

Social Media Audit



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PURPOSE

McDonald's is an international leader in the fast food industry, and has a strong Corporate Social Responsibility, or CSR record. Their bottom line is doing well despite the current recession, but their image is not pristine. The current product push at McDonald's is their new 'McCafe' line of coffee items.

In order to monitor the health of the McDonald's brand as well as its monetary health, online conversations have been reviewed, starting with Jan. 1st, 2009. Using a full range of social media, we should be able to produce a snapshot of current attitudes toward the McDonald's brand.

METHODOLOGY

Sites sampled were updated between January 10th to February 6th, though two had been active for some time before January 10th. Using Technorati, Google, Twitter, and IceRocket searches, relevant posts were gathered.

Since credibility in this case is largely a measure of impact, credibility was determined by examining site traffic and influence, using web monitoring such as Alexa to determine passive impact, and comments and other interactive responses to determine active impact.

RESULTS

The attitudes of the sampled social media writers can be loosely categorized as either positive or

negative. Nearly all negative comments touched on the unhealthiness of McDonald's food, while not one of the positive comments even mentioned health concerns one way or another. Positive comments generally focused on particular meals as comfort food or guilty pleasures, though the new 'McCafe' push was mentioned.

There was no real consistency to the menu items mentioned as favorites – a huge range of McDonald's items were liked, which makes the similarity in positive attitudes more remarkable. The McFish lover and the Cheeseburger lover both treat their favorite McDonald's items as a delicious food they do not need (and perhaps do not want?) to think about further.

Negative comments were more broad, focusing on a variety of topics. Again, the common tie was the unhealthiness of McDonald's. Further study is warranted to compare health attitudes toward McDonald's with attitudes toward comparably healthy competitors.

CONCLUSION

The results show a strong base of positive support for McDonald's as a brand, not just as a product. McDonald's is definitely a “feel-good” part of people's lives. This lifestyle attitude should be pushed, and steps taken to minimize health concerns, while acknowledging that the primary function of “feel-good” food will never be accomplished by the healthiest food around. McDonald's can be one part of a healthy lifestyle – the feel-good part.

Source	Source Credibility	Date/Time	Feedback
<p>McDonalds Facebook Discussion Board Topic: What do you eat when you go to McDonalds?</p> <p>http://www.facebook.com/topic.php?uid=43517831296&topic=6185</p>	<p>Discussion topic created by Preeti Rawat.</p> <p>The topic yielded over 65 posts in just over six hours of being posted</p>	<p>Feb 6, 2009 6:51 a.m.</p>	<p>Discusses McDonalds fan's favorite McDonalds meals.</p> <p>"I eat mcfish, side salad and Coke!" – Patricia Foster, Minneapolis, MN</p> <p>"my comfort food are cheeseburger meal with coke float...yummm" – Juniel Guath</p>
<p>The Consumerist http://consumerist.com/5147144/woman-sues-mcdonalds-for-serving-cleaning-liquid-instead-of-iced-tea</p>	<p>Web site for consumer-driven advice.</p> <p>"The Consumerist is the 38th most popular blog in the world, as measured by Technorati, a site that tracks blogs and other social media."</p> <p>This story has 17,000 views and counting</p>	<p>Feb 5, 2009 12:17 p.m.</p>	<p>Discusses the current lawsuit McDonalds is facing by serving a woman tile cleaner instead of iced tea with many comments/posts from readers of the blog.</p> <p>DePaulBlueDemon said: "This is really scary. Talk about gross negligence... How do you confuse cleaning solution with iced tea?"</p>

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<p>McDonalds Talk of LJ (LiveJournal) http://community.livejournal.com/mcdonalds_talk/</p>	<p>Created by C. Polingaysi, Florence, Alabama. After five years and over 1,000 posts, much feedback (negative and positive) is communicated through this source. Discussion topics vary from likes to dislikes to internal communication within the organization.</p>	<p>July 2003 – Present.</p>	<p>This discussion is for “Anybody who has had an encounter with the McDonald's Corporation, whether as an employee or a customer, is invited to comment in this community. This community was started as a place for both workers and customers to gripe about McDonald's, but some positive input is welcome, too.”</p>
<p>Stacerella on Twitter</p>	<p>- Name: Stacerella - Location: Oakville, ON</p> <p>124 following 119 followers 3,242 updates</p>	<p>Feb 6, 2009 10:30 a.m</p>	<p>Discusses the quality of McDonald’s coffee. “...McDonalds has surprisingly good coffee. probably the best cofee I've ever had that I've not made myself.”</p>
<p>Blogspot.com “Cliopatra, Changes, and McDonalds is Evil” http://exhotgirl.blogspot.com/2009/01/cliopatra-and-changes.html</p>	<p>Jennifer Brindley “Ex Hot Girl” 10 Followers Professional freelance photographer</p>	<p>Jan 10, 2009</p>	<p>Lists and discusses in detail multiple reasons for “quitting” McDonalds. In a blog which asked what will you do to make 2009 a better year, she replied, “I am going to attempt to NEVER eat at McDonalds again.”</p>

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<p>McDonalds Fans Lovers http://profiles.friendster.com/88898586</p>	<p>115 registered fans</p>	<p>Nov 2008 - present</p>	<p>McDonalds fans are welcome to post any comments, suggestions, personal experiences, photos, videos, or general thoughts about McDonalds. "McDonalds... probably the best fast food restaurant in the world." – Muhammad</p>
<p>Restaurant News and Reviews at Blogspot http://restaurantnewsandviews.blogspot.com/2009/01/mcdonalds-new-sliders.html</p>	<p>Peter Romeo, Port Washington, NY. Has written restaurant editorials since 1981 for a variety of newspapers, magazine, and websites. Most recently Executive Editor of Nation's Restaurant News (www.nrn.com) with almost 2.3 million views.</p>	<p>Jan 26, 2009</p>	<p>Discusses McDonald's "fourth tier" of the menu, consisting of two new products that are currently being tested in the U.K. <i>Little Tasters</i> – A mini burger served on a ciabatta bun. <i>Little Italian</i> – The same as the Taster only Italian sausage instead of hamburger.</p>
<p>Marketingshift.com "McDonalds Reality House Webisodes Target College Market" http://www.marketingshift.com/2009/2/mcdonalds-targets-college-age-market.cfm</p>	<p>As Described by Technorati, Marketingshift.com discusses "Research on advertising technology & online marketing trends such as podcasting, tv, multimedia, RSS feeds, search engine marketing and viral marketing." Marketingshift.com created by Jason Dowdwill Article by Matt O'Hern</p>	<p>Feb 2, 2009</p>	<p>Matt describes McDonald's new webisode promoting the McDouble and the dollar value meal as "pointless". "College age kids are strapped for cash enough already. Showing them a short webisode isn't going to provide any extra incentive for them to capitalize on the good deals at the dollar menu."</p>

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Blogspot.com “Windfall Profits for Big Burger” http://jammiewearingfool.blogspot.com/2009/01/windfall-profits-for-big-burger.html	Jammie waringfool, Northern NJ Profile views: 7,603 On Blogger Since: Nov, 06	01/26/09	Upset that McDonalds had a great fiscal year in 2008 with a net profit of 80%. “But in these tough economic times and the new era of responsibility, it’s <i>just not fair</i> they’re making money while others suffer...”
Philcox on Twitter	- Name: Phil Cox <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around; align-items: center;"> 26 following 22 followers 37 updates </div>	Feb 5, 2009 11:00 pm	Expresses excitement about finding free WiFi and general love of McDonalds. “Finally found some free wifi! I love mcdonalds sometimes I leave and want to go back there.”