Glossary
of Social Media terminology

+1 button: Similar to Facebook's "Like" button, the +1 button is proprietary to Google and is the Internet equivalent of the thumbs-up. "+1" may also show up in emails or comment threads, as in the following: "+1 for that idea" with the meaning of "I really like this idea and I'm showing my support for it."

This thing is called an octothorpe.

/r/: Subreddit

Abandonment rate: The percentage of social customer service issues that are abandoned by customers without a resolution.

Algorithm: A rules-based procedure for making calculations or solving problems. Algorithms are everywhere in computer science and are crucial to the software that runs the world. In social media, the most important algorithms are those that determine which content we see. For example, your Facebook News Feed doesn't show every status update and every photo from every one of your friends. Instead, it displays an algorithmically curated set of content that Facebook thinks is most worth seeing. Similarly, Twitter, Facebook, and Google Plus use algorithms to define which topics and hashtags are currently trending.

AMA: In reference to Reddit, an acronym for "Ask me anything." In an AMA post, a user will answer questions posed by the Reddit community. To-date, the most popular AMA of all time took place in 2012 with President Barack Obama.

Analytics: Analytics tells you what happened. In general, it involves using technology to gather data which analysts can study. The goal of analysts is to examine this data, looking for patterns in behaviour. The most common way of gathering data is using a tracking tag on a website or software application. The tag registers a "session" when a user visits and then stores data about what pages they visited, what actions they completed, and how they interacted with different elements such as clicking on buttons or performing a search.

Archiving: The practice of retaining an organization's social media messages and associated metadata, often for the purpose of regulatory compliance. Archiving has become increasingly important as more and more business communications occur on social media. Organizations can save records of social conversations in their own secure databases, much like they already store email and other documents. This data can later be retrieved and analysed to track the effectiveness of social media activities. It can also be gathered as part of a legal e-discovery process.

Audience selector: A tool that allows you to choose which audience you want to share something with on Facebook.

Authenticity: Some people cover up their identity and don't really express themselves on social media. Being open and authentic on social media means a great deal to your audience who wants to genuinely engage with you or your business. It's important to find your own voice and be personal on social media. We wouldn't be following you if we didn't think you were awesome, so just be yourself!

Avatar: A visual representation of a user online, though not necessarily an actual photo of the user. Social media profile pics are an example of an avatar. Fun trivia fact: "avatar" is Sanskrit for "incarnation". Makes sense, right?

Average handling time: The average time required for a company, team, or individual to resolve customer issues on social media, from beginning to end.

Average response time: How long it takes on average for a company, team, or individual to reply to a customer's messages while resolving an issue.

Big data: In short, big data is large sets of unstructured data. Traditionally, the data that we analyze has already been formatted into nice rows and columns. Think of a spreadsheet with a list of customer names and email addresses. The reason why big data is hard to analyze is that the data sets are massive and complex. They might contain the messy natural language we find in Tweets and Facebook updates, so the challenge involves sorting, analyzing, and processing. But as the data sets are so large and layered with information, good analysis can reveal surprising insights.

Bio: A 'Bio', short for biography, is the small portion of your online profile that explains to new or potential followers who you are. All social platforms have some version of a Bio as they are valuable in attracting new followers with similar interests. When it comes to your Twitter strategy, your Bio is the first thing users see when they discover your profile and a good Bio can greatly improve how often you show up in keyword searches.

Brand advocate: In the marketing world, a brand advocate is a customer that is so satisfied with your product that they go out of their way to help you market it. They do work on their own, but often become an even more valuable resource (for spreading news, good will, and product insight) when you connect with them, engage them and empower them. Social media is filled with brand advocates. Take the time to find yours.

Brandjacking: The hijacking of a brand to promote an agenda or damage a reputation. Brandjackers don't hack the social media accounts of target individuals and organizations. Instead, they assume a target's online identity through indirect means such as fake accounts, promoted hashtags, and satirical marketing campaigns.

Caption: A brief description that appears underneath an Instagram photo.

Check-In: A Foursquare and Facebook term, to check-in is to declare when a user has physically visited a geographical location or event. Checking-in allows the user to let their friends know where they are, and the ability to earn badges and points.

Circles: Google+ Circles are a method for sorting your Google+ contacts by social context, location, shared interest, or any other criteria. They allow you to organize people on Google+ to match the way you actually know them in real life. With Circles, you can easily share different content with different categories of people. You can also filter what other people are sharing that you never miss an important update from your closest friends and family.

Clickbait: Web content with a misleading or sensationalist headline that entices readers to click through to the full story, usually with the goal of generating page views and advertising revenue. This One Weird Trick works by piquing your curiosity. You click the link, but You Won't Believe What Happens Next: the article stinks.

Clickthrough rate (CTR): This is a common metric for reporting on the number of people who viewed a message or piece of content and then actually performed the action required such as clicking on the ad or link in an email marketing campaign. The actual metric is calculated by comparing the number of clicks to impressions. For example, if 100 people saw your ad in Google and one person clicked on the ad, you would have a click-through-rate of 1.0%. Clickthrough rate (CTR) is most commonly used for search engine marketing and other performance-driven channels as the general philosophy is that the higher your CTR, the more effective your marketing is.

Community management: The practice of developing relationships around a common interest. This is done by monitoring and engaging with those who engage with the common interest. The goal is to nurture relationships so that the community acts as advocates on behalf of the common interest.

Competitor sentiment: To provide context, it can be useful to measure your sentiment alongside that of your competitors through social media monitoring. This kind of intel—whether positive or negative—will allow you to make strategic business decisions to stay ahead of your competition.

Compliance: Conformance with rules, regulations, or laws. Social media compliance is particularly relevant to organizations in regulated industries, such as healthcare, banking, and insurance. These businesses face strict rules governing what they can communicate to the public, and numerous regulatory agencies have confirmed that these rules extend to social media. Among other requirements, regulated organisations must be able to demonstrate that they are archiving social communications and supervising the use of social media by their employees.

