



# So-Commerce

**A benchmark study into the use of  
social media by online retailers**

- » 100 online retail websites benchmarked
- » Over 60 best practice guidelines and tips

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# Introduction

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## Background

This report is the latest in a series of benchmark studies published by full-service digital marketing agency, dotDigital Group plc.

dotDigital has a ten year plus history of working with retail brands to build and run websites and marketing campaigns that effectively attract and convert visitors. This report is produced by dotCommerce - the ecommerce solutions arm of the dotDigital Group.

## Why social media?

2009 was the year in which social media began to play a significant role in the marketing mix. Today the popularity and influence of social media continues to soar and the stats speak for themselves:

- 10% of all time spent on the internet is spent on social media sites
- Facebook has more than 250m users worldwide
- 77% of all active internet users regularly read blogs
- 24 hours of video is uploaded to YouTube every minute
- Around one in every 300 web visits is to Twitter whose user base is growing 1,000% every year.

With so many people engaging in the social media-sphere, the research team at dotCommerce set out to discover if and how UK online retailers of all sizes are using these social media channels to communicate with their key audiences and drive their businesses.

We assessed the extent and effectiveness of their efforts and combined this research with a series of best practice guidelines and top tips.

The result is a report that provides online sellers with practical advice, guidance, real-world examples and benchmarks to help them tap into the potential value of social media and execute an effective strategy.

## Who is the report for?

Because this study analyses the activities of both small and large retailers in the UK, the information provided in this report is relevant to retailers of all sizes with a web presence as well as online marketers in general.

To download this report in full follow this [social media ecommerce solutions](http://www.dotcommerce.co.uk/socialmedia) link or go to [www.dotcommerce.co.uk/socialmedia](http://www.dotcommerce.co.uk/socialmedia)

# Methodology

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We assessed the social media activities of 100 retailers in the UK. Half of the retailers studied generated less than £10m annual turnover, while the other half were large retailers turning over in excess of £100m in 2008.\*

The retailers were assessed on 14 different criteria relating to a range of social media activities:

## Criteria

- **Twitter**

- Does the retailer have a Twitter account?
- Is it publicised on the website?
- How is the account used?

- **Facebook**

- Does the retailer have a Facebook fan page?
- Is it publicised on the website?
- How is the page used?

- **Blogging**

- Does the retailer have a blog?
- Is it publicised on the website?
- How is the blog used?

- **User generated content**

- Does the site contain user generated content and if so which type?

- **RSS**

- Does the site have an RSS feed?
- What is the feed used to publicise?

- **Other social media**

- Are there links to any other social media sites on the website?
- Does the website have social media bookmarking links?

## Notes

*dotCommerce recognises that different retailers have varying objectives and requirements for their social media marketing, and differing experiences of the best ways to achieve these with their own target audience. This report analyses success factors on a general, best practice basis.*

*The study represents a snapshot during November 2009. It is acknowledged that the websites and social media channels assessed may have changed since this date.*

*\*Source: Catalogue E-Business*

# Executive summary and results

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The results of this social media study generated some eye-opening insights into how social media is used by retail brands. In the next few chapters we delve into those results and offer some practical hints and tips on the steps retailers can take to really make the most of social media marketing.

Here we give an overview of the key findings:

## Some form of social media is common

Social media is being used in some way by 42% of the retailers assessed, although given the high levels of attention that social media sites attract, and their very low entry cost, we expected this number to be higher.

Whilst some kind of social media presence was found, it seems retailers are reluctant to expand their activity, with only 12% using more than one form of social media channel to communicate with their target audiences.

## Twitter v Facebook

Although Facebook has been around for two years longer than Twitter, and has a vastly greater user base (350m users, compared to Twitter's 18m) the percentage of brands using these networks was similar, with Twitter taking a slight lead (24% of brands assessed had a Facebook presence and 26% were on Twitter).

Both networks have their advantages, and in most cases a presence on both would be advisable. Twitter is simpler by nature, which makes it potentially easier for businesses to get going with it quickly, and which may account for the slight preference for this network amongst the brands we assessed.

