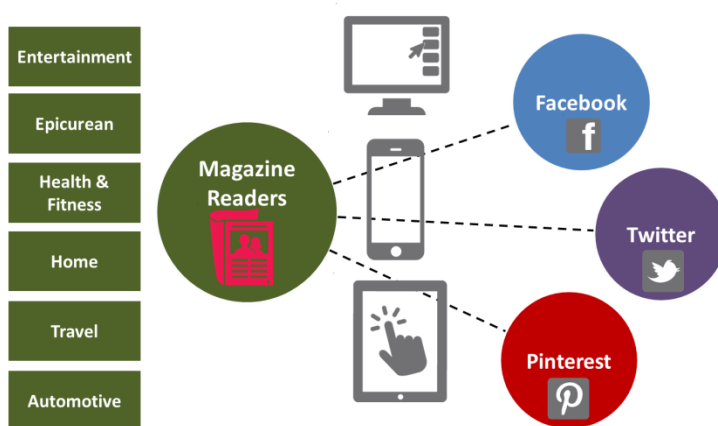


TARGETING KEY READERS VIA SOCIAL NETWORKING PERSONAS

Heather Dougherty and Jennifer Olson, Experian Marketing Services

Marketers have jumped on the Social Networking bandwagon, using Facebook and similar sites to connect with customers. But all social network users are not created equal. There are heavy users and light users, users who post and comment, and those who observe, those who provide ratings and reviews, and those who merely follow companies and brands. Then there are those who use many different networks and others who use only one. All of these consumer types are important to understand to improve targeting and engagement efforts.

Here we examine the social media behavior of magazine readers in six different verticals, Automotive, Entertainment, Epicurean, Health & Fitness, Home, and Travel to identify engagement across three social networks: Facebook, Twitter, and Pinterest. By understanding where they spend their time and how often, we can combine their attitudes toward social media to drive the strategy behind campaigns to promote wine, beer, and spirits to these key audiences.



The segments were created by aggregating magazine titles and accompanying websites for each vertical to use data from the Simmons National Consumer Survey, Simmons Connect, Simmons Multi-Media Engagement Survey, Simmons New Media Study, and Hitwise.

We start with data from the Simmons National Consumer Study and New Media Study, taking a deeper look into how readers of these six vertical magazine segments interact with brands, media, and each other on social media networks in general. We will compare and contrast their behaviors and give insights on general ways that brands and media can use social networks to connect with their fans and readers, can drive appropriate messaging, and can help media and their advertising partners reach the best and most receptive audience for their products. Additional data from Hitwise and Simmons Connect provides website and mobile app behavior to understand to what extent, how often and how long six vertical magazine segments interact with social media on PCs, smartphones, and tablets.

Social Networks and Consumer Brands

Over half of the magazine readers within each vertical are social media users and are more likely than adults in general to say that they like to follow their favorite brands on social networking sites – and heavy magazine readers are even more likely, at an index of 103 and 113, respectively. The percentages of readers who agree with this has grown over time as well, with a 24% increase (from 21.9% to 27.3%) over the period of Fall 2011 to Spring 2013. Heavy readers started out more likely to agree with this (at 25.4%), but still increased 18% to a total of 29.9% who agree with this statement. When we look at this data among our magazine segments, some interesting trends appear. Health & Fitness readers are the most likely of our segments to agree with this, at an index of 123, followed by Entertainment (20% more likely) and Epicurean readers, who are 17% more likely than adults in general. Readers of Travel and Home magazines under-index among adults when it comes to friending brands, at indices of 86 and 98, respectively.

Looking deeper into the reasons behind following their favorite brands, we can learn what motivates readers to interact with companies. Two-thirds of heavy magazine readers say that they “friend” brands to get coupons and discounts, with getting product information ranked second at 42%. Although only 13% say that they follow brands in order to get better customer service, these heavy readers are 11% more likely than adults and magazine readers to do this, a lesson that we’ll explore later on. Travel magazine readers are the least likely to agree with this, but are the most likely (49%; 158 index) of our segments to follow a brand to find out about sneak previews of products. Sales announcements are another motivator for Travel readers – nearly 40% of followers (index 129) want to know when the next deal is coming up. In our automotive segment, over three-quarters of this group have friended or followed a brand on a social networking site. Motivations for this group include, not

surprisingly, discounts (61%), sneak peeks of new products (44%), and product info (44%). Auto fans may be hoping for insider information about new makes and models before wider release. Interestingly, the Automotive and Entertainment segments are the only ones that over-index (both at an index of 107) for following a brand to get product information – all of our other segments are less interested in this aspect of social networking than adults in general.