Connection: On LinkedIn, there are several types of connections you can make. The basic type of connection is a 1st degree connection—a contact that you know personally or professionally and that has accepted your invitation to connect. Other degrees of connections are dependent on your extended network and how closely they are connected to other individuals you know.

Content curation: Content curation is the process of sifting through the web to find the best and most relevant content for an audience and then presenting it to them in a meaningful way. Unlike content marketing, content curation doesn't involve publishing new content. Instead, it's about creating value for your audience by saving them time and effort. There's no shortage of content out there, but not all of it is worth reading. Plus, there's no guarantee that the best articles, videos, and infographics will show up on the first page of a Google search. Organizing related content into pinboards, newsletters, or weekly blog posts can help you build a regular audience and also demonstrate your subject expertise.

Content discovery: A process used by marketers to uncover valuable content and trends relevant to their audience. Content discovery helps shape a successful content marketing strategy and can be executed in numerous ways.

Content management system (CMS): Whether you're running a blog, marketing website, or a social media presence, a content management system (CMS) is the backbone of your content marketing strategy. A web CMS is an online application that allows you to draft, share, edit, schedule, and index your content. Popular web content management systems make use of simple editors that allow you to create publish content without demanding a knowledge of code.

Content marketing: A marketing strategy based on attracting and retaining customers through the creation and distribution of valuable content, such as videos, white papers, guides, and infographics. Content marketers look to earn customer loyalty and influence decisions by providing useful, entertaining, or educational media. A famous example of content marketing is the Michelin Guide, first published by the tire company Michelin in 1900. Rather than telling people to buy their tires, Michelin provided maps, advice on car repairs, lists of hotels, and other valuable information that would encourage car ownership. Over time the Michelin Guide evolved into the world's most influential guide to restaurants—driving massive brand awareness and loyalty for Michelin. With the rise of social media and search engines, content marketing is now a vital technique for businesses of all sizes.

Content rate: The amount of content produced in a designated time period.

Conversions: In social media marketing, a conversion is a positive action that is taken on a website by a visitor from social media. The action demonstrates that the visitor is "converting" into a customer. Sales aren't the only type of conversion; many websites measure webinar registrations, newsletter signups, content downloads, and other important outcomes that ultimately lead to a sale. Tracking conversions is crucial to properly attributing revenue to social media.

Conversation map: A visualization of the terms that are most commonly associated with a chosen keyword on social media. Usually delivered as a percentage of total mentions, a Conversation Map is a feature in Hootsuite Analytics that collects data from over 25 sources across the web.

Cover photo: The large, horizontal image at the top of your Facebook profile or page. Similar to a profile photo, a cover photo is public and can be seen by anyone. This is a great place for individuals, brands and organizations to use an unique image to represent who they are, what their business is or what they care about.

Creative Commons: Creative Commons is a public copyright license that gives you the ability to use and share otherwise copyrighted material. For social media users, Creative Commons often comes into play when we are looking for images and photos to accompany a social media message or blog post. In both of these cases, unless you are using your own images or have express permission, you can only share Creative Commons images. Sites like Google Image Search and Flickr have filters so you can easily search for Creative Commons photos. Just be careful, as there are different level of Creative Commons which could restrict whether an image could be used commercially, whether it can be modified, and what kind of attribution is required.

Creep: To creep is to spend an extended period of time looking through someone's profiles, photos, and videos on social media. The term is generally used in the context of dating, where social networks such as Facebook give users the ability to check out potential dates or ex-partners. At least, that's what people tell us. We've never, ever done it. Ever.

Crisis management: The social media governance measures a company has in place to manage social media risk and react in the event of a crisis. A crisis can include a wide range of possibilities, from security hacks to mis-Tweets and even external events that result in an influx in social mentions (ex. a natural disaster's impact on the Red Cross). Crisis management is vital to large organizations that seek to manage social media risk and respond effectively.

Crowdsourcing: Crowdsourcing refers to the process of leveraging your online community to assist in services, content and ideas for your business. Business examples include getting your audience to volunteer in helping translate your product or by asking your community to contribute content for your blog.

Deflection rate: The percentage of social customer service issues which are transferred to another communications channel, such as email, the phone, or live chat.

Direct Message: A direct message (DM) is a private Twitter message sent to one of your followers. Direct messages can only be sent to a Twitter user who is already following you, and you can only receive direct messages from users you follow.

Discover: A feature on the Twitter platform that has 5 functions: Tweets, Activity, Who to Follow, Find Friends and Popular accounts.

Discover (Snapchat) : A feature on Snapchat that consists of a collection of hand-picked videos provided by partners and regions.

Display Ad: Display ads are typically small visual banners that are shown on websites. Common formats include images, flash, video, and audio. They can also be text-based (for example, Google AdWords lets you build text-based display ads). In general, display ads are used for large audience-based media buys or retargeting.

Electronic discovery (e-discovery): The gathering an exchange of relevant electronic records (such as social media communications) during a legal case or government investigation. Many organizations are required to securely and consistently archive all digital communications so that they can be produced in e-discovery.

Embedded media: Digital media that is displayed within another piece of content, outside of its native setting.

Employee advocate: An employee that is willing to promote and defend a company both online and off. Like other brand advocates, passionate employees can influence the purchasing decisions of their friends, family, and other social contacts.

Employee amplification: The re-sharing of a company's social content by its employees. Organized and coordinated amplification programs leverage employee advocates at scale to greatly increase the social reach of a brand.

Empowerment model: An organizational approach to social media which emphasizes participation and initiative from all departments, teams, and employees.

Engagement: Social media engagement refers to the acts of talking to, messaging or otherwise interacting with other people on social networks. This broad term encompasses a several different types of actions on social media, from commenting on Facebook posts to participating in Twitter chats. At its simplest, social media engagement is any interaction you have with other users. For that reason, it's a core part of every social media strategy. Your followers expect you to interact with them. Being social is core to social media, after all.