However, Facebook should not be neglected particularly by B2C businesses as it offers an opportunity to engage with real fans of your brand, and with such a large user base and integrated advertising, has great potential value as a marketing tool.

## Lack of integration between retailer websites and social media

A surprisingly high number of brands that had a social media presence on an external channel failed to publicise this on their website. Around three in four (77%) of those with a Twitter account failed to link to it from their website, and the same was true for 67% of those with a Facebook page.

## Blogging is neglected

Only 8% of retailers had a blog on their website, making it the least used of all the main social media channels we assessed.

Of those who blogged only 38% posted daily and the blog was mainly used for product updates (50%) or company news (50%). Smaller retailers (10%) were more likely to blog than larger brands (6%).

# Full results

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## Social media presence

- 42% of the retailers we assessed have some kind of social media presence with either a Facebook page, Twitter account or blog
- Only 12% have more than one social media presence e.g. blog with a Twitter account
- Only 4% have a Facebook page, a Twitter account and a blog
- 26% have a Twitter account
- 24% have a Facebook account
- 8% have a blog
- 1% have user generated content
- 3% have RSS feeds
- 6% have links to other social media on their sites

## Twitter

### Promotion of Twitter accounts:

- 26% have a Twitter account
- Of these, 23% provide a link to their account on their website – all are larger retailers
- 77% of those with a Twitter account provide no link from their website

### Those with Twitter accounts have on average:

- 348 Followers
- 90 users they were following
- A history of 129 tweets

### How Twitter accounts are used:

Of the 26% of companies with Twitter accounts:

- 73% use it for product updates
- 27% use it for customer service
- 62% use it for marketing
- 58% use it to promote company news
- 12% use it to promote blog posts
- 12% use it to link to interesting, related articles

# Full results

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## Facebook

### Promotion of Facebook accounts - of the 24% of companies with Facebook accounts:

- 33% provide a link to their account on their website
- 67% of those with a Facebook account have no link from their website

### How Facebook accounts are used:

- 67% use it for product updates
- 13% use it for customer service
- 42% use it for marketing
- 42% use it to promote company news

## Blogs

### 8% of companies have a blog. Of those who blog:

- 38% post daily
- 50% post monthly
- 12% post more infrequently

### How the blog is used:

- 50% post product updates
- 25% for marketing
- 50% for company news
- 38% links to interesting, relevant articles

## User-generated content

- Only 1% offer user generated content in the form of reviews
- Other types of UGC are completely ignored

## RSS

- 3% offer an RSS feed, and all of these are for blog posts

## Links to other social media

- Only 6% offer links to other types of social media – Youtube, Flickr and iPhone apps

# Full results

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## Company-size comparison

- 42% of large companies are on Twitter, compared to only 12% of small companies
- 36% of large companies are on Facebook, compared to only 16% of small companies
- Small companies are more likely to have a Facebook than a Twitter account. The opposite is true for large companies
- 10% of small companies have blogs, compared to only 6% of large companies
- More large companies have Twitter and Facebook accounts, but when it comes to blogs, small companies are leading the way
- Only 6% offer links to other types of social media – Youtube, Flickr and iPhone apps





Twitter is a micro-blogging network where users can post 140 character messages or 'tweets'. These are then fed out to other users on the Twitter network who have chosen to follow a specific individual, company or brand.

### Key stats

- Twitter has 5.5 million users in the UK
- The average age of a Twitter user is 31, compared to 27 on Facebook

### Definitions

- ✓ **Tweet** – a 140 character message posted on Twitter
- ✓ **Follower** – a user that is following your tweets
- ✓ **Retweet (RT)** – when someone republishes a message, crediting the original author

### Our findings

Our research found that 26% of retailers had a Twitter account – slightly more than the number that had Facebook accounts (24%). Of those with a Twitter account, only 23% provided a link to the account on their website (all those who did were larger retailers).

Across all the Twitter accounts surveyed, the average number of followers was 348. On average, retailers' Twitter accounts followed 90 other users and had tweeted 129 times during the length of time they had been using the service. The most common information communicated via these accounts was product updates (73%), followed by marketing (62%), and company news (58%).



