

Building Your Social Media Playbook

Best Practices and Findings from the 2018 Social Media Survey



E Source

Luke Currin

Senior Manager,
Marketing & Communications

2018 E Source Summit for the Tennessee Valley

We'll answer five questions

Where does the industry stand?

What do org structures, staffing, and budgets look like?

What are utilities' paid strategies, metrics, and tools?

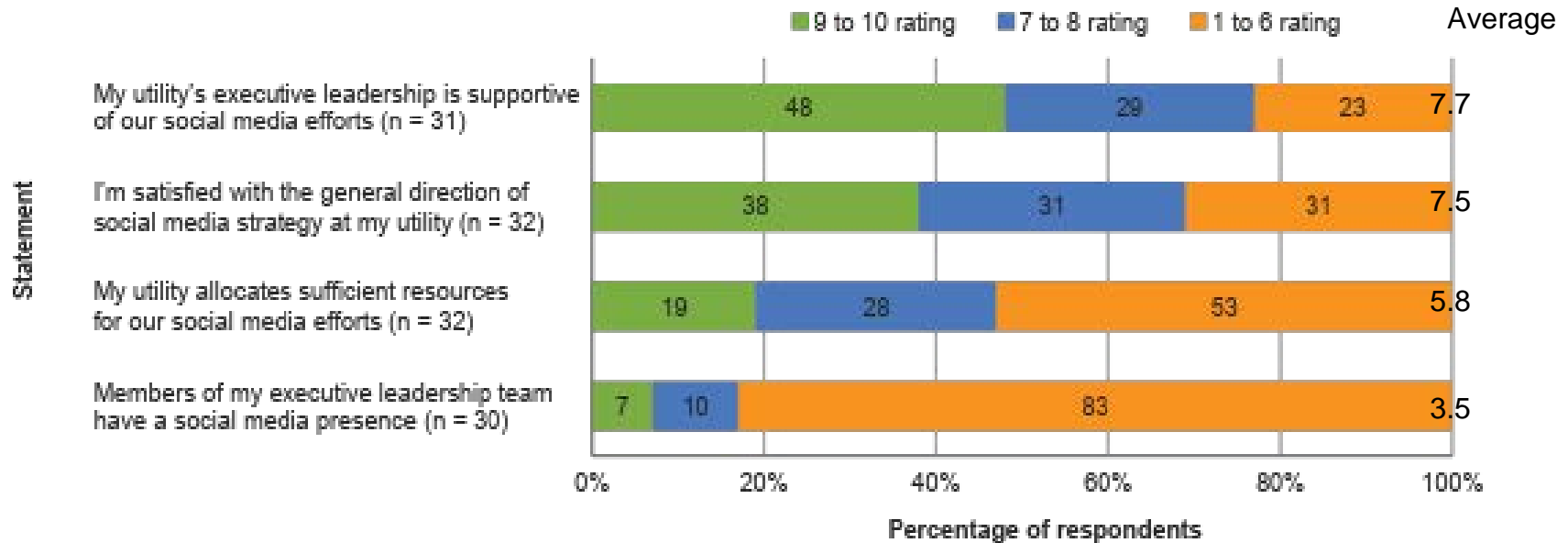
What do the people want?

Where is the industry going?



Where does the industry stand?