Engagement rate: Engagement rate is the percentage of people who saw your social media post and actively engaged with it (clicked the link, expanded the image attached, replied, liked, favorited, shared, Retweeted, etc). Engagement rate is a valuable metric to help determine the quality and success of your social media messaging, as it provides an indicator as to how interesting or useful the message was to your audience. Twitter Analytics provides in-depth engagement rate data for every Tweet you send.

Extended circles: On Google+, your extended circles include all the people in your circles, plus all the people in your circles' circles. In other words, everyone within two degrees of separation.

F4F: Meaning "Follow for follow", this is an invitation to follow a user on Twitter or Instagram with the assurance that they will follow back.

Facebook Group: A space on Facebook where you can communicate and share content within a select group of people. There are three types of groups: public, closed, and secret. Make sure you understand the privacy settings of any group of which you're a member. You can join a maximum of 6000 Facebook groups. If that ever becomes a problem for you, we'd love to hear your story.

Facebook Network: Your Facebook Network is the web of people whom you are friends with on Facebook. The term expresses the inherent sense of connectivity users experience on the Facebook platform, where a web of updates and information are delivered to you from all the people in your life.

Facebook Notes: A Facebook feature that enables users to publish longer content in a blog format. A 2015 update brought Notes back into the social media lexicon, and allows users to add a large header image, resize pictures, and add links and hashtags within a post.

Facebook Reach: The number of unique people who have seen content from your Facebook Page. Reach is not the same as impressions, which is the total number of times your content is viewed (including multiple views from the same user). Facebook provides two different reach metrics: total reach and post reach.

Facebook Fans: The people who like your Facebook Page.

Favourite: An indication that someone likes your Tweet, given by clicking the star icon.

Feed: The social media data format that provides users with a steady stream of updates and information.

Filter: A photographic effect that can be applied to enhance images on social media, such as offering a vintage look, black and white, sepia, altering saturation levels, or countless other visual modifications. The most popular use is on Instagram, where users can currently choose from over 20 different filters. The popularity of filters has resulted in the hashtag #nofilter being applied to photos where no photographic affect has been applied. Snapchat users can also apply filters to their Snaps, to add coloured effects, the current time, weather, speed, or Geofilters, when available.

First response time: A measurement how long it takes a company to give its first response to a customer's comment or inquiry on social media. This can be a key performance indicator for social customer service, because even if the issue is not resolved immediately, a quick first response demonstrates that the company is listening and willing to help.

Follower: A Twitter user who has subscribed to your Twitter account so they can receive your Tweets in their Home feed. If you want to send them a direct message, you need to follow them back.

Followers to following ratio: The ratio of your social media followers to those you are following. In an ideal world, you have more followers than users you are following.

Following: The number of accounts that a Twitter handle is following.

Follows: The number of accounts that are following a Twitter handle.

Forum: An online site, also known as a message board, where people can hold discussions

Foursquare: A location-based discovery service that helps people find local places and experiences that are relevant to their interests and tastes. Foursquare pioneered the "check-in" back in 2009, putting the idea of real-time location sharing on the map. The company has since launched a separate app called Swarm that is exclusively dedicated to checking in and keeping up with your friends' locations.

Friend: A person that you connect with on Facebook or another social network. Unlike a fan or follower, a friend is a two-way connection; both you and your friend have to endorse the relationship.

Friend Emojis: On Snapchat, the "Friend Emojis" reflect a user's relationship with another user. For example, the sunglass-wearing cool guy emoji means that the Snapchatters share a best friend on the app.

Friendship page: Facebook Friendship pages show the story of a friendship between two people connected on Facebook. They display a variety of content, including photos that both people are tagged in, public messages that they have exchanged, and their mutual friends and interests.

Geofilter: Special overlays for Snapchat users that reflect the geographic location they are in. Geofilters have also been created by branded partners as well as Snapchat users themselves

Geolocation, **geotagging**: The practice of tagging a photo, video, or message with a specific location. The ubiquity of GPS-enabled smartphones has made geotagging a core aspect of social media.

Geotargetting: A feature on many social media platforms that allows users to share their content with geographically defined audiences. Instead of sending a generic message for the whole world to see, you can refine the messaging and language of your content to better connect with people in specific cities, countries, and regions. You can also filter your audience by language.

GIF: Gif (pronounced jif, apparently) is the acronym for Graphics Interchange Format, which refers to a file format that supports both static and animated images. Gifs rose to popularity as they allow you to essentially present a short video clip in a far more condensed image format, leading to such joyous gifs as the following.

Handle: Handle is another way of saying your account name. Hootsuite's Twitter handle is @Hootsuite, for example. It's important that you try and maintain consistent handles on all of your social network profiles, since people who follow you on Twitter might want to find you on Instagram or Pinterest. A consistent handle helps with discoverability.

Hashtag: The hashtag is a word or phrase preceded by the "#" sign. #Hashtags are a simple way to mark the topic (or topics) of social media messages and make them discoverable to people with shared interests. On most social networks, clicking a hashtag will reveal all the public and recently published messages that also contain that hashtag. Hashtags first emerged on Twitter as a user-created phenomenon and are now used on almost **every** other social media platform, including Facebook, Google+, Instagram, Vine and Pinterest.

Header image: A header image, not to be confused with a profile photo, is the banner image at the top of a user's Twitter profile.

Hearts: A feature of the Periscope app that measure popularity and act as virtual thumbs up and appreciation of the broadcaster.

Home: Often the first page you see when you sign into your social media account, it contains a constantly updating timeline or feed of the user activity and news stories in your network.

Impressions: The number of times an ad, sponsored update, or promoted post is displayed.

Inbound marketing: Inbound is about creating and sharing content with the world. By creating content specifically designed to appeal to your dream customers, inbound attracts qualified prospects to your business and keeps them coming back for more.

