



Socially Exceptional: How Top Marketers Shine on Social Media

Key Data and Findings from the Fourth Annual “State of Marketing” Research



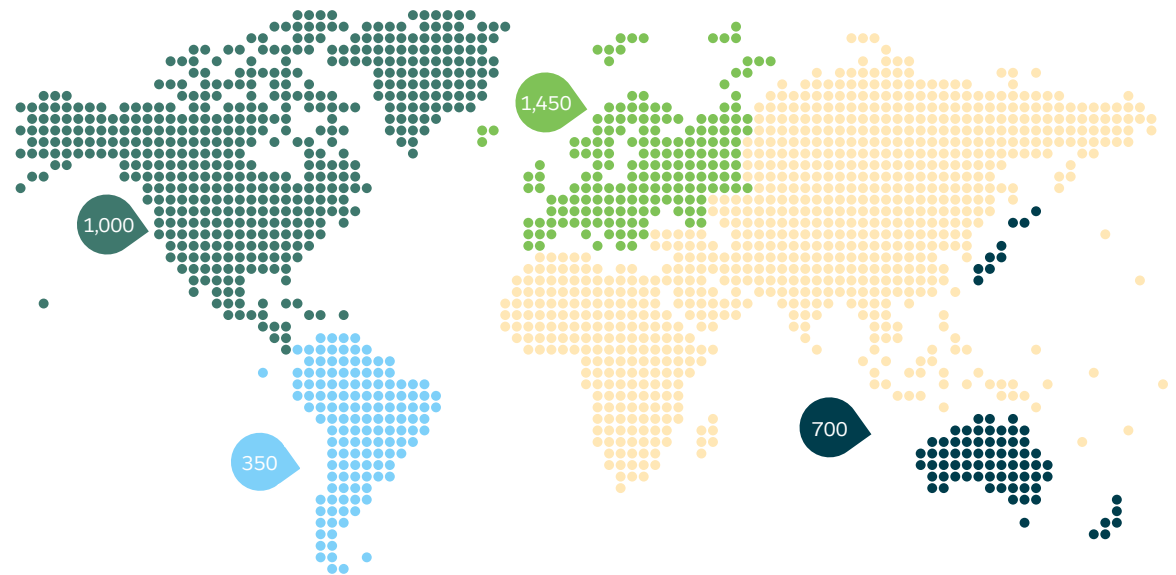
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About This Report

This year, Salesforce's fourth annual "State of Marketing" research took a deep look into not just "social marketing" as a stand-alone marketing specialization, but how social marketers work together with people across their entire business, including the rest of marketing, sales, and customer service. In this e-book (as in the research), high-performing marketing leaders are defined as those who are extremely satisfied with the current outcomes realized as a direct result of their company's marketing investment, as well as their overall marketing performance compared to their competitors. [See page 9 for detailed performance information.](#)

READ THE FULL PRIMARY REPORT



 Salesforce Research surveyed 3,500 marketing leaders worldwide in our fourth annual "State of Marketing" report.

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Marketers Are Waging Fierce Battles Over Customer Service

Today, 86% of high performers agree or strongly agree that they compete on the basis of customer experience, twice as many as underperformers. Customer experience is central to their go-to-market strategy, in how they aim to win new customers, and in how they're keeping current customers happy.

64% of marketers say they have become more focused on providing customers with a consistent experience across every channel (including in-store, online, email, mobile, social, sales, and service) as a result of customer expectations over the past 12-18 months.

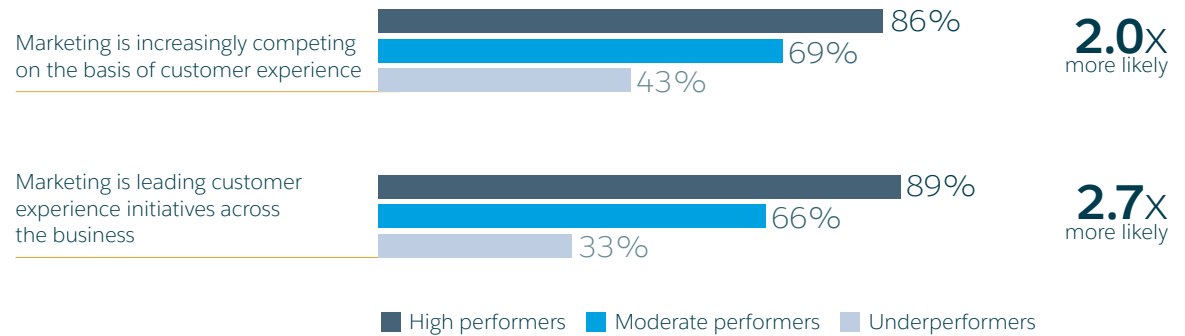
This means a majority of marketers today know this is important, but many still struggle with how to make it work.

