



UK Networking Event Series

FROM NETWORKING EVENT TO LESSONS LEARNED: Using Social Media to Push CI Boundaries | Part Deux

by Andrew Beurschgens and Catriona Oldershaw

Since 2016, when Miribure's Suki Fuller shared with the SCIP UK chapter the steps needed to extract value from social media for CI¹, the SCIP UK Chapter has continued to share how social media can be a relevant, complimentary source of intelligence. We have covered topics like the need to be convinced of the value of social media in the first place, which social media platform to use for which application, and whether social media's value is about finding nuggets or whether there is a role for standalone deliverables powered by social media.

The SCIP UK networking event series aims to follow up on the social media agenda to discover how ideas discussed have been implemented back at the ranch, for better or worse. Last year The Insights Distillery's Catriona Oldershaw and EE's Andrew Beurschgens focused on a real life application of a social media listening platform to push the CI boundaries, including the set-up, deliverables and feedback. Not only was the presentation pitched to the UK forum, but it was also successful in being part of the line up at the SCIP European Conference in Prague. One year on, both Catriona and Andrew shared with the great and the good assembled in Cascais, Portugal for 22nd SCIP European Summit their next social media-based case study to provide an early ready at speed.

Leveraging critical learnings from our first case study^{2,3}

While previous SCIP conferences and the event have broadcasted the message that CI teams should get involved with social media as an exciting new human intelligence frontier, there now appears to be more sharing of 'how'! It is, after all, where many business consumers are most engaged and taking part in unmediated conversations. [see Table 1: Social Media Context].

Before launching into the new applied case study, Andrew reminded the audience about previous critical success factors behind the previous case study focusing on a new market entrant. These included the journey The Insight Distillery went on to deliver the previous early case study focusing on a new market entrant, the set-up, the deliverables, and the feedback [Figure 1: Critical Success Factors behind Using Social Media Listening Platforms for CI]. The importance of simple, timely value-adding deliverables supplying the quantitative 'what' and the qualitative 'why'. They further discussed how an enterprise level social media listening platform allowed Andrew to track the changing consumer sentiment and why. It culminated with the additional lessons learned to challenge the audience about what they could do differently tomorrow? [Figure 2: What Are You Going to Do Differently Tomorrow?]

Table 1: Social Media Context

Definition	A form of intelligence gathering which uses enterprise level social media listening tools to harvest and analyze online content posted by consumers on social media channels, industry influencers and participants, news and media outlets	
Strengths & Weaknesses	Strengths - Speed to insight 'Always on' / real time - Global and local - Plentiful - Unsolicited - Unmediated - Rich in meta-data	Weaknesses - Huge amount of 'noise' - Some areas of low volume
Why CI Teams Should Get Involved with Social Media	- Identify competitor strengths and weaknesses as perceived by consumers and industry influencers, and ways to exploit this knowledge - Make an early assessment of the 'success' or impact of competitor launches, announcements, and crises - Can we spot fads turning into trends that turn into business opportunities - Can it act as a 'Canary in the Coal Mine' early warning system around critical shifts in consumer sentiment	

Figure 1: Critical Success Factors behind Using Social Media Listening Platforms for CI



Source: Gaining an Early Read at Speed | Pushing CI Boundaries with Social Media | Part Deux

Figure 2: What Are You Going to Do Differently Tomorrow?



Source: Gaining an Early Read at Speed | Pushing CI Boundaries with Social Media | Part Deux

A new foresight business problem for EE

With all CI assignments, they need a true objective. Last year's case study focused on the early read at speed of a market's reaction to a new competitor's proposition launch and entry. This year's case study required a new focus. Social media needed a new business problem and it benefited from the previous application's pathfinder of context, complement, and collaborate. The context was that the UK mobile market's handset sales were softening; two vendors dominated the market, with one of them launching its promised innovative annual new launch, and Andrew's employer wanted to benefit from its availability more than its growing competitor set. The intelligence question was whether the handset launch was going to be as big as previous launches and how do we capitalize the most?

Documenting the proposal to outline what happens when

With any new project, it is best to document what will happen when. This case study was to be delivered in stages; Stage 1 was to prove if a correlation did exist through social media based on the handset manufacturer's previous product launches and the social media activity

at that time. Stage 2 outlined what were the hot topics associated with the handset and why. Remember the device had not yet had its key note and little was perceived to be known. Stage 3 focused on what was resonating positively and negatively post the Key Note while stage 4 focussed more on the feedback from the consumer with the product in their hands. Throughout the stages, it was important to understand what objections could be resonating through social media that needed addressing once the handset appeared in the customer's hands.