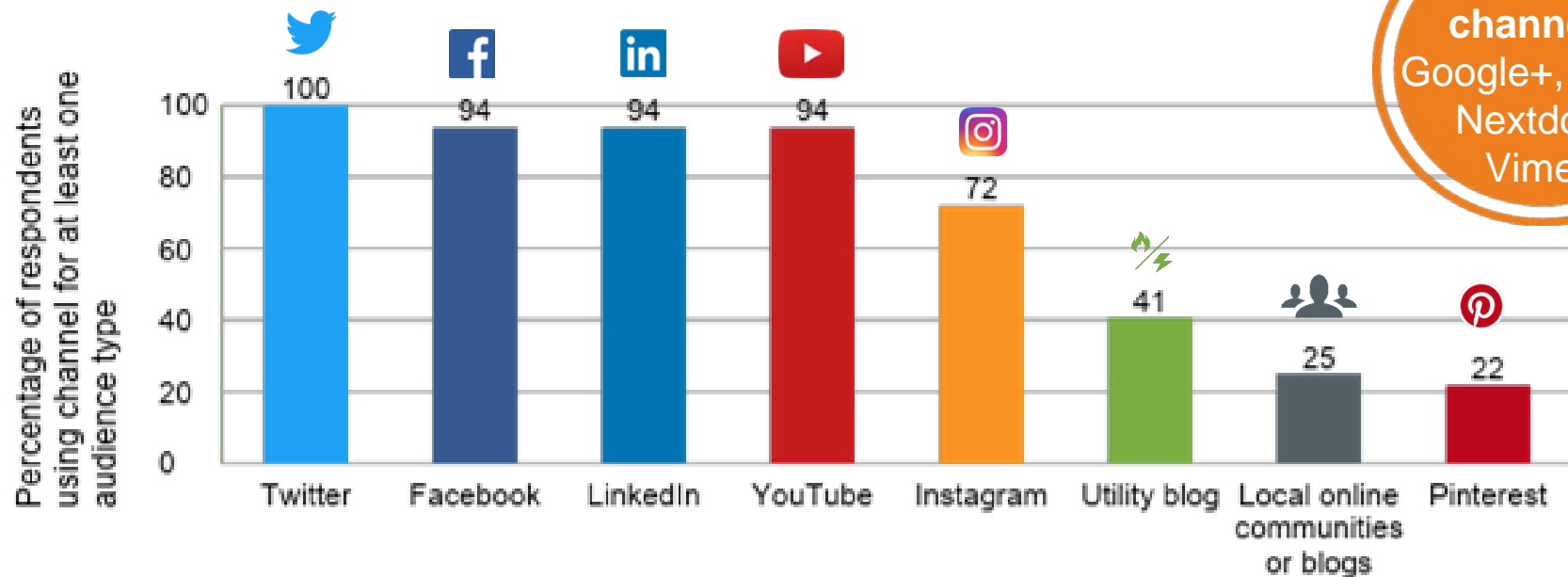
Leadership more supportive of social media now than in 2016



Base: Varies as shown. **Question S2_14:** Using a scale of 1 to 10, where 1 where 1 means strongly disagree and 10 means strongly agree, please indicate how strongly you agree or disagree with the following statements. **Note:** "Don't know" responses were removed from this analysis.

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Twitter remains utilities' most-used social media channel



Base: n = 32 utilities. **Question S1_1:** Please indicate which of the following social media channels your organization currently uses for communicating with the following audiences. Select all that apply in each column. If you are the decision-maker for more than one utility, please do your best to answer with all of them in mind.


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Utilities use social media most for storm situations



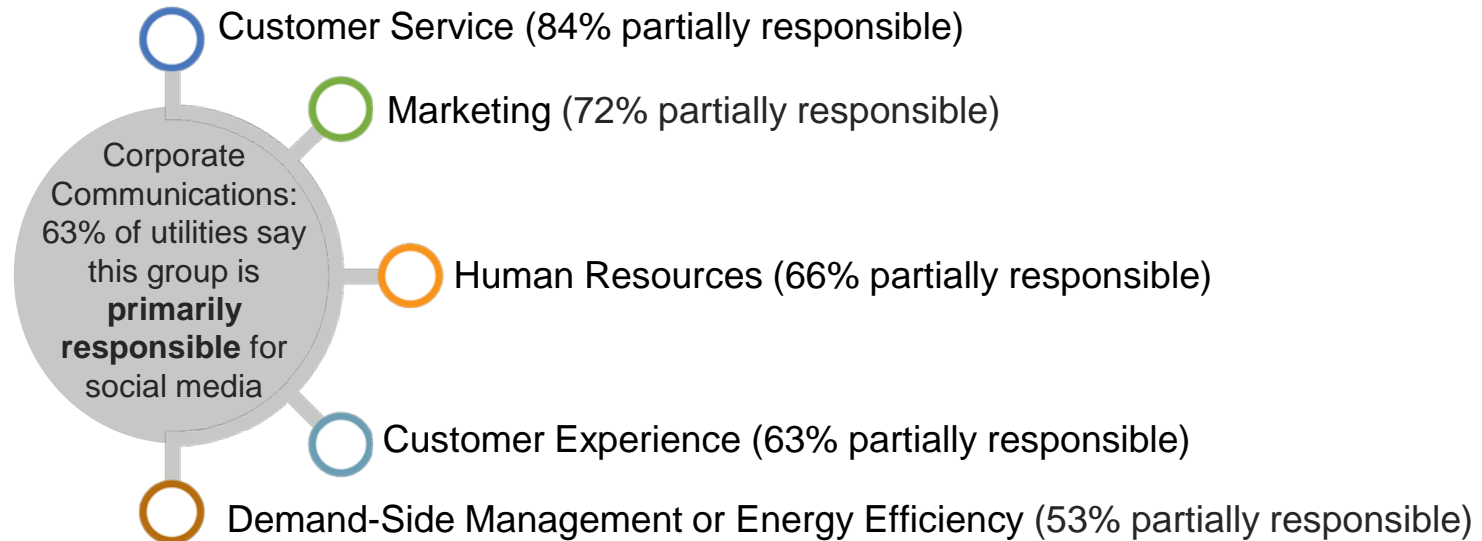
Base: n = 32 utilities. **Question S3_2:** What are the most important uses of social media to your utility?
Please rank your top five uses of social media, where 1 is the most important.