Inbound volume: The total number of incoming messages addressed to an organization or a specific social media account within a given time span.

Influencer: A social media user who can reach a significant audience and drive awareness about a trend, topic, company, or product. From a marketer's perspective, the ideal influencer is also a passionate brand advocate. However, influencers often try to remain impartial toward brands in order to maintain credibility with their hard-earned audiences. Successful influencer strategies usually involve the coordination of Marketing, Customer Service, and Public Relations teams.

Instagram: A free online photo sharing app that allows for the addition of several filters, editing, and sharing options.

Instagram Direct: Allows for the sending of threaded messages with one or more other Instagram users. Instagram Direct can also be used to send images or video viewed in the Feed privately between users.

Instagram Home Page: The feed where a user will see an accumulation of the content posted by users they are following.

Kik: A mobile messaging app. Kik allows users to connect with others using a username rather than a cell phone number, to send text, video, images, sketches, and more through their Wifi or data connection. It also boasts an in-app web browser, so users can check out links and other social media accounts all without leaving the app, making it especially appealing for users as well as the companies trying to reach them.

Klout Score: A numerical rating of online social influence, ranging from 1 to 100. Klout rates a social media user based on the size of their social networks and how other users interact with their content. The company defines influence as "the ability to drive action" and measures hundreds of signals from Twitter, Facebook, Google+, LinkedIn, Instagram, Wikipedia, and its own network. You can increase your Klout score by connecting multiple platforms to your Klout profile.

Like: Derived from the dictionary-approved meaning (children like ice cream, duh), to like something on social media is a Facebook invention that's evolved into an understood expression of support for content. Along with shares, comments, and favorites, likes can be tracked as proof of engagement. Facebook's algorithm adjusts individual content feeds based on like patterns, making for interesting results when consciously meddled with.

Like-baiting: The practice of explicitly requesting likes (or shares and comments) to increase engagement on Facebook. Facebook has adjusted its algorithm to reduce the visibility of like-baiting posts in users' news feeds.

LinkedIn endorsement: A LinkedIn member's recognition of another person's skill, such as Content Marketing, Web Programming, or Rocket Science (we're still waiting on Endorsements for that last one). Endorsements boost your credibility on LinkedIn by indicating that you actually have the skills you say you have. You can only endorse the skills of your first-degree connections.

LinkedIn Influencer: A top industry leader or other high profile professional who has been invited to publish on LinkedIn. LinkedIn Influencers include Bill Gates, Richard Branson, and Hootsuite CEO Ryan Holmes. Although every LinkedIn user can use the social network as a publishing platform, the LinkedIn Influencer program is invitation-only.

LinkedIn recommendation: A written compliment from one of your connections that you can display on your LinkedIn profile to impress hiring managers, potential customers, and that really interesting person you met at TEDxToledo. There's no limit to how many recommendations you can give or request, but remember that the most authentic recommendations come from people that you've actually worked with. If you receive a lackluster recommendation that you would rather not display, then you can easily hide it from your profile. You're also able to edit, remove, or hide your recommendation from another LinkedIn member's profile at any time, like when a co-worker steals your sandwich from the office fridge.

List: A curated set of Twitter accounts that that you can group together in their own timeline. Lists are a convenient way to organize other Twitter users, whether you follow them or not. When you create a Twitter list, you can choose to make it public or private. Private lists are good for cataloguing sales prospects and sworn enemies, while public lists are available for anyone to subscribe to. They're an effective method of content curation and a great way to show that you know who's who in a particular field or cultural niche.

Live Stories: Live Stories are a curated stream of user submitted Snaps from various locations and events. Users who have their location services on at the same event location will be given the option to contribute Snaps to the Live Story. The end result is a Story told from a community perspective with lots of different points view.

Live Tweet: To post comments and participate in Twitter conversations while an event or situation is happening.

Marketing automation: A combination of tactics and technology platforms which enable businesses to automatically deliver personalized content to prospects and customers through a variety of online channels, such as social media, email, and websites. Basically, it's giving people the information that they need, when they need it, and doing it consistently at scale. That's why the "automation" part is so important. In an ideal system, marketers set up some clever logic for categorizing and "scoring" potential customers, as well as the processes for nurturing them with timely content. Then they put their feet up and relax as the technology takes over, moving leads down the marketing funnel towards a purchase.

Meerkat: A live-streaming video app connected to Twitter that allows users to broadcast live video from their smartphone. Meerkat will tweet out links to the user's content automatically to their followers.

Meerkatted/Meerkatting: The process of sending a broadcast through Meerkat.

Meme: An idea, fashion, or behaviour that is transmitted from person to person through media, speech, gestures, and other forms of communication. The term was conceived by evolutionary biologist Richard Dawkins in the 1970s, but it has exploded into greater relevance in the past decade with the rise of online culture. If you've spent more than five seconds on the internet, you've probably encountered a meme; whether it was a classic like All Your Base or Dancing Baby, or a modern masterpiece like Doge or Grumpy Cat, you likely felt compelled to share it, upvote it, or remix it.

Mention: The act of tagging another user's handle or account name in a social media message. Mentions typically trigger a notification for that user and are a key part of what makes social media "social". When properly formatted (for example, as an @mention on Twitter or +mention on Google+), a mention also allows your audience to click through to the mentioned users' bio or profile.

Messenger: The app that allows Facebook users to message one another instantly through a smartphone. Updates to the app allowed for the ability to find their friends more easily, the possibility of reaching additional users, and increased privacy settings.

Microblogging: Publishing smaller, frequent quantities of content to a microblog platform such as Twitter or Tumblr.