REASON FOR BECOMING A FRIEND OR FAN OF A BRAND	MAGAZINE READERS	HEAVY MAG READERS	EPICUREAN	HOME & HOME SERVICES	HEALTH & FITNESS	TRAVEL	AUTOMOTIVE	ENTERTAINMENT
TO GET PRODUCT INFORMATION	100	102	85	87	92	98	107	107
TO GET DISCOUNTS AND/OR COUPONS	101	105	100	106	110	118	98	106
TO MEET OTHER CONSUMERS LIKE ME	102	103	102	91	110	113	135	109
BECAUSE IT SAYS SOMETHING ABOUT ME	97	93	79	91	96	85	94	95
TO GET BETTER CUSTOMER SERVICE	100	111	111	101	115	117	131	118
TO GET A SNEAK PEAK AT NEW PRODUCTS	101	101	117	116	119	158	144	106
FOR SALES ANNOUNCEMENTS	100	97	116	106	116	129	95	116
FRIENDS OF MINE ARE FANS	102	92	99	94	96	88	106	94
A FRIEND RECOMMENDED I BECOME A FAN	98	104	107	99	106	80	99	87
OTHER	99	101	100	95	103	82	75	95
NONE OF THESE	97	65	72	76	61	*53	85	56

The importance of marketer interaction with friends and fans would be one of the important tenets to take away from this section of the paper. While social networkers, as we’ve seen above, like to interact with brands and media online, they are still hesitant to use social networking sites as a big part of their purchase funnel. Only 9.5% of social networkers say that “I am more likely to purchase products I see advertised on a social sharing/networking website,” and magazine readers, both any and heavy, are about average when it comes to agreeing with that statement. Among our segments, this statement falls flat with Epicurean and Home readers, both coming in at under 9% who agree with this statement. The Health & Fitness segment is the most likely to agree with this, at 12.4% (index 130), with Automotive (11.3%; 119) and Travel (11.1%; 116) close behind. This leads to informing decisions on other ways that brands and publishers can and should connect with social network users and build relationships that can lead to further interaction.

Trustworthy

Brands might consider it an advantage to have friends or fans on social networking sites. But this may not always be a positive, because there is an inherent risk in connecting that closely with users. Magazine readers in general are below average when it comes to agreeing with the statement, “I trust product information that I get from social sharing/networking websites more than other sources,” although heavy magazine readers tend to find product information more trustworthy. These are relatively small segments, however, as social network sites are, as above, seen as a place more likely to find deals than product information. This can help guide the messaging and content on social sites for a brand. Digging a little further into the behavior of our segments, some of our groups are more likely to find this content reliable than others. The Epicurean segment is the most likely of our magazine groups to find social content trustworthy, followed by Health & Fitness, Automotive, and Home. The Travel segment is 29% less likely than adults – the most “suspicious” of all the segments. Over time, this metric has tended to decrease across all our segments as well, with Travel dropping the most. Despite this wariness, the segments do continue to “friend” their brands, with the percentage of social network users who fan for product information ranging from 44% (Automotive) to 35% for Epicurean.

Print and Other Media

Another way of exploring the way that readers interact with brands is to look at who or what they are likely to friend outside of consumer brands. The Experian Simmons National Consumer Study also asks social media users what types of media brands they follow, with answers including magazines, newspapers, music groups, TV shows, other, and none of the above. Magazine readers in general, along with heavy magazine readers, were less likely than adults to say “none of the above,” with indices of 98 and 91, respectively. Among our magazine segments, only Home and Travel over-indexed, and just slightly at that, with 49.4% and 47.7% of their readers (compared with 46.2% of all adults) saying that they had been fans of “none of the above.”

Looking at readers who become friends with magazines, it is hardly surprising that all our groups over-index for friending magazines. The ability to receive content from their favorite magazines via their news feed is likely one of the biggest factors driving this statement. Interestingly, our Travel segment is the most likely of all our clusters to friend magazines (18.9% of readers; 299 index), followed by Health & Fitness (267 index), Automotive (255 index), Entertainment (236 index), Home (206), and Epicurean (194). These segments are more involved with magazine brands on social networks than either magazine readers in general (116 index) and heavy magazine readers (164), showing the power of these segments to help drive a brand. Within the other categories of media measured, there are some expected patterns. Newspaper and other news sites are favorites among our segments (with the exception of the Travel segment), likely due to similar content that comes through their news feeds, and Entertainment readers over-index for friending their favorite TV shows, music groups, and even newspaper/news sites (144, 127, and 130, respectively).