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Org structures, staffing, and budgets

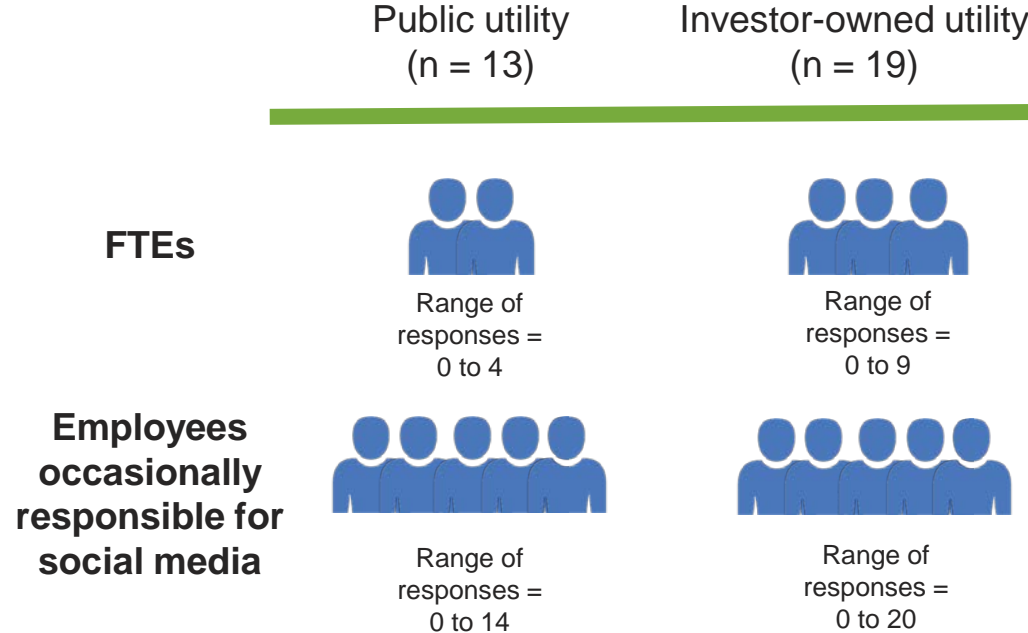
Corporate Communications has primary responsibility for social media



Base: n = 32 utilities. **Question S2_1:** Which department within your utility has primary control/ownership over social media activities? Please select only one. **S2_2:** Which of the following groups within your utility are involved to some degree with social media activities? Select all that apply; this includes the department you indicated in the previous question as having primary control. **Note:** Only departments that at least 50% of utilities said are involved to some degree in social media are presented.

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Most utilities have 1 to 2 FTEs for social media



Base: n = 32. **Question S2_3:** Approximately how many full-time equivalents (FTEs) are dedicated to social media activities in your organization (that is, how many have access to post on the organization's social media channels)? **S2_4:** Approximately how many individual employees across all departments are at least occasionally responsible for social media activities at your utility? **Note:** Respondents weren't limited to set answer choices; they could type an answer in the response field. Illustration above shows mean number of employees.

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Most utilities have a small social media budget and receive no funding from other departments

Budget amount	Have dedicated budget (%)	Receive funding from other departments (%)
Less than \$10,000	21	18
\$10,000 to \$24,999	25	4
\$25,000 to \$49,999	4	7
\$50,000 to \$74,999	7	4
\$75,000 to \$99,999	0	7
\$100,000 to \$149,999	7	7
\$150,000 or more	21	18
No budget, but we request funding as needed	7	NA
No budget for social media	7	NA
We don't receive funding for social media from other departments	NA	36

Base: n = 28. **Question S2_11a:** What is your utility's annual social media budget (excluding employee salaries)? **S2_11b:** How much funding do you receive from other departments to support social media activity (for example, funding from marketing for promoted posts)? **Notes:** NA = not applicable. "Don't know" responses were removed from this analysis.