Multi-channel attribution: When people buy products, they rarely complete a purchase in one step. For example, they might hear about a brand from a Tweet, later see a banner ad for the product, and then perform a Google search, and then, many days later, finally visit the website to purchase. Multi-channel attribution attempts to give relative value to each of these channels, treating each channel as contributing and moving the customer towards purchase. This is practically done by using a web analytics program (such as Google Analytics). The goal is to better understand how your customer discovers, evaluates, and purchases your products or services and to develop a holistic understanding of the different influence of marketing channels such as social media, organic search, paid media, and email marketing.

Mute: There are always a handful of people on Twitter that you feel obligated to follow because you know that if you unfollowed them, they'd take it completely the wrong way. Perhaps it's your boss, your overly-dramatic friend, or your #mom who #loves #talking (it's not you mom, it's your 25 Tweets per day). Mute is a feature available on Twitter that allows you to remove select people from your feed without them ever knowing. They still see that you follow them, and they can still favourite, retweet, and reply to you—you just don't see any of their activity in your timeline. Muting a user is not the same as blocking them.

Mutual: Any social media user that you follow, who also follows you back.

Net Promoter Score: A customer loyalty metric that is based on the following question: "On a scale of 0 to 10, how likely is it that you would recommend our company, product, or service to a friend or colleague?" People who respond with a 9 or 10 are designated as "promoters"; a 7 or 8 as "passives"; and a 6 or lower as "detractors". The percentage of customers that are detractors is then subtracted from the percentage that are promoters to arrive at the company's NPS (passives are ignored, because that's their lot in life). Scores range from +100 to -100, but an actual NPS at either of those extremes would cause heart attacks in the board room of a real-world business.

Newsjacking: The act of referencing or involving yourself in a news story or event in order to connect with the audience following or discussing that story. Injecting your own story into a news story has become much easier with social media, as users can simply use hashtags or search terms to attach their content to breaking news. That being said, newsjacking should only be done if there is a very close tie between your product or idea and the story. Simply attaching a news hashtag to content that is completely unrelated is not a best practice, and will likely draw the ire of your followers.

Notification: A message or update sharing new social media activity. For example, if somebody Likes one of your Instagram photos you can receive a notification on your phone that lets you know.

Organic Reach: Describes the number of unique people who view your content without paid promotion. The distinction between organic and paid reach is, of course, that the former is free. People come across this content through the feeds, streams, posts, pages of their contacts—usually friends, family, colleagues, trusted brands, and cats/dogs.

ow.ly: Ow.ly is a URL shortener that converts a regular URL into a more condensed format.

Paid Reach: Similar to organic reach, this refers to the number of individuals viewing your published paid content—ads, sponsored stories, promotional material. For example, paid Facebook ads are labeled as Sponsored content, while Twitter's are identified as Promoted Tweets. Paid reach generally has a much larger network than organic reach so messages are potentially read by people outside of a specific contact list. You can also target specific messaging to groups based on commonalities like location and shared interests.

Paid Replay: Introduced to Snapchat in September 2015, paid replays allow users the option to pay 99 cents to replay three Snaps of their choosing. This feature marked Snapchat's first in-app purchasing option.

Paid social media: Paid social media refers to the use of social media for ad placement. The most common types of paid social media are native advertisements such as Facebook Ads, Twitter Promoted Tweets, LinkedIn Sponsored Updates, and YouTube sponsored videos. Other forms of paid social media include traditional display ads on social networks and Twitter Promoted Accounts.

Permalink: The URL address of an individual piece of content. Permalinks are useful because they allow you to reference a specific Tweet, update, or blog post instead of the feed or timeline in which you found it. You can quickly find an item's permalink by clicking on its timestamp.

Phishing: An attempt to fraudulently acquire sensitive information such as usernames, passwords, and credit card information (and often, indirectly, money) by authentic-looking electronic communication, usually email. Also a method of spreading electronic viruses by exploiting security weaknesses. To learn more, please enter your Gmail password.

Pinned Tweet: A Tweet that has been pinned to the top a Twitter profile page. Pinning a Tweet is a great way to feature an important announcement or one of your greatest hits. Everyone who views your profile page will see the Tweet; however, pinning a Tweet will not have an effect on its visibility in anyone else's timeline. To increase your reach and impressions, consider Promoted Tweets.

Pins: Favourite links stored on Pinterest are called Pins. Each Pin is made up of a picture and a description given by the user; when clicked, Pins direct users to the image source page. Pins can be liked or repinned by other users. Users can also organize Pins by theme or event into visual collections called Pinboards.

Pinterest: Pinterest is a visual organizer for saving and sharing links to webpages and other media that you like—otherwise known as Pins. Pins are represented by a picture and a description of your choosing. They can be organized into collections called Pinboards. Pinterest users can share their Pins with others, or Repin pictures they liked from other users. Think of Pinterest as a virtual scrapbook, or a bookmarks page with pictures. Common uses include event planning, food blogging, and fashion blogging.

Pinboard: A collection of Pins on Pinterest. A Pinboard can be organized by any theme of your choosing, and it can either be private or public. Some examples of Pinboards: 50 Alternative Uses for Mason Jars, Short Hairstyles, My Dream Wedding, Easy Appetizers.

Podcast: A type of audio file available through the Internet, typically produced as a series that listeners subscribe to.

Post: A Facebook status update, or an item on a blog or forum.

Private: The state of a social media account such as Instagram or Twitter that protects content from the public. Users must request to follow private accounts to see the content.

Promoted Accounts: Announced in 2010, Promoted Accounts are a Twitter Ads feature that invites targeted users to follow a Twitter Handle. This function is used to quickly grow a Twitter handle's following. Promoted accounts appear in the Home timeline, the Discover tab and profile pages.

Promoted Trends: Promoted Trends are a Twitter Ads feature that allows an advertiser to promote time-, context- and event-sensitive trends to the top of the Trends list on Twitter. They are clearly marked as "Promoted."

Promoted Tweets: Promoted Tweets are native advertisements targeted to a specific audience available through Twitter Ads. They look almost identical to organic Tweets in users' timelines but include a small "Promoted" marker. Promoted Tweets are used by advertisers to reach an expanded audience.