Influencing Others

When it comes to measuring return on the social investment from friends and fans, it is interesting to look at how many of each segment's readers pay attention to input from other customers. Among all adults who visit social networking sites, 38.4% say that they pay attention to ratings and reviews from other customers. However, among our segments, these numbers are often higher – Epicurean readers come in at 45.4%, with Automotive right behind at 45.2%. Health & Fitness follows with 43.4%, with Travel next at 42.1%. Our Home segment is slightly above the mean at 39.2%, and Entertainment is right on par with the average at 38.3%. These same groups are also more likely than average to say that “I am more likely to purchase products I see used or recommended by friends on social sharing/networking websites.” Here, the ranking ranges from Travel (index 134) and Automotive (index 125) to Health & Fitness (index 123) and Epicurean (113).

Conversely, we can also look at which segments are most likely to post ratings and reviews themselves. Active participation is highest among our Health & Fitness and Epicurean segments, both over 25% and indexing at 117 and 116, respectively. Magazine readers in general are about average on this statistic, while heavy magazine readers are 10% more likely than social networking adults (22.1%) at 24.1%.

Sharers versus Lurkers

Continuing our thread about active versus passive social networkers, we can compare and contrast our segments and see which ones tend to be “lurkers,” following others' conversations and opinions in general and which ones are more likely to be “sharers,” taking an active part in discussions both online and in real life, face to face conversations. While Facebook and other social networking sites have become nearly ubiquitous these days, there is still a minority of users who post regularly. Both magazine readers and heavy magazine readers are about average in this sense, at 38.8% and 39.7%. Among our magazine segments, the leader of the pack in terms of posting content is the Entertainment segment (index 113). Gossip and other entertainment news are hot topics, and getting the scoop or commenting on the latest Kardashian scandal helps drive this segment's behavior. The only other cluster out of our group that over-indexes for sharing content is the Health & Fitness group. This may be driven by frequent automatic status updates on fitness routines (via wearable fitness devices like Fitbit or Nike+) or sharing healthy food or fitness tips with like-minded friends. Our other segments do share, but at a slightly lower rate than the rest of the social networking population. The good news about our segments, however, is that they are all less likely to be solely lurkers, and say that “I would rather read other people's comments on social sharing/networking websites than to post my own.” This group is, however, bigger than the active users, ranging from 50.6% for Health & Fitness to 53.8% for Entertainment, a not unsurprising number, given that nearly 54% of all our social networking adults would rather lurk online than share with others.

Similar to our active versus passive users, we can look at those who become fans because of their friends, either directly by recommendation or because they notice that their friends are fans. Heavy magazine readers are slightly more likely to follow an active recommendation from a friend (index 104) but are less likely to follow based on just noticing that a friend is a fan (index 92). Our Automotive segment is the one more likely to friend based on a passive recommendation, at an index of 106 (19.5% vs. 18.4%), while the others tend to notice less what others are doing indirectly. In terms of following recommendations from friends, Epicurean and Health and Fitness are higher than average as well as the other segments for having that as a reason to friend a brand.

Reaching out to others to connect is another way of looking at social introverts versus social extroverts in terms of our segments. As a whole, 26.7% of social networking adults are active in reaching out to their friends to connect with each other on social sites, while 48.5% of this same group says they frequently get requests from others. Our segments all definitely fall into the extrovert group, over-indexing from 125 (Entertainment) and 123 (Travel) to the low end with Epicurean (104) and Home (103) in terms of being the ones to send the invites. But these groups are not social pariahs either – the Health & Fitness and Entertainment are above 50% (and average) for being the ones asked to be friends.

Influencers

Some friends and fans of a brand may not just be users, but also influencers for their entire circle of friends. When we look at the statement “Social sharing/networking websites are a way for me to tell people about companies and products that I like,” 27.1% of magazine readers agree with this, slightly below the adult average (27.4%). Heavy magazine readers, on the other hand, are 12% more likely to share their opinions, and most of our segments are even more likely. Our Travel segment, generally less interactive than the others, shines here, with an index of 137. They are closely followed by the Health and Fitness segment (index 135), and then Entertainment (124), Epicurean (123), and Automotive (121) all in a cluster right behind. The Home and Home Services segment is the laggard in this group. They are only slightly more likely than adults in general, with 28.6% agreeing with this statement, to use social networks to share their opinions on products and companies. Given that all of our segments are involved in sharing, both good and bad, it behooves publishers and brands alike to interact with these influential reader segments.