Top Marketers Compete Based on Customer Experience

High-performing marketers are more likely to compete based on customer experience and to lead those efforts across their company.

Percentage of Marketing Leaders Who Strongly Agree or Agree with the Following Statements

High Performers vs. Underperformers



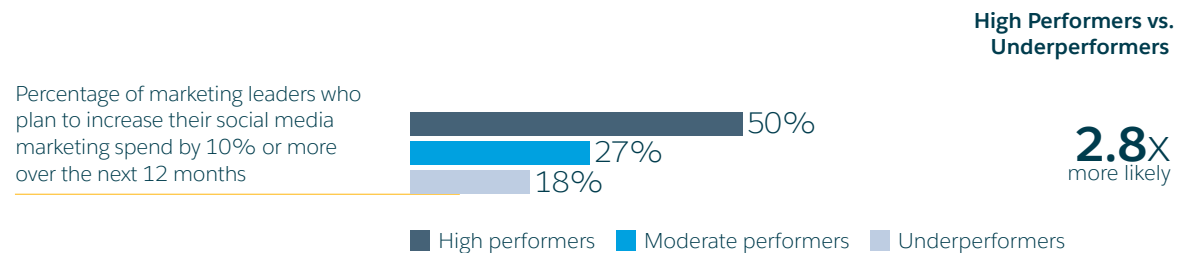
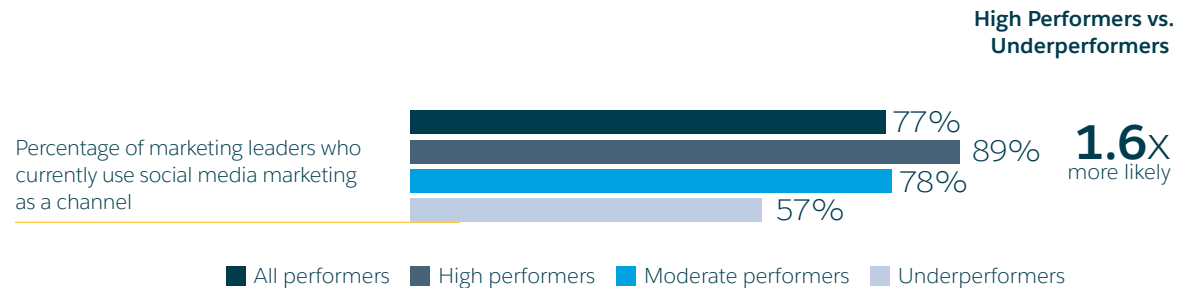
Social is a key part of many customer relationships. A typical customer journey may begin with a brand's Facebook post, followed by marketing emails, an ecommerce purchase, and a customer service issue resolved in Twitter.

77% of all marketers (including 89% of high performers) say their organization uses social media marketing.

A social marketing strategy is no longer simply nice to have – it's required for all brands. According to our "State of the Connected Customer" report, over half (52%) of all consumers agree or strongly agree that social media has given them more power as a consumer, and 55% of Millennials say they use social media to voice opinions about brands and products, and that brands need to be there to listen to their feedback and engage. Moreover, customers don't just drive their own buying journeys but increasingly have the power to influence those of their peers.

Half of all high-performing marketers expect to increase their budget on social media marketing substantially (by 10% or more) within the next 12 months. That's 2.8 times higher than underperforming marketers (only 18% of whom plan to significantly increase social marketing spending).