Protected account: A private Twitter account. Only approved followers can view Tweets and photos from a protected account or access its complete profile. Tweets from protected accounts cannot be retweeted, even by approved followers.

Publishing approval process: A business procedure for ensuring that outbound social media messages are error-free, on-time, and on-brand. Many organizations now protect their social media accounts by managing them through a social relationship platform (SRP), which provide a safe environment for teams to collaborate on content before publishing

Quote Tweet: A way to retweet where a user can include their own comments along with the tweet.

Reach: Reach is a data metric that determines the potential size of audience any given message could reach. It does not mean that that entire audience will see your social media post, but rather tells you the maximum amount of people your post could potentially reach. Reach is determined by a fairly complex calculation, that includes # of followers, shares and impressions as well as net follower increase over time. Reach should not be confused with Impressions or Engagement.

Reddit: reddit is a popular website and social networking site on which content submitted or shared by users is then voted on by other visitors. Each piece of content, from videos to text posts, can be either upvoted (positive) or downvoted (negative) by users. The most upvoted and commented on posts appear higher up on the website's main page, as well as on its many topic-focused sections called subreddits.

Regram: The act of reposting another Instagram users image or video.

Retargeting: Retargeting is an online advertising technique that involves targeting web visitors who expressed an interest in your products or services. This is accomplished by placing a small tracking tag on your website. Once visitors come to your website, you can then target them as they visit other websites including Facebook, news sites, blogs, or other online media. The rationale is that these visitors are your best chance to make a sale so instead of advertising to strangers, you spend your budget on prospects who have already visited your website. Other advanced uses include targeting custom audience segments (using data you've collected from other sources such as a CRM system or Facebook), offering shoppers who abandoned your check-out a special deal to come back, and building lists of valuable prospects to target (such as visitors who viewed 25+ blog posts and visited specific product pages).

Repin: On Pinterest, if you find a Pin on another user's Pinboard that you like, you can save it to your board by Repinning it. To do that, hover your cursor over the image, and select 'Repin.' Then, you can either add the pin to an existing Pinboard collection, or start a new one. You have the option of using the existing description for the Pin, or come up with your own. If you like the Pin, but don't want it to appear on your Pinterest page, you can Like it instead of Repinning it.

Reply: A response to someone's Tweet that begins with their @username. Unlike Direct Messages, replies are public. When you click the reply button next to a Tweet, your ensuing conversation will be viewable in the public area of your profile.

Response rate: A engagement metric to assess how much you are interacting with your social audience. To calculate your response rate, take the number of mentions that you have replied to in a given time period and divide it by the total number of mentions you have received (excluding retweets).

Response volume: The total number of outbound messages that an organization, team, or specific social media account delivers in response to customer service issues within a given time period.

Return on relationship (ROR): A measurement of the value gained by a person or business from developing a relationship. Measuring ROR isn't easy; it involves not only analyzing connection growth, but also understanding the impact your customers' voices have on your brand and reputation. This includes sentiment analysis, as well as engagement metrics for your content, like organic sharing rates. ROR is an alternative (or complementary) metric to social media ROI.

Retweet: A Tweet that is re-shared to the followers of another user's Twitter account. There are two kinds of Retweet: the classic "manual" Retweet and the now-standard "web Retweet". In a manual Retweet, you simply type "RT" before the @username and content of somebody else's Tweet. This used to be the only way you could retweet, and it's the still only way to add your own comment to a Tweet when you pass it along. A "web Retweet" is what happens when you click the official Retweet button: the full Tweet appears in your timeline in its original form, complete with the author's name and avatar. Since a web Retweet allows your followers to easily retweet or favourite the original Tweet, it's generally considered good etiquette to use this method unless you have something valuable to add through a manual RT.

RSS: RSS (Rich Site Summary) is a format for syndicating web content. Bloggers, news publishers, and other content creators use RSS feeds to effectively broadcast content (or content summaries) to audiences. Readers can subscribe to RSS feeds without providing personal information, and then automatically receive updates through a news reader or aggregator.

Scale: The degree to which an organization can effectively use social media across multiple departments and geographies. "Scaling up social media" is an effort to coordinate social listening, engagement, and analytics among multiple groups while eliminating redundancy, confusion, and waste.

Scheduling: Planning social media updates and content ahead of time, using a social relationship platform (SRP) or another publishing tool. Scheduling allows social media practitioners to save time in their daily workflow by drafting several messages at once, often as part of a publishing approval process. It also enables them to reach audiences in different time zones and organize extended marketing campaigns.

Scope: A live broadcast session created through Periscope.

Scoper: A nickname for a Periscope user.

Screenshot: When a photo is taken of phone screen activity. For Snapchat users, since the app highlights the temporary nature of messages sent, the ability to take a screenshot by either party has proven controversial. While Snapchat notifies the user whose photo or video was screenshotted, there is currently no proactive way to prevent this from happening.

Selfie: A self-portrait photograph, usually taken with a smartphone and shared on social media sites.

Sentiment analysis: An attempt to understand how an audience feels about a brand, company, or product based on data collected from social media. It typically involves the use of natural language processing or another computational method to identify the attitude contained in a social media message. Different analytics platforms classify sentiment in a variety of ways; for example, some use "polar" classification (positive or negative sentiment), while others sort messages by emotion or tone (Contentment/Gratitude, Fear/Uneasiness, etc).

SEO: Search engine optimization is the practice of increasing the "organic" visibility of a web page in a search engine, such as Google. Although businesses can pay to promote their websites on search engine results pages (Search Engine Marketing, or SEM), SEO refers to "free" tactics that enhance the search ranking of a page.

Share: When content is reposted on a social media site through another user's channel.

