

# Too many metrics! Measuring social media's impact

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## INTRODUCTION

90% of today's businesses agree that social media is an important tool for their business to connect with consumers to share company news, offers, and practices. It is evident that libraries must be present on social media platforms to survive in a competitive information marketplace.

Social media platforms are unique because they are cheap, easily accessible tools that enable people to create and curate information effectively. However, each platform displays, shares, and measures interactions differently. This poster presents research and experimentation in developing a consistent means to report and analyze accurate metrics across platforms in order to assess the effectiveness of social media efforts.

## BACKGROUND

In the onset of digital marketing efforts, libraries saw the service as a means to solve a disconnection between library services and users' knowledge of the library offerings. In 2007, Kenneway recommended sending personalized messages to library populations. These marketing techniques can be measured in social media by qualitative counts of **reach** or **impressions**. While direct messaging is effective it cannot account for outreach to new users, or non-library users.

As peoples' use of social networks has evolved, analysts and marketers have realized the possibility of social capital. Institutions with followers who know how to blog, tweet, wiki, search, innovate, program and/or organize online tend to have increased political, cultural, and economic value. A library's social capital can be calculated through collecting user **engagements**, **shares** and **mentions** on social media platforms.

## DATA COLLECTION

Instagram

Twitter

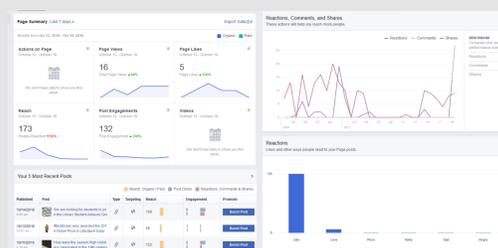
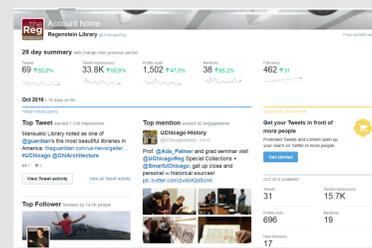
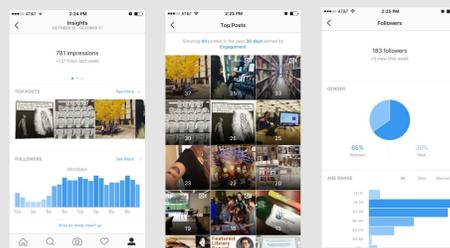
Facebook

Amount of data available

In 2016, Instagram launched tools for businesses, which includes analytics reports in the mobile app. To access Instagram's analytics, account holders must link their Instagram with a Facebook business account. Libraries can view audience demographics and measure how posts are performing well through reach, impressions, and engagement.

Twitter's analytics dashboard tracks the performance of every tweet. Data includes impressions, engagements, and link clicks, as well as follower demographics and interests. Twitter allows users to export data, expanding options for analyzing tweet's success. Notably, exporting data notes tweets that generate new followers.

Out of the three most popular social media platforms for social media marketing in the U.S., Facebook provides the most robust analytics. After registering as a business, account holders can measure reach, impressions, and engagement by post, page, event, or video, as well as demographics for followers, reach, and engagement.



Reporting data is minimal with no option to export. Rather than using Instagram's Insights feature, the University of Chicago Library records mentions and tags. Doing so allows librarians to identify collections and services popular with users.

Twitter does not record mentions or hashtags. The University of Chicago Library uses external applications in order to do. Similar to Instagram, tracking mentions and tags provides insight on users' reception of collections, services, and spaces.

Facebook provides robust data to encourage businesses to pay for ads, which increases reach, and subsequently, engagement. The University of Chicago Library does not invest in ads, opting instead to measure organic contents' influence on follower behavior.

## ANALYZING METRICS

Quantitative metrics from social media accounts are useful for measuring social media's reach. Across the three listed platforms, two common measurements of a posts' productivity are:

**Impressions:** the number of times a post was seen  
**Engagement:** the number of interactions with a post.

Using these metrics, managers were able to deduce that successful posts tag relevant affiliations and engage with notable news.

Users saw and engaged with posts that celebrated national holidays, tagged campus departments, or displayed timely resources more frequently. Using these, managers can send personalized messages to segmented populations in social media.

## MEASURING IMPACT

In exporting and analyzing data across platforms, University of Chicago Library Social Media Managers determined that because social media accounts vary in audience demographic, reach, and delivery or content, account metrics cannot be directly compared. Rather, managers work to analyze impact of each account. Determining an account's impact requires managers to take a close look at the original goals for social media.

Establishing goals enable account managers to identify **key performance indicators** (KPI). For example, a KPI of Regenstein Library's Twitter account is drop-in workshop attendance. Managers calculated that advertising workshops on Twitter led to a 37% increase in workshop attendance. The increase, compared against an 18% average of staff time to manage the account, allows administration to understand that Twitter is a worthy investment.

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