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Staffing and budget will stay the same or increase in next 12 months



Increase



Remain the same



Decrease



28%

72%

0%



37%

63%

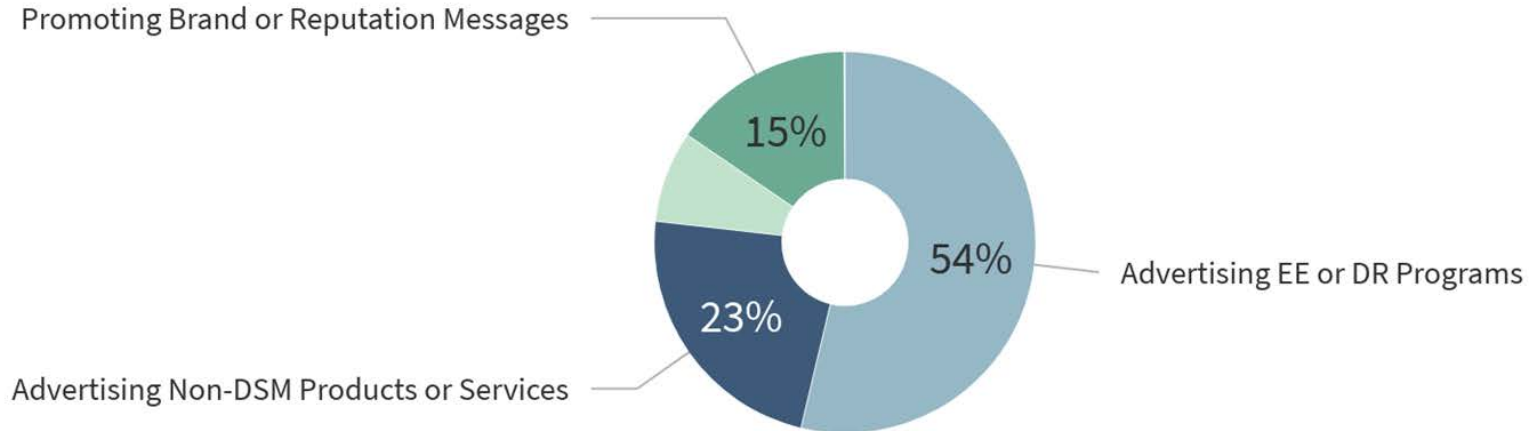
0%

Base: n = 32 utilities. **Question S2_13:** How do you see the staffing level of social media personnel and the budget for social media in your utility changing in the next 12 months?

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Select the topic toward which the highest percentage of your advertising budget goes.

When poll is active, respond at **PollEv.com/esourcepolls106** Text **ESOURCEPOLLS106** to **22333** once to join



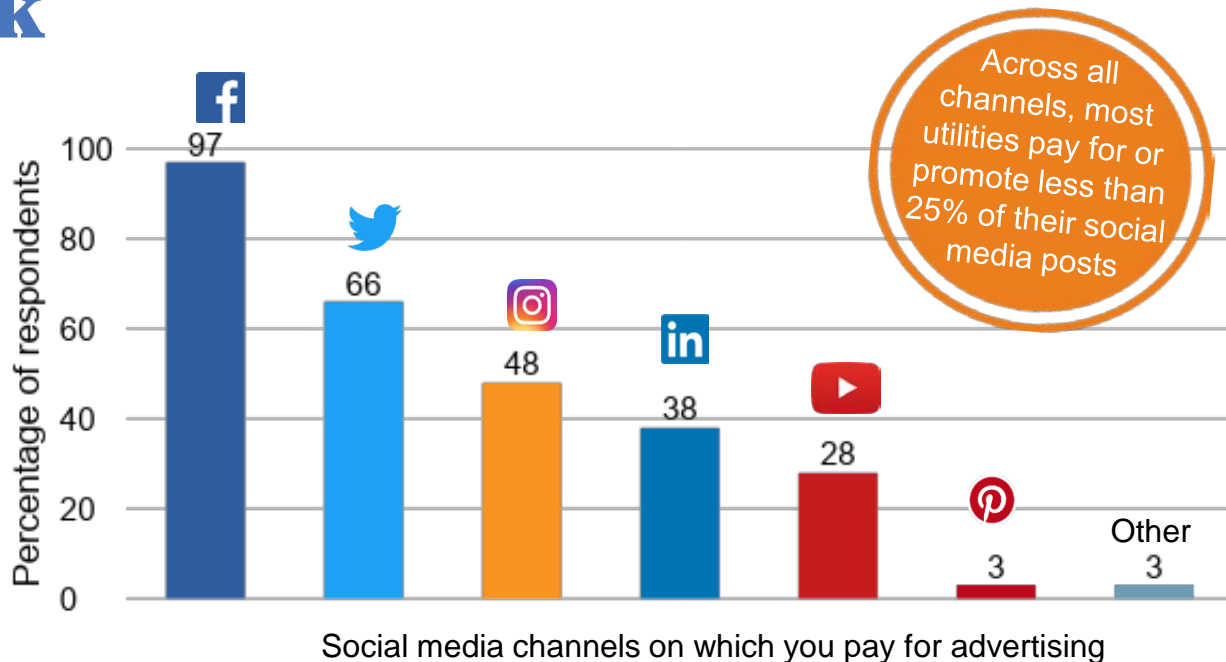
A group of people in a meeting room, smiling and engaged in a discussion. The image is overlaid with a blue gradient and a white rectangular frame around the text.