Share of Voice: Share of voice is a metric for understanding how many social media mentions a particular brand is receiving in relation to its competition. Usually measured as a percentage of total mentions within an industry or among a defined group of competitors.

SlideShare: A popular social platform for sharing presentations and other business-oriented content. SlideShare makes it easy to embed content on websites and share it to other social networks, such as Facebook, Twitter, and LinkedIn, which has owned the platform since 2012.

SMS: SMS is the text messaging service component of phone, web, or mobile communication systems. For marketing purposes, it is often used by brands to promote text-based offers to consumers, remind about bills (common for telecommunication companies), or send location-based notifications (such as a promo code when a consumer walks by a restaurant).

Snapcash: Snapcash, created in partnership with Square, is a fast and easy way for Snapchatters to exchange money within the Chat feature. Once Snapchat users have linked their debit card in the app, they can send Snapcash to anyone in their contact list who is eligible to receive Snapcash.

Snapchat: Photo and video messaging app created in September 2011 that allows users to take photos and videos and add text, drawings, or emojis before sending to recipients. One of the distinguishing features is that the individual messages only last up to 10 seconds before they disappear forever and are erased from the company's servers. In 2013, the Story feature was added, which allows users to post a replayable Snap for up to 24 hours in the "Our Story" section.

Snapchat Lenses: Introduced in September 2015, Lenses allow users to add animated masks to their Snapchat selfies. To use Lenses, the user must have the camera in selfie mode and then press on their own face in the screen.

Snapchat Trophies: Introduced in September 2015, a feature that rewards users with emoji trophies after completing Snapchat challenges and activities.

Snapcode: A unique scannable QR code provided to each Snapchat user. Users can point their phone's camera at a friend's Snapcode, whether on a phone or a vector version of the code, to automatically add the other person as a Snapchat contact.

SnapKidz: A version of Snapchat for those 13 years of age and under that includes an interface for taking snaps, drawing and editing them, but restricts the addition of friends or sending messages.

Snapstreak: What happens when two Snapchat users send Snaps to each other for a consecutive number of days. This will be reflected next to the users' names with a fire emoji and a number representing how many days the Snapstreak has lasted.

Snap Stories: Stories string Snaps together to create a narrative that lasts for 24 hours. To create a Story, a user chooses to add their Snaps to their Story. Depending on their privacy settings, the photos and videos added to a Story can be viewed by either all Snapchatters, just the user's friends, or a customized group.

Social customer service: The practice of identifying and resolving customer service issues on social media. Social customer service should be coordinated internally across departments so that an organization can respond rapidly to any customer inquiry on any channel. The most effective social customer service is proactive: in addition to fielding inbound messages, the organization monitors social media for keywords that could indicate customer service issues. The organization then reaches out to resolve potential issues before they escalate, creating greater customer satisfaction and loyalty.

Social media listening: The process of finding and assessing what is being said about a company, topic, brand, or person on social media channels.

Social media management: Technology and business processes for securely managing social media accounts, engaging audiences, and measuring the business results of social media activities. Effective social media management is absolutely vital to conducting business on social media. It enables an organization to keep track of all of its social media accounts and provide various teams and individuals with the appropriate levels of access to these assets. When implemented at scale across departments and regions, coordinated social media management practices allow everyone within the organization to collaborate and achieve measurable outcomes on social media.

Social media marketing: The use of social media by marketers to increase brand awareness, identify key audiences, generate leads, and build meaningful relationships with customers. Social media marketing should be well coordinated with social customer service, community management, and social selling activities to create seamless relationships with customers across their life cycle. Of course, social media is just one channel in the overall marketing mix; the most effective social media marketing programs are also integrated into multi-channel strategies.

Social media monitoring: Listening and responding to brand and keyword mentions on social media. Social media monitoring is crucial to social customer service, social selling, social media marketing, and community management.

Social media ROI: A measurement of the effectiveness of an organization's investment in social media. Like any metric for "return on investment", social media ROI is calculated by dividing the total benefits of an investment by the sum of its costs. Therefore, it is completely dependent on which costs and benefits are factored into the calculation. To get meaningful value from an ROI calculation, the metric should be fully aligned with the business objectives behind a social media activity. Social media should also be properly integrated with web analytics in order to assess its value within a multi-channel attribution model.

Social Relationship Platform (SRP): Social relationship platforms are secure and scalable technologies that allow businesses to manage social media communications of any kind across departments and devices. That's a mouthful, but, put simply, these tools put everything you need for social media into one place, making it easier to manage. Social relationship platforms are used for monitoring, posting and tracking social media, and help manage everything from customer service to lead generation. Hootsuite is a social relationship platform.

Social selling: The use of social media by sales professionals to increase productivity and generate revenue. Sellers can effectively leverage social media to enhance their reputations, expand their interpersonal networks, and attract new prospects. They can also identify buyers by listening and engaging in the online spaces where potentials customers are conducting research and asking for advice.

SoLoMo: SoLoMo is the combination of three of biggest trends among consumers: using socialmedia (So); location-based relevance in both search intent and the use of the internet to find local products and services (Lo); and mobile adoption in which consumers tend to prefer to access apps and the internet through smartphones rather than desktops or tablets (Mo).

Spam: Unnecessary and repetitive social media content that clogs up the feeds of social media users. In other words, the bane of your existence. The term has been used to refer to junk messages since the earliest days of the Internet. Its meaning originates from a 1970 Monty Python skit in which the word "spam" is spoken repeatedly to the point of ludicrousness. The skit culminates in a group of Vikings singing a timeless paean to everyone's favourite canned meat product.

Subreddit: A subreddit is a smaller forum within the social website reddit that is dedicated to a specific topic or theme. These are defined by the symbol "/r/" which precedes the unique reddit url of that particular subreddit. There are large subreddits like /r/politics or /r/videos, but they can be as specific as /r/learnuselesstalents ore /r/contagiouslaughter. There are thousands upon thousands of subreddits, and the reddit homepage is composed of the most popular content from every subreddit combined. You can also customize your own reddit homepage by subscribing to your favorite subreddits.

