

How social networking can enhance market research



By [Ashlan Bonnell](#)

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WASHINGTON, US: By 2017, just three years from now, one-third of the earth's current population, or 2.5 billion people, will be participating in social networking.

Whether or not social media was once perceived at trivial, the new reality is that the [social realm has become a truly viable resource](#) for the corporate universe. In fact, it is critical. So, as social media's reputation evolves and its usage rapidly continues to increase, it's becoming more important than ever for those in the market research industry to leverage the unique networking opportunities that these social platforms provide. However, due to preconceived notions, a large number of market research professionals are finding it difficult to harness social media's diverse capabilities advantageously. But, before these capabilities can be fully utilised, market researchers must first comprehend the practicality and applicability social media offers. So, how can your market research efforts actually benefit from social networking? Here are just a few:

1. Global interaction with market research professionals



The days of attending area network events to connect with colleagues in your field are quickly becoming obsolete. Social media has truly revolutionised the concept of industry networking. With increased convenience, cost-effectiveness and opportunity, social networking connects professionals that might never have had a chance to meet otherwise. In addition to simply connecting with individuals, developments of networking features, such as LinkedIn Groups and Google+ Circles and Hangouts, have made it much easier for researchers to engage with communities of professionals according to industry or vertical. As long as credibility is established quickly via professional personal profiles and quality interactions, a market researcher will be able to build their own community of industry contacts and expand their industry insight. Because social media allows for this casting of a wider net,

researchers' pool of connections within the community will continue to become more diverse, and, in turn, will only further enhance their research goals.

2. Instantaneous industry updates

Once a researcher has built a diverse and reputable network of market research professionals on the appropriate social channels, they have then opened the gates for immediate access to real-time industry updates. Especially through the constancy of Twitter, real-time pulse checking has completely changed how society receives their news. Because timeliness is such a critical component of the market research industry, the ability to receive virtually instantaneous news and updates is one of the most compelling features of social media for the business intelligence field and will continue to improve communication throughout the industry.

3. Access to reliable market research material via your social community

When boiled down to its most basic purpose, social media is all about sharing. People *want* to engage with others who share their interests. They want others to know what they are doing. It's an outlet, whether for pride, feedback or simply just to share. As social channels continue to gain traction as reliable and trusted avenues for industry engagement, those that choose to share will continue to shift towards more highly educated and experienced professionals. And, in turn, as the credibility of those who share increases, so will the quality and reliability of the market research content they post. Then, others in their communities can benefit from their engagement. So, when it comes down to it, for market researchers, the benefits of social media fall in the enhanced networking opportunities and the improvement of the industry through quality

community sharing.

For more information on effectively utilising social media for your market research efforts, [download MarketResearch.com's free white paper](#) "How to Use Social Media for Market Research."

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Ashlan Bonnell is Managing Editor at MarketResearch.com, Washington DC. I am a professional writer with experience in writing, editing, online communications, blogging, social media integration and social media marketing, media relations, public relations, and email marketing.

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