Paid social, metrics, and tools

97% of respondents pay for advertising on Facebook

91%






pay for advertising on social media networks or websites



Base: n = 32 utilities for S5_1; n = 29 utilities for S5_1a. **Question S5_1:** Does your utility pay for advertising on social networks? Select all that apply. **S5_1a:** On which social media channels do you pay for advertising? Select all that apply. **S5_2:** What percentage of your utilities' social media posts are paid or promoted?

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Engagement rate is most-used metric across social media channels

		Promoted posts		Organic posts	
		Metric used	N	Metric used	N
	Twitter (n = 32)	Engagement rate	5	Engagement rate	8
		Impressions	4	Impressions	5
	Facebook (n = 30)	Engagement rate	7	Engagement rate	10
		Reach	3	Reach	6
	YouTube (n = 30)	Views	2	Views	3
		Engagement rate	1	Engagement rate	2
	LinkedIn (n = 30)	Engagement rate	1	Impressions	2
		Depends on campaign	1	Engagement rate	1
	Instagram (n = 23)	Engagement rate	2	Engagement rate	3
		Likes	2	Likes	3

Base: Varies; utilities were only shown channels they use. **Question S5_3:** For each social media channel, what metric do you use to measure the success of promoted and organic posts (for example, engagement rate, click-through rate, or something else)? **Note:** Answering this question was optional; only the top two responses for each channel are presented.

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How do you attribute conversions for ads in your social media marketing funnel?



Respond at **PollEv.com/esourcepolls106**



Text **ESOURCEPOLLS106** to **22333** once to join, then text your message

“click through”

8 days ago

“Engagement rate”

8 days ago

“Time on site, form completes”

8 days ago

“We dont”

8 days ago

“Click throughs”

8 days ago

“We don't?”