Online Behaviors

The point of access is important when planning social media campaigns to gain a sense of the amount of real estate or screen size that you may have to work with. Across all of the verticals for the magazine readers, the smartphone is the top device for social media consumption followed by the PC at home, so social content is more likely to be visited while the reader is on-the-go. The Health & Fitness and Entertainment magazine readers had the highest reach for smartphones while Entertainment readers ranked first for PC at Home. Travel readers were significantly higher for social media consumption on tablets than all of the other groups. These Travel readers are also more likely to say that they often access their social networking sites from different devices – 47.9% of this segment – 17% more than average. Automotive and Health & Fitness readers are close behind, with 46.8% and 45.3% of these groups checking in from multiple devices, indices of 115 and 111, respectively.

Social Media Consumption by Device

	Entertainment	Epicurean	Health & Fitness	Home	Travel	Automotive
PC at Home	59%	56%	54%	51%	49%	49%
Smartphone	64%	63%	67%	62%	59%	63%
Tablet	26%	26%	30%	27%	39%	26%

When looking at the specific social networks, not surprisingly, Facebook has the highest reach across all verticals and devices, providing a compelling platform for potential advertisers. Despite the high reach, when accessed by PC at home, all of the magazine readers are generally on par with the overall US population for Facebook.com, since the second largest website on the Internet has reached mass market status. Smartphones are a popular option, with all of the segments more likely to access the Facebook app, particularly the Health & Fitness readers. The Travel magazine readers were 7% more likely to access the Facebook app on a tablet as compared with Adults 18 and over, the highest among the magazine segments. The majority of magazine readers spent more than 60 minutes and visited the Facebook app 16 times or more on smartphones and tablets over 30 days with one exception, Auto magazine readers. However the Auto magazine readers stand out somewhat from the others as they only over-index against the general population for accessing the Facebook app on smartphones and the Twitter app on tablets.

Twitter ranked second among the social networking apps access on smartphones, with the highest engagement from the Travel readers who over-index at 133 for spending 60 minutes or more and over-index at 140 for accessing 16 times or more over 30 days. Epicureans follow with an over-index at 115 for spending 60 minutes or more and over-index at 114 for accessing 16 times or more with over a 30-day period.

On tablets, Pinterest was the second most accessed social networking app, particularly with Epicureans, Health & Fitness, and Home magazine readers, all of whom are also more likely to spend more than 60 minutes or more and access 16 times or more over a 30 day period. These same groups were also very active with the Pinterest app on smartphones as well.

Social Media Consumption by Device – Facebook, Twitter, and Pinterest

		Total	Entertainment	Epicurean	Health & Fitness	Home	Travel	Automotive
Facebook	PC at Home	90%	89%	88%	87%	87%	84%	85%
	Smartphone	71%	77%	75%	78%	77%	75%	73%
	Tablet	61%	63%	59%	62%	61%	65%	57%
Twitter	PC at Home	32%	31%	32%	33%	30%	34%	34%
	Smartphone	16%	16%	17%	16%	17%	19%	15%
	Tablet	11%	12%	15%	15%	11%	11%	14%
Pinterest	PC at Home	14%	15%	18%	15%	15%	17%	12%
	Smartphone	10%	14%	15%	13%	13%	9%	3%
	Tablet	16%	18%	22%	20%	19%	18%	13%

In terms of visiting more than one social network on a PC, the Travel magazine readers have the highest degree of overlap between Facebook.com and Twitter.com at 27%. The Home and Epicurean segments overlapped the most for Facebook.com and Pinterest.com.

