the page without manual updates too.

Why are these features great? I love being able to switch with a single button between my Twitter accounts. I love being able to see pictures and videos in the line of tweets, without having to actually click on a link to get to them. I love being able to group my favorite twitter follows and quickly hone in on their information. I like to see my DM conversations in a stream. I like to be able to see the trends (without having to actually search and find them) and learn why they are trends without having to read the stream. And I like the auto-refresh – no more reloading every few minutes! While I haven't used the "mute" feature (removes tweets from a particular user from the stream), I can imagine doing so.

I have become disenchanted with desktop clients – they tend to bog down my computer with extra processes and require me to manage multiple windows. For my time and money (free!), Brizzly is my hands-down favorite Twitter interface on my desktop and laptop. Brizzly is in closed beta, but I have a few invites left. If you would like one, please leave your email in the comments or send your email to me (check my contact page) and I will send one along.

The other piece of the puzzle for me is mobile Twitter. I find that I spend more time gazing at the stream during moments of down time while I am out and about. I use an iPhone, so my experience is limited to iPhone Twitter applications. I have used several of them, and I have now paired them down to two, with one add-on for push notification.



My main Twitter app has been [Tweetie](#), and is now [Tweetie 2](#) (\$2.99 in the App Store). Yes, I paid for both versions. Yes, I think it is worth it and have no qualms about sending a little more money to this developer. Tweetie offers a great many features – it returns you to the same place in the stream where you left off; it offers messaging and reply indicators; it has a clever reloading mechanism (simply scroll up to trigger a reload); it incorporates third-party applications [Follow Cost](#), [Tweet Blocker](#) and [Favstar.fm](#); it provides live search with filtering; it has added tweeting options (when you hit the character count indicator); it includes a draft manager for saving and tweeting later; it has added new options revealed when you swipe tweets to the right (a feature from Tweetie 1); it allows controls over SMS notifications; it syncs saved searches from the Twitter web; it is able to create iPhone contacts from Twitter profiles; it works in landscape mode; and, it shows conversations in threaded format.

Why do I like these features? Returning me to my place helps me to ensure I haven't missed a beat. Scroll/reload speeds up my Twitter reading. The added applications, particularly Favstar.fm, allow me to manage how people view my own Twitter contributions from right within the Tweetie application. More tweet features makes it easier for me to share media through Tweetie, taking full advantage of the iPhone still and video camera, and facilitates link sharing. Landscape mode, a necessity for my worsening eyesight, makes tweets easier to read. Threaded conversations are a must if you are engage in a lengthy one-on-one conversation (yes, they DO happen occasionally on Twitter).



But there are two features missing from Tweetie that require me to turn to two other applications: groups and push notifications. When I want to focus on a particular group of Twitter follows, I use Tweetdeck for iPhone (free). Group reading is pretty much the only reason I would use [Tweetdeck](#) rather than Tweetie, but it remains a compelling one. For push notifications of retweets, mentions and direct messages, I use [Boxcar](#) (\$2.99 for one service, .99 cents for each additional service). My one service is Twitter, but you can use Boxcar to push your Facebook updates and email as well. It works very well – I can get push notifications from Boxcar in places where I have insufficient signal to get a phone call or text message.

As Louis Gray points out in his post, no single service is available on all platforms: desktop, Web and iPhone. So, if you are interested in having full-featured access to Twitter, you really have to consider employing more than one application. The endorsements of Brizzly, Tweetie 2, Tweetdeck, and Boxcar in this post are based entirely on my own experiences. I encourage you to check them out and see if they fit your purposes and meet your needs. Also, please feel free to post your own favorites (and why they are) in the comments below.