8 days ago

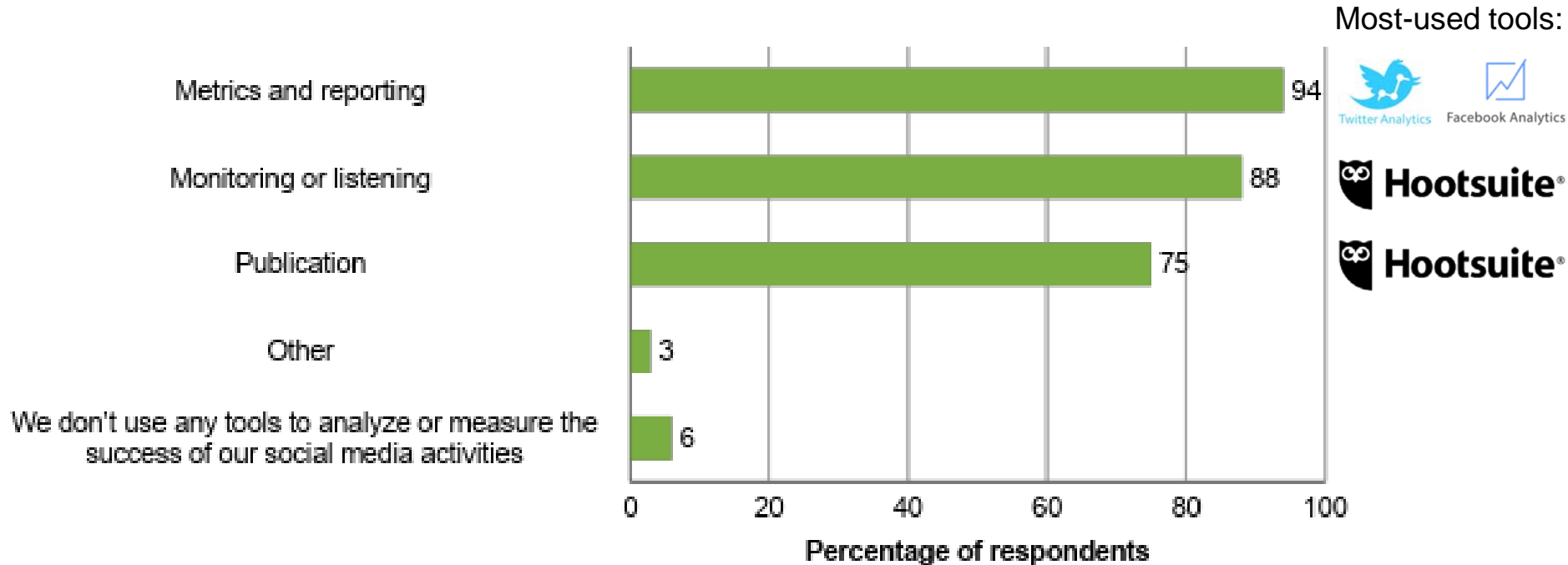
“CTR”

8 days ago

“Enrollment”

8 days ago

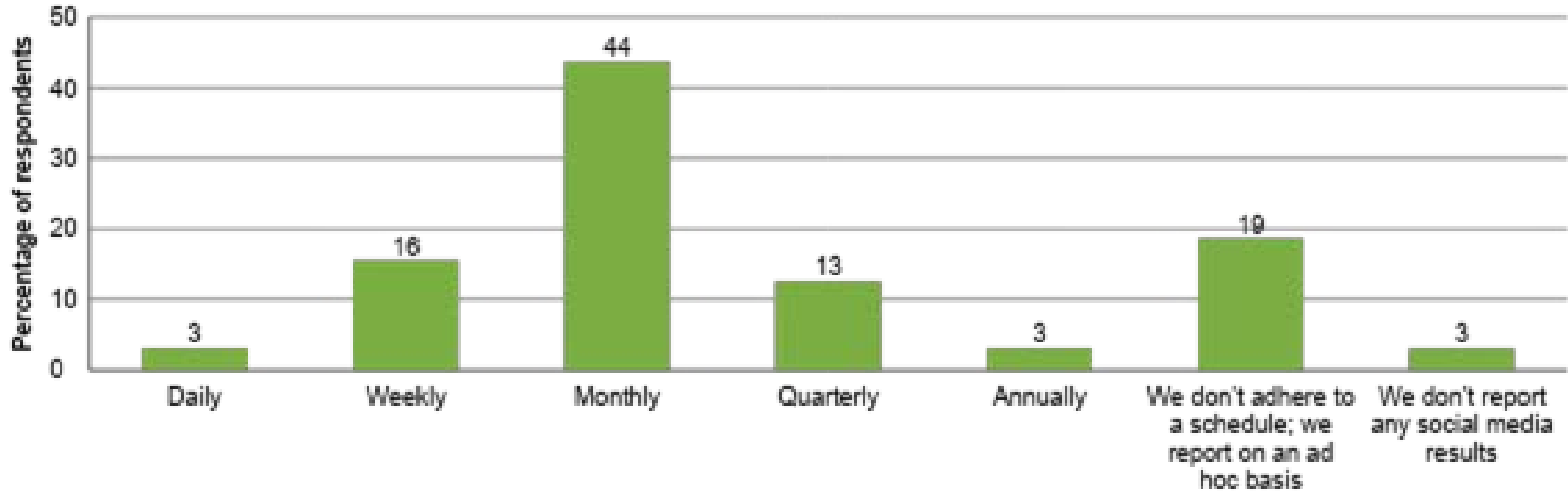
Hootsuite is a popular choice for measuring the success of social media activities



Base: n = 32 utilities. **Question S5_6:** What social media tools does your organization use to analyze or measure the success of the following social media activities? (Please list all tools in the appropriate category, separated by commas.)