### Star example: eSpares [www.espares.co.uk](http://www.espares.co.uk)

(<http://twitter.com/espares>)

eSpares is a specialist retailer selling spare parts for kitchen and home accessories.

The eSpares Twitter account is a great example of how a retailer can build up a following and really connect with its customers and prospects in a natural and engaging way.

The page has a personalised background and detailed content in its biography. It even declares that it will “willingly talk food, music, pop culture and all things eSpares too”.

The tweets themselves are a mixture of offers, competitions, product information, customer service, and general advice and chit chat - plus some off-the-wall comments on totally unrelated subjects.

This approach helps to create a human face for the brand and keep followers engaged. The result is a follower base of over 761 to date – not bad for a retailer selling spare parts!

# Section 1 Analysis - Twitter



Star example: eSpares [www.espareshop.co.uk](http://www.espareshop.co.uk)

(<http://twitter.com/espareshop>)

twitter

30 DAY  
30 PRIZES

Hey there! eSpares is using Twitter.

Twitter is a free service that lets you keep in touch with people through the exchange of quick, frequent answers to one simple question: What's happening? Join today to start receiving eSpares's tweets.

Join today!

Already using Twitter from your phone? Click here.

Name eSpares  
Location UK  
Web <http://www.espareshop.co.uk>  
Bio Samara will help you find spares for your kitchen appliances, Flymo and Karcher. Will willingly talk food, music, pop culture and all things eSpares too!

962 following 761 followers 20 listed

Tweets 1,568

Following

View all...

RSS feed of eSpares's tweets

@socialemail Thanks for the Follow Friday loving last week; we really appreciate it!

about 2 hours ago from TweetDeck in reply to socialemail

RT @ticlean: [www.makeitandmendit.com](http://www.makeitandmendit.com) Mending your own kitchen equipment - finding and using parts that you can buy online at eSpares

about 2 hours ago from TweetDeck

The penultimate winner of our #FIY competition is Laurence Bodiam with his Dyson belt story. Read it here: <http://bit.ly/8TvYi>

about 19 hours ago from TweetDeck

Darrell Burnell sets a great #FIY example with his shout of "we can fix that!". A worthy winner of the iStation <http://bit.ly/8TvYi>

8:44 AM Jan 30th from TweetDeck

Another reason to love eSpares: We'll never stop you from shopping in your pajamas: <http://bit.ly/dgQz85>

6:44 AM Jan 29th from TweetDeck

@algermonradish Sad news; the door handle was made obsolete...checked our warehouse and we haven't got any old stock. Really sorry.....

4:04 AM Jan 29th from TweetDeck in reply to algermonradish

@algermonradish Just looking now, will be back with an update soon!

3:56 AM Jan 29th from TweetDeck in reply to algermonradish

tweet your  
FIX IT YOURS  
story to win  
#FIY

Penultimate winner of our #FIY competition is Laurence Bodiam with his Dyson belt story. Read it here: <http://bit.ly/8TvYi>

about 19 hours ago from TweetDeck

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6:44 AM Jan 29th from TweetDeck

### Top 10 tips for retailers using Twitter:

1. **Make sure you register your brand name ASAP!** – with the popularity of Twitter increasing at a phenomenal rate, it's vital to claim your ID before someone else gets it first.
2. **Write a biography** – think carefully about what you want to write in the biography section; this is your opportunity to sell yourself.
3. **Add your logo and design a background** – creating a customer Twitter background and featuring your branding and logo will help to strengthen your online identity and encourage recognition in the busy Twitter 'market place'.
4. **Use hash tags in your tweets** – users can track tagged keywords (eg #iPad), so if you use a relevant tag that is trending you will increase the likelihood of people coming across your content .
5. **Encourage 'retweeting'** – getting your followers to retweet your posts is a great way to spread your influence. Keep your tweets short and engaging to maximise retweet potential and don't be afraid to ask followers to retweet a post.
6. **Engage** – rather than using Twitter solely as a broadcast tool, don't be afraid to engage with followers. Use @replies to respond publicly (this will notify the original poster of your response and thread it so other users can follow the conversation), or direct messaging to respond to something privately, for example if you receive a complaint or query about a specific order.
7. **Get ready for customer service enquiries** – it's highly likely you will be contacted via Twitter with customer service questions. These shouldn't be ignored. Be prepared for your reader to tell you how best to deal with them.
8. **Special offers work** – Dell generated \$6.5m of revenue on Twitter alone by using offers! We all love a discount and what better way to spread the news of your offer than on a social network.
9. **Be generous** – retweet or comment on tweets by other people and show them you're not just interested in what your brand has to say.
10. **Monitor** – make sure you monitor what tweeters are saying about your brand or your industry so you can pick up the positives and negatives and handle them effectively. Twitter search or Tweetbeep are great applications for this.