Important to tap into the existing rhythm of the business, consistently

Much of the value from CI can be had through collaboration and ensuring your efforts tap into the rhythm of the business. This is as much a value at the outset when defining the business problem as it is to adding weight or otherwise to another existing business problem. Stage 2's deliverables were able to complement another business challenge. By aligning this project's insight output to that challenge as well, it improved the credibility of not only gaining an early read at the device launch but also that of the other business problem.

Figure 3: More Reinforcing, Concluding Next Steps for CI



Source: *Gaining an Early Read at Speed | Pushing CI Boundaries with Social Media | Part Deux*

The reporting across the stages had to be consistent as well. Structures had to be similar, the messaging needed to be simple, too, so to get the main response quickly, given the multi stage delivery of the insight.

Has it been worth it?

Figure 3, ‘More Reinforcing, Concluding Next Steps,’ summed up the steps and considerations associated with using a social media listening platform to push the CI boundaries. One of the big learnings from this application was how it made a business feel ahead of the launch, a launch over which it had little control in terms of product features. Too often CI focuses on driving action. With this application, there was a lot of value to be had from how the insight made the business ‘feel’.

What's Next?

What else can social media focus on to deliver an early read at speed? What’s the new context? The new problem? Indeed there could be a case around tracking the UK’s sentiment as it gets accustomed to BREXIT and the effect it has on the nation’s consumption behaviour. Can social media provide an early warning ahead of

a bigger set of events? Perhaps other practitioner case studies will continue to emerge, delivering social media’s value proposition - a considered, valuable, early read at speed.

Networking Event Series

The SCIP UK Chapter hosts a series of networking events throughout the year. These events bring together practitioners from all corners of the discipline: service providers, consultants, academics and practitioners to address topics as identified from the previous events’ feedback.

The series aims to increase the understanding and awareness of desired themes among SCIP members and non-members, as well as to take the discipline to different business practices through co-hosting opportunities with other professional organizations and membership bodies. It is about creating an environment to discover, enhance, exchange, and problem solve. To understand the previous networking events’ discussion themes, go to the SCIP UK chapter page for a complete running order, as well as the links for the many that have been published in SCIP’s Competitive Intelligence Magazine article, helping to form SCIP’s Body of Knowledge.

The SCIP UK Chapter is grateful to all of its speakers’ passion and ability to share, without whom there would be neither a networking event nor the creation of a rich exchange of ideas and learnings. The opportunity to speak at these networking events is open to anyone, United Kingdom-based or just passing through, subject to meeting the growing list of event topics. Engagement with attendees is typically around five themes, centred on case studies to bring out applied learnings, namely: Innovative Integration of CI within the Business, Professional Growth in CI, Analysis in Action, Mastering Information Overload and Communicating with Impact.

We encourage others to come forward to introduce the group to new perspectives, experiences and learning. Everyone’s application of CI brings new perspectives, as CI from one company to the next is different. What links all the prospective speakers, regardless of their background or role within the competitive intelligence profession, is a passion for the discipline. Along with all the volunteer speakers to date and those that have yet to take advantage of the opportunity, they are all unique examples of characters continuing to fix the discipline more firmly on the map! What is the next step? Register your interest and details with Michelle Winter mwinter@scip.org to explore speaking opportunities and/or to be proactively kept abreast of forthcoming events in the UK.

References:

1. “Reflecting on the Stepping Stones to Extracting Value from Social Media for CI”
SCIP CIM, Feb-Apr 2016
<http://bit.ly/2bjizZW>

2. “Gaining an Early Read at Speed | Pushing CI Boundaries with Social Media”
SCIP Prague Presentation, Nov 2016 by Andrew Beurschgens and Catriona Oldershaw

3. “From Networking Event to Lessons Learnt | Using Social Media to Push CI Boundaries”
SCIP CIM, Spring 2017
<http://bit.ly/2nySjF9>

4. “Gaining an Early Read at Speed | Pushing CI Boundaries with Social Media Part Deux”
SCIP Lisbon Presentation, Nov 2017 by Andrew Beurschgens and Catriona Oldershaw



ABOUT THE AUTHORS
Andrew Beurschgens is the Head of Market Intelligence at EE, the consumer home and broadband line of business, which has been acquired by BT. In cooperation with other volunteers from both the practitioner and supply side of the competitive intelligence discipline, Andrew is acting Volunteer Chair of the UK Chapter. He is a former SCIP Catalyst and recent Distinguished SCIP Member Award winner, recognised for his volunteer services to the profession and its members, and has served on the SCIP Board.



Catriona Oldershaw, co-founder of The Insights Distillery (“TID”), has 20 years’ experience in senior agency, client-side marketing and commercial roles, including 4 years as Managing Director UK at social media provider, Synthesio, where she was selected as a member of the Silicon Valley Comes to the UK Top 100 Club of most promising UK based business leaders of high growth companies. She has spoken at numerous events as a social media intelligence expert, including Social Media World Forum, techMAP, NewMR and news:rewired.