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Most utilities report their social media results monthly to their organization



Base: n = 32 utilities. Question S5_7: How often do you typically report your social media results to your organization?

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What the people want

Use puppies and linemen to increase organic, nonpaid engagement

"We incorporate **graphics or video in every post**, and we make sure the content is beneficial or engaging to the viewer. [We're] not posting just to say we posted."

"Simply used listening as a way to **understand what our audiences are talking about** and wanting us to talk about—not just what we want to say to them."

"Posting photos of crews working and alerting customers to drive safely around them. Using very **project-specific messaging has the most engagement**."

"Puppies! JK—fun content. They're few and far between, but our followers like pretty pictures, good animal stories, and other types of engaging content. On Instagram, we notice **our followers like photos of linemen**, so those photos now make up 90% of that content."

"Visual content is key. We try and **ensure our videos or photos are engaging to customers**. Once we had a video of a pet shelter that our linemen assisted in installing lighting. The video consisted of three of our linemen with dogs from the shelter, and that has been one of our most successful videos to date."

Base: n = 32 utilities. Question S5_5: What has been the most successful way your utility has increased organic, nonpaid engagement on social media?

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Use puppies and linemen to increase organic engagement

"We incorporate puppies in our content every post, and it's beneficial to our audience. [We're] not posting anything that doesn't stand what we're wanting us to do for them."



"Posting photos of crews working and alerting customers to drive safely around them. Using very project specific messaging has the most engagement."

"Puppies! JK—fun content. They're few and far between, but our followers like pretty pictures. We post good animal stories, and other types of engaging content. On Instagram, we notice our followers like photos of linemen, so those photos now make up 90% of that content."



"We try and ensure our videos or photos are high quality. Once we had a video of a pet shelter that was installing lighting. The video consisted of three parts from the shelter, and that has been one of our most popular posts to date."

Base: n = 32 utilities. Question S5_5: What has been the most successful way your utility has increased organic, nonpaid engagement on social media?

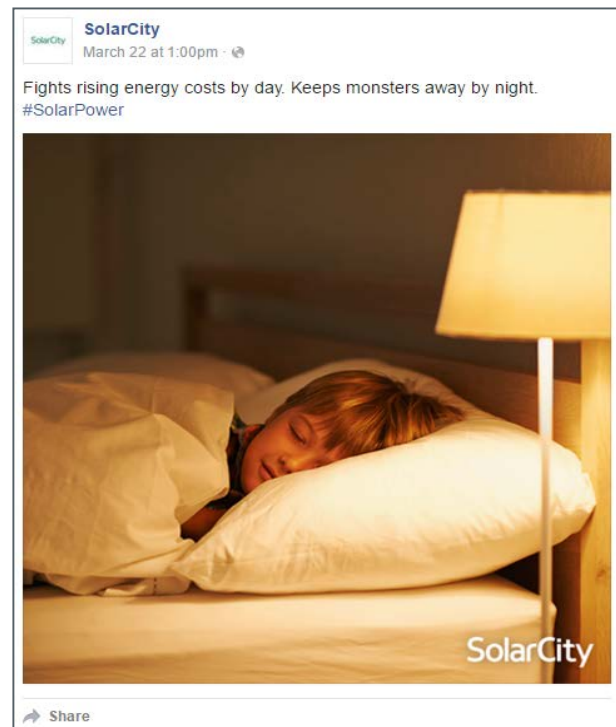
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Describe the qualities of your highest-performing ad images.

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Solar installers' social media

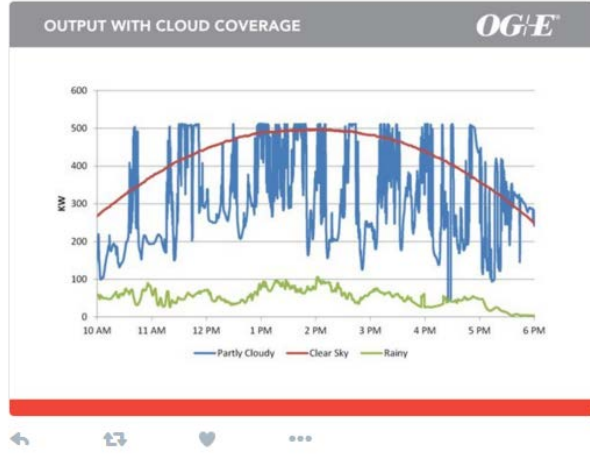


Utilities' social media



OG&E @OGandE · 13 Dec 2015

Solar energy fluctuates. If a cloud moves between sun & panels, the farm's capacity drops about 80% in seconds.