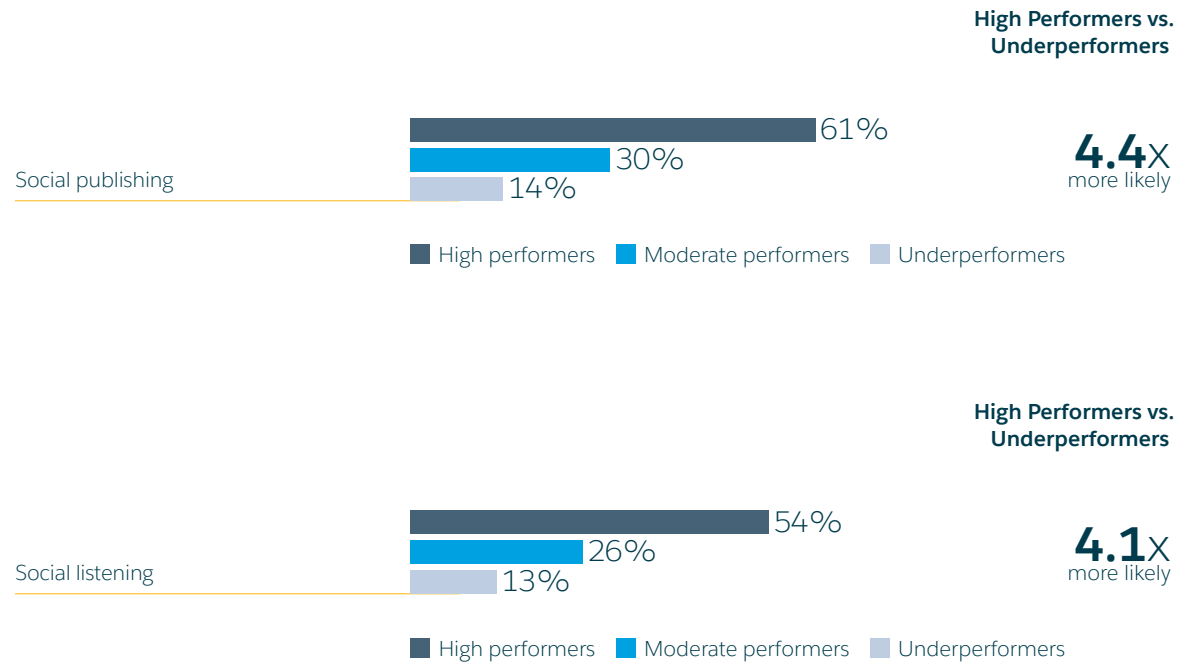
A Vast Majority of Marketers use Social Media Marketing



This increased investment isn't for only one social tool or platform; 61% of high performers state that they use social publishing tools extensively, and 54% say they use social listening tools extensively – 4.4 times and 4.1 times higher than underperformers, respectively.

Today's top marketers go even further. They know that having multiple vendors, each selling one piece or component of social media management solutions, is no longer sufficient. Integrated platforms are necessary to deliver connected, cross-channel experiences to customers. Leveraging customer data from different sources – which can include multiple social channels and platforms – is one of the top three challenges for marketing leaders today, according to this research.

Percentage of Marketing Leaders Who Extensively Use the Following Tools



Social Media Marketing Must Coordinate with Other Channels

Marketing leaders need to figure out how to unify their view of the customer, so it is not enough to implement social marketing on its own. Marketers must integrate it with other channels including cross-channel journeys and customer service.

Fortunately, just 18% of all marketers say there's no coordination between their social media marketing and other channels. However, this is still an evolving space, and the level of sophistication in coordinating those channels has plenty of room for improvement.

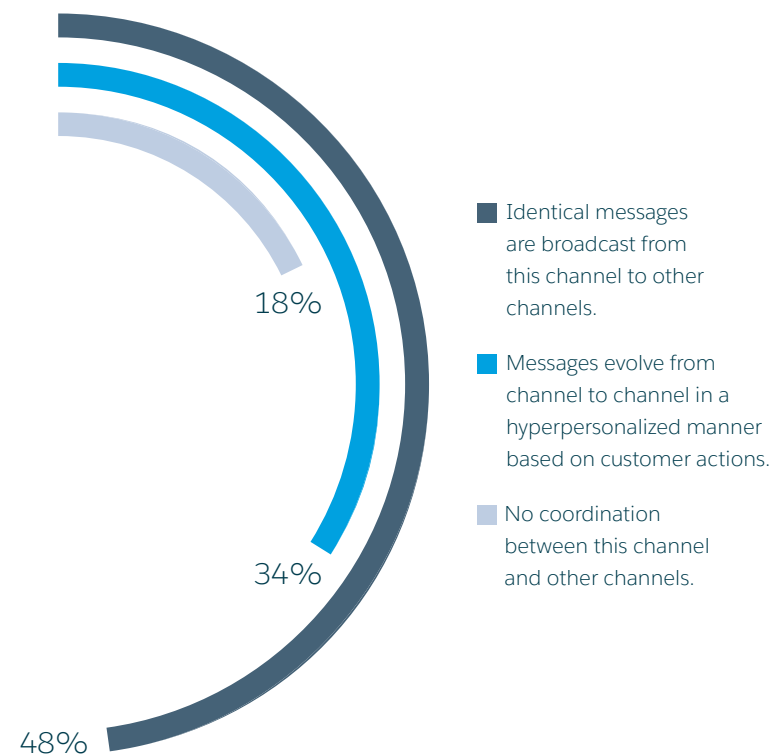
Only a third of marketers say that messages evolve from channel to channel in a hyperpersonalized manner based on customer actions, with the remaining 48% broadcasting identical messages on social media as other channels. As expected, high performers are 1.9 times more likely than underperformers to evolve their messages in this hyperpersonalized manner.