	Entertainment	Epicurean	Health & Fitness	Home	Travel	Automotive
Visit Both Facebook.com & Twitter.com	25%	23%	22%	20%	27%	24%
Visit Both Facebook.com & Pinterest.com	20%	31%	27%	34%	23%	17%
Visit Both Twitter.com & Pinterest.com	9%	12%	10%	11%	11%	6%

Social networks are also a direct traffic driver to the websites of the magazines. Among the verticals, Health & Fitness magazines receive the highest proportion of their website traffic from social networks, 12% on average over 12 months, followed by Home with 11% and Entertainment with 10%. For both Health & Fitness and Entertainment, Facebook comprised the largest share of traffic from social networks. However for Home magazines, Pinterest accounted for a higher share of traffic than Facebook due to visual nature of Pinterest, where users can curate photos of products and rooms, perfect for the home décor market. Epicureans had a fairly even share of traffic from both Facebook and Pinterest, pointing to the opportunities across both platforms for driving visits. Twitter did not represent a significant share of traffic to any of the categories, suggesting that while readers are interesting with content on Twitter, a call to action such as visiting the website may not be as effective or different tactics may be needed to help do so.

Targeting Drinkers

Advertising alcohol online can be business to ensure that the appropriate audience is reached, but with the proper controls¹ to check the age of the visitor, social media can be an effective platform. The added benefit of users sharing your message can also help amplify marketing efforts to reach a wider audience. To understand the connection between the social sharers and alcohol consumption, we looked at the sharers' proclivity to drink various types of alcohol and where it was consumed. Each of our segments skew toward the age of 35 and over, proving them an appropriate audience and all over-indexed for drinking beer, wine and different types of liquor.

The key findings for the locations are to generate ideas for potential promotional events, co-branding opportunities, and content developments & advertorials. As we saw earlier, magazine readers were somewhat skeptical of purchasing products that they see advertised on social media, so these other types of promotions may resonate more with this audience to drive awareness and trial. For marketing budgets that can allow sponsorships of entertainment events like concerts or sporting events, these can be effective venues to promote beer, wine and spirits while the audience is ready to consumer these products and possibly try out new brands. One example is Grey Goose vodka, a promotional partner for the US Open Tennis Championships for the past 7 years, who this year promoted a signature cocktail for the event, the Honey Deuce, on Facebook and Twitter. Many fans mentioned the cocktail in their tweets and posted photos of themselves with the Honey Deuce cocktail on Twitter and Instagram. On a smaller scale, local restaurants and bars/clubs could also be good venues for sponsored events like beer or wine tastings or cocktail parties to encourage trial of the product and get people talking about the brand on social media. In New York, the Sixpoint Brewery often sponsors contests on Twitter for fans to retweet messages in exchange for free tickets to a beer tasting at a new restaurant opening.

Readers of Entertainment content are more likely consume beer (139), wine (130), and alcohol (202) at entertainment/sporting events, but liquor (129) and wine (122) at restaurants. They are also more likely to consume wine (126) at bars/clubs, but not beer. Food and wine is always a good match, and the Epicureans are more likely to consume wine (152) and some liquor (114) at restaurants, but not beer. They also tend to consume wine at home and in bars/clubs. Travel magazine readers have much more distinct consumption with locations – more likely to consume beer (287) at entertainment/sporting events, wine (265) at restaurants, and liquor (110) at bars/clubs.

Health & Fitness readers, a group that skews more female, are more likely to consume wine (154) at restaurants and at home (142) and more likely to consume wine (160) and liquor (122) at bars/clubs, but over-index for beer only at entertainment/sporting events. On the other end of the spectrum, Automotive readers skew more male and have a tendency to consume beer (251) at entertainment/sporting events and at bars/clubs, but also consume wine (136) and beer (118) at restaurants.

	Entertainment	Epicurean	Health & Fitness	Home	Travel	Automotive
Beer: Bar/Club	81	73	99	60	58	109
Beer: Entertainment/Sporting Event	139	146	184	152	287	251
Beer: Restaurant	78	78	109	78	87	118
Beer: Your Home	85	108	98	85	62	128
Liquor: Bar/ Club	105	91	122	78	110	105
Liquor: Entertainment/Sporting Event	202	*199	286	251	N/A	N/A
Liquor: Restaurant	129	114	96	107	89	64
Liquor: Your Home	100	106	93	90	75	119
Wine: Bar/Club	126	159	160	139	N/A	N/A
Wine: Entertainment/ Sporting Event	130	N/A	N/A	161	N/A	N/A
Wine: Restaurant	122	152	165	154	265	136
Wine: Your Home	106	163	142	134	103	77

To further illustrate the “real world” usage of the data collected above, we will look at the specific example of marketing alcoholic beverages to our socially-connected Epicurean segment – the ways to reach them, how to direct messaging that resonates with this group, how to engage them in conversations on social media.