Subtweet: The stealthy art of disparaging someone in a Tweet without @mentioning their Twitter handle. You're talking about them behind their back, but doing it publicly. A paradox, really.

Tag: A keyword added to a social media post with the original purpose of categorizing related content. A tag can also refer to the act of tagging someone in a post, which creates a link to their social media profile and associates them with the content.

Thread: A strand of messages which represent a conversation or part of a conversation. Threads are essential to most forms of online communication, including social media, web forums, and email. Without them, it is incredibly difficult to put messages into context or keep track of ongoing conversations. Anyone who used email before Gmail revolutionized the medium with threaded conversations can attest to that. Threads begin with an initial message and then continue as a series of replies or comments.

Throwback Thursday (#tbt): A weekly social media tradition in which people make Instagram a little less instant. Although Throwback Thursday wasn't invented on Instagram, the term has been widely popularized by the platform. Essentially, every Thursday users post either a really old photograph of themselves (as a child, in high school, etc) or a saved photo they took more recently but want to share because it's just that good. The next time you go camping and take lots of amazing photos, hold off on spamming your followers with all of them at once. Just save them for later and #tbt every Thursday to your heart's content.

Timestamp: The date and time that a message is posted to a social network, usually visible below the headline or username. Clicking on a timestamp will usually bring you to the content's permalink.

Top Tweets: The most popular and engaging Tweets for a given search query, as determined by a Twitter algorithm. Searches on Twitter.com return Top Tweets by default, but you can toggle to "All" results to see the full list of Tweets that match your search.

Trend: A topic or hashtag that is popular on social media at a given moment. Trends are highlighted by social networks such as Twitter and Facebook to encourage discussion and engagement among their users. The "trending" concept was first popularized by Twitter and has since been adopted by Facebook, Google+, and other networks. The trends that you see on Twitter and Facebook are personalized for you, based on your location as well as who you follow or what pages you like.

Trendjacking: When a brand or individual tries to benefit from a social media trend by injecting their own irrelevant content into the conversation. Attempts to take over the conversation with

Triage: The process of prioritizing, assigning, and responding to inbound social media messages. The term is borrowed from emergency medicine, where it is crucial to assess the relative urgency of various cases in order to prioritize care. In a social media triage process, incoming messages are filtered, assigned to the right people, evaluated for urgency, and possibly escalated so that the organization can provide the appropriate response (either online, offline, or both).

Troll: A social media user who makes a deliberately offensive or annoying postings with the sole aim of provoking another user or group of users.

Tweet: A Twitter message. Tweets can contain up to 140 characters of text, as well as photos, videos, and other forms of media. They are public by default and will show up in Twitter timelines and searches unless they are sent from Protected Accounts or as Direct Messages. Tweets can also be embedded in webpages.

Twitter: A social network and media platform that enables users to publish 140-character messages along with photos, videos, and other content. Twitter is famous for its real-time and emergent discussions on breaking news stories and trends.

Twitterati: Keen and frequent users of Twitter who have high numbers of followers and actively participate on daily basis.

Twitter canoe: A Twitter conversation that has picked up too many usernames for an actual conversation to take place. The thread might begin as a dialogue between two people before spiralling out of control as more and more Twitter users insinuate themselves into the conversation with "Reply all" messages. Like an overloaded canoe, the thread sinks once too many people have hopped in.

Twitter Card: A media-rich Tweet that includes an embedded video, photo gallery, page summary, or other interactive element beyond the text of the message. Twitter Cards help your Tweets stand out and encourage your followers to engage with your content directly from their timelines. They are automatically attached to a Tweet whenever you (or any other user) tweets a link to a webpage that is marked up with some simple HTML code

Unfollow: The action of unsubscribing from another Twitter user's account.

Unfriending: Removing someone from a list of social media contacts.

URL: The location of a page or other resource on the World Wide Web.

URL shortener: A tool that condenses a URL into a shorter (and more social media friendly) format, known as a short link. Users who click on a short link are redirected to the original URL. URL shorteners can also provide link tracking capabilities, which allow businesses to measure click-throughs from social media and attribute website conversions to individual social messages. Popular URL shorteners include bit.ly and Hootsuite's ow.ly.

User-generated content (UGC): Media that has been created and published online by the users of a social or collaboration platform, typically for non-commercial purposes. User-generated content is one of the defining characteristics of social media. It is often produced collaboratively and in real-time by multiple users. Many companies have enthusiastically embraced and encouraged user-generated content as a means of increasing brand awareness and customer loyalty. Instagram contests, Vine video contests, and other UGC-based social campaigns allow businesses to tap into the creative energies of their customers and use their contributions to fuel marketing strategies.

Vanity URL: A vanity URL is a web address that is branded for marketing purposes. They are a custom branded URL that replaces common URL shortener formats with something that has your branding or is related to the content. Instead of showing up as ow.ly or a bit.ly, it could show up looking like Time Inc.'s vanity URL "ti.me".

Verified: Social media account is verified authentic, at the discretion of the social media provider. This is usually reserved for brands and public figures as a way of preventing fraud and protecting the integrity of the person or company behind the account.

Views: In reference to Snapchat, these are users who have looked at your Snap Story. To see who has viewed their story, users simply need to click the eye symbol next to their Story.

Vlogger: Someone who creates and broadcasts video blogs.

Who to Follow: Who to Follow is a feature in the left hand sidebar of your Twitter homepage that helps users find relevant accounts to follow. The accounts that populate in the Who to Follow section are suggested because they have similar interests, professions or geographic proximity to you. You can click follow them immediately or view their profile for more information.

Word cloud: Word clouds, also known as tag clouds or weighted lists, are a visual representation of text, where the frequency of a word determines its size in the word cloud. This is a great tool for identifying words that are repeated or most common.