Alignment is important not just between different marketing channels – it's necessary between social channels and customer service, too.

64% of all marketing leaders say that service collaborates with marketing to manage and respond to social inquiries and issues.

In our “[State of Service](#)” report, Salesforce asked the same question to customer service professionals and found similar results, with 62% reporting collaboration between these two teams.

To what degree are campaign messages in social media marketing coordinated with messages in other channels?



Social Media Marketing Must Coordinate with Other Channels

This is another area with a large gap between high performers and underperformers. **Eighty-eight percent of high performers say that service collaborates with marketing to manage and respond to social inquiries and issues, while just 37% of underperformers report the same.**

An inconsistent customer service experience between social and phone or email support can directly result in loss of customers. In our “[State of the Connected Customer](#)” report, 73% of consumers say they are likely to switch brands if a company provides inconsistent levels of service – such as when sales and service reps aren’t equipped with the same customer information so interactions with both departments feel like working with two different companies. Additionally, four of five consumers say that it’s a major or moderate influence on their loyalty when brands immediately respond after they reach out for help.

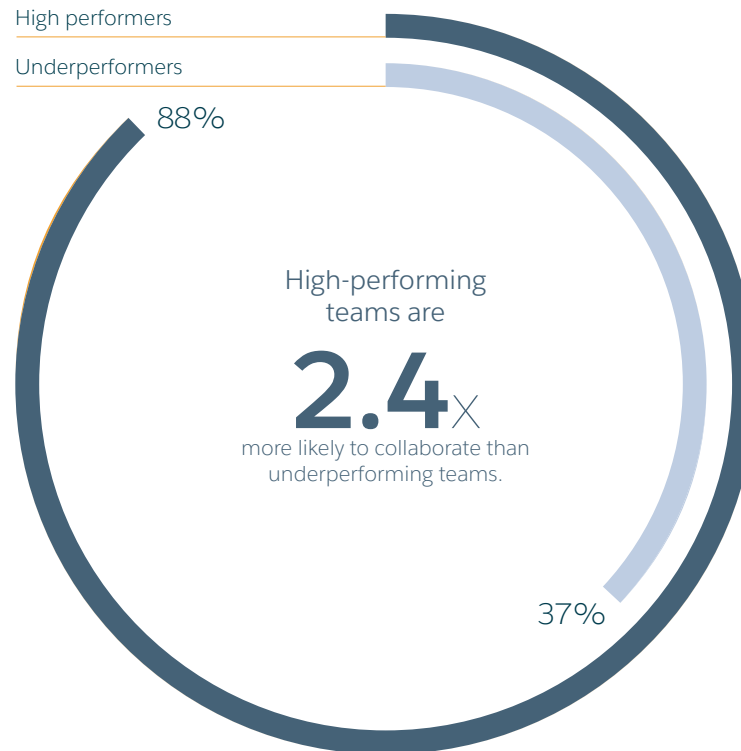
Marketers have a responsibility to respond equally across any channel a consumer prefers.

What should you take away from all of this data? It’s important for all brands to invest in their social marketing initiatives, while at the same time integrating social into the rest of their marketing, sales, and service efforts to provide a cohesive customer experience.

This isn’t just something that high-performing marketers invest in on a whim. According to our “[State of the Connected Customer](#)” research report, 75% of consumers say they expect companies to provide a consistent experience wherever they engage (such as the web, social media, mobile, or in person).

High-Performing Companies Integrate Social and Service

Service collaborates with marketing to manage and respond to social inquiries and issues.



What was the source of this research? In our fourth annual “State of Marketing” report, Salesforce Research surveyed 3,500 marketing leaders worldwide. Throughout this report, high-performing marketing leaders are defined as those who are extremely satisfied with the current outcomes realized as a direct result of their company’s marketing investment, as well as their overall marketing performance compared to their competitors.

Data in this report is from a blind survey conducted in April 2017 that generated 3,500 responses from full-time marketing leaders – those holding a manager or higher leadership role within their organization – in the U.S., Canada, Brazil, U.K./Ireland, France, Germany, the Netherlands, Japan, and Australia/New Zealand. All respondents are third-party panelists (not limited to Salesforce customers). Due to rounding, not all percentage totals in this report equal 100%. All comparison calculations are made from total numbers (not rounded numbers).

For more information about the methodology, check out the “State of Marketing” report.

Majority of Professionals Expect Companies to Deliver Social Impact

Customers and employees want to work for and purchase from companies that care about more than the bottom line.