KCP&L: Kansas City Power & Light

March 11 at 11:51am · 🌐

Did you know we are building our first solar plant? Check out this new Disney inspired solar farm!



Disney's solar farm looks like Mickey Mouse because of course it does

Never a company to miss a moment for on-point branding, a new Disney solar farm in Florida is shaped like the head of beloved character Mickey Mouse.

CPS Energy
March 1 · 🌐

"Demand response, solar choice, smart grid - all will help the state grid." This morning, our Group EVP & Chief Generation & Strategy Officer, Cris Eugster, gave a keynote presentation titled, "Transforming the Utility Business" at the ERCOT Market Summit 2016 (<http://ow.ly/YWot6>) held in Austin, TX. Eugster also noted, "Growth of renewables has a huge implication on reliability of the system." We will have about 500 MW of solar online by the end of 2016.

Noting the benefits of being a municipally-owned utility, Eugster said, "We are long-term play, and don't have to worry about short-term profit."

See our recent blog for another way we bring value to our customers by providing one-third of the City of San Antonio's budget. <http://ow.ly/YWog6>





Where the industry is going

Over half of utilities plan to improve and enhance their social media presence in the next 12 months

- 1 Improving and enhancing our overall social media presence (56%)
- 2 Managing crisis situations (53%)
- 3 Creating content and an editorial process (50%)
- 4 Integrating social media into a broader customer experience plan (41%)
- 5 Integrating social media into a broader digital communications strategy (34%)

Base: n = 32 utilities. **Question S3_6:** What are the top five social media issues or challenges you expect to focus on at your utility over the next 12 months? Please select up to five.

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Instagram growing in popularity among utilities



Start using



Increase use



56%



Maintain the same use



63%



66%



63%



56%



Stop using



Decrease use



Don't plan to start using in next 12 months



78%



Blog

47%



Communities

59%

Base: n = 32 utilities. **Question S1_4:** How do you see your utility's social media usage of each channel changing in the next 12 months? Please drag and drop the social media terms ("items") into the appropriate categories. **Note:** Only those with more than 40% of utilities choosing that channel are presented.

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Utilities don't feel successful at meeting their top social media goals

Protect and
enhance
brand
reputation

(n = 32)

81%

(n = 31)

32%

Increase
customer
satisfaction

(n = 32)

66%

(n = 32)

22%

Improve the
customer
experience

(n = 32)

63%

(n = 31)

19%

Establish and
grow social
presence and
network

(n = 32)

56%

(n = 32)

41%

Increase
awareness of
programs,
products, or
services

(n = 32)

53%

(n = 32)

13%

Top bar: This is an important social media goal for our utility

Bottom bar: We're successfully achieving this goal

Base: Varies as shown. **Question S3_3:** Using a scale of 1 to 10, where 1 means not at all important and 10 means very important, how important is each of the following goals for social media to your utility? **S3_4:** Using a scale of 1 to 10, where 1 means not successful and 10 means very successful, please rate how successful your utility's use of social media has been in accomplishing each of the following goals. **Note:** Responses of "This is not a goal" and "NA" (not applicable) were removed from this analysis. Percentages shown are utilities indicating a 9 or 10 rating on a 10-point scale, where 10 means very important or very successful.

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What social media LESSONS have you learned in the past year?

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What is the FUTURE DIRECTION for social media at your utility?

When poll is active, respond at [PollEv.com/esourcepolls106](https://www.poll-ev.com/esourcepolls106) Text **ESOURCEPOLLS106** to **22333** once to join



We're here to help!

MarCom research team



Luke Currin

Senior Manager
Marketing & Communications
303-345-9111

luke_currin@esource.com



Meredith Ledbetter

Senior Analyst
Marketing & Communications
303-345-9175

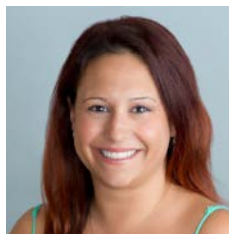
meredith_ledbetter@esource.com



Lane Ginsbern

Analyst
Marketing & Communications
303-345-9169

lane_ginsbern@esource.com



Jessica Bailis

Associate Analyst
Marketing & Communications
303-345-9159

jessica_bailis@esource.com



Q&A, Discussion