Alcoholic Beverage Consumption

	EPICUREAN	
	Vertical %	Index
PORT, SHERRY & DESSERT WINES	18.0%	304
BRANDY	13.6%	227
IMPORTED DINNER/TABLE WINES	32.4%	192
BLENDED WHISKEY OR RYE	8.7%	186
GIN	16.1%	177
CHAMPAGNE & SPARKLING WINE	36.6%	172
CANADIAN WHISKEY	16.2%	161
DOMESTIC DINNER/TABLE WINES	57.7%	151
IRISH WHISKEY	11.0%	149
SCOTCH WHISKY	12.1%	146
COOLERS	25.6%	144
CRAFT BEER	31.8%	143
COGNAC	12.0%	137
BOURBON WHISKEY	19.4%	130
RUM	33.9%	126
VODKA	39.1%	124
TEQUILA	39.1%	124
IMPORTED BEER	38.9%	122
DOMESTIC BEER	28.2%	119
FLAV ALCOHOLIC BEV	24.7%	110
LIGHT BEER	35.6%	108

As we have seen in the prior section and in the chart to the left, Epicureans are fans of all the alcohol categories measured in the National Consumer Study. Using this data, we will focus on a couple of data points that have both high vertical percents and indices and show how our alcohol marketer could work with magazine brands and social media to successfully pitch imported and domestic dinner wines to this crowd.

Social Recap

As we have seen previously, Epicureans are not likely to purchase brands they see advertised on social sites (9%; 94 index). They are likely, however, to follow brands (117 index), trust product information (137 index), post ratings on sites themselves (116), tell others about companies and brands they like (123), pay attention to ratings from others (118), and purchase products they see recommended by others on social networking sites (113).

Looking at what motivates them to friend or fan a brand, we see that they are willing to do this in exchange for better customer service (111), to get a sneak peak at new products (117), and for sales announcements (116).

Multi-Media Engagement Study

To round out how these same Epicurean social sharers respond to specific social networking sites, we leveraged data from the Simmons Multi-Media Engagement Study, which examines the emotional and cognitive ways that consumers are engaged with media – in this case, the wine drinkers within our Epicurean segment and their engagement levels to facebook.com and twitter.com.

As we saw before, social networks are not a place that particularly inspire purchasing – 15% of twitter users and 12% of Facebook users say that “This site inspires me to buy things” – though a higher percentage of each (26% and 25%, respectively, for Facebook and Twitter) do say that they get valuable information from the site. In terms of advertising on the site, we again see some relatively low numbers, with 21% of Twitter and 11% of Facebook users saying “Ads on this site help me make purchase decisions,” and 16% of Twitter and 12% of Facebook users saying, “I get valuable information from the ads on this site.”

Content from other users plays a big part in influencing the utility of these sites for our Epicurean wine drinkers. Even though our segment is generally on the extroverted, more likely to share, side, they do appreciate the input that comes from other users and their expertise. Among our wine-drinking segment, the statement, “I’ve gotten interested in things I otherwise wouldn’t have because of others on this website” resonates with 29% of Twitter.com visitors and 27% of Facebook.com visitors, while “I’m as interested in input from other users as I am in the regular content on this website” appeals to 60% of Twitter.com and 41% of Facebook.com visitors.

The social interaction aspect of these sites appeals to our oenophile Epicureans as well. Forty-three percent of Twitter.com users and 40% of Facebook.com visitors say, “I bring up things on this site in conversation,” and “This gives me something to talk about” is agreed upon by 41% of Facebook users and 35% of Twitterers. Of Facebook users, 48% say, “This is definitely entertaining,” while 46% of twitter users agree with that statement.

Recommendations

The recommendations set out based on these data points for our beverage marketer and their social networking strategy included:

- Engage with users and bring them into the conversation. Share information that they can pass on to friends – empower them to be the influencers that they are.
- Respond to readers, especially when it comes to concerns and complaints. There may not be many, but remember that one disgruntled fan has many friends and a wide-reaching network, and all your followers are watching each and every interaction you have with others.
- Give them information about products, but hold off on the hard sell. Promotional events and co-branding can engage your users without scaring them off, and offering discounts and deals will resonate with your users.
- Content oriented around Health & Fitness and Entertainment on Facebook.com can be effective in driving visitors to your magazine website. Sharable home-oriented content efforts with Pinterest can help drive a lift in website traffic.

Bibliography

1. “New Rules for Alcohol Companies to Advertise and Market on Social Networks, Emily Steel, *The Wall Street Journal*, September 20, 2011