### And a word of caution...

Be aware of Twitter 'follow bots' – some companies use bots to automatically follow users (sometimes randomly, sometimes targeted to demographic data or use of key words) in the hope that users will follow them back. This may have some small value in increasing your base of followers, but is seen as annoying and intrusive by most users and may earn you a poor reputation.



Facebook is a social network that was originally set up to be used by students on a university campus in the US. Facebook is now the most widely used network in the world with more than 350m users.

### Key stats

- Facebook has around 23 million users in the UK
- 50% of active Facebook users log on to their accounts every day

### Definitions

- ✓ **Fan page** – a fan page is similar to an individual's profile page, but is designed specifically for brands, companies or causes
- ✓ **Wall** – this is an area on a profile or fan page where you can post updates

### Our findings

About a quarter of the retailers we assessed (24%) had some sort of presence on Facebook – a relatively low number considering Facebook is still the largest social network in the world.

As with Twitter, only one third of the retailers surveyed, publicised their Facebook presence on their website. Product updates were the most commonly shared information by those with Facebook fan pages (67%), followed by marketing and company news (both 42%).

**Star example: ASOS** [www.asos.com](http://www.asos.com)

(<http://www.facebook.com/ASOSOfficial>)

ASOS.com is major online fashion retailer, offering celebrity 'looks' which shoppers can emulate at affordable prices. The ASOS Facebook page has over 196,000 fans, and is a good example of how to use Facebook content to create a customer community.

The Facebook pages encourage fans to post pictures and videos of themselves in their favourite outfits as well as providing product information, competitions and special offers.



### Top 10 tips for retailers using Facebook:

1. **Use your logo** – it makes sense to use your logo as your profile picture. This will help increase brand awareness.
2. **Run a Facebook exclusive competition** – reward your fans and encourage more customers to sign-up by running exclusive competitions, only open to Facebook fans.
3. **Include 'become a fan' links in your email marketing** – linking email marketing to social media can be very powerful, so publicise your fan page in your newsletters.
4. **Publicise your Facebook presence on your website** – make sure your website users know about your Facebook profile/fan page and can access it directly from your website.
5. **Bring some personality to your updates** – using a corporate tone won't work on Facebook, so keep it informal and friendly.
6. **Remember your audience** – Facebook is generally used to stay in touch with 'real-life' friends so bear this in mind when it comes to the tone of your posts. You aren't writing for the boardroom. Keep content informal, friendly and interesting.
7. **Post product pictures** – if you have some great product imagery, or photos of people using your products, post it all on Facebook and encourage your fans to share it with their friends.
8. **Distribute unique discounts** – reward your supporters and increase your Facebook fan base by encouraging existing fans to spread the word to their friends
9. **Ask for feedback** – do you have a new product you're thinking of launching? Why not ask for feedback from your Facebook fans; this will make them feel valued and help to encourage loyalty and referrals along with building anticipation and awareness of the new product.
10. **Try experimenting with some Facebook ads** – this is a different (and paid for) Facebook service which allows you to target all Facebook users in your demographic rather than just your own fans.

Facebook provides a range of interactive possibilities for engaging your fans. Why not explore how you can use Facebook to:

- Invite people to events
- Post video
- Create and join networks
- Mass message your fans
- Advertise



**BLOG** – A blog or ‘web log’ is a type of website that contains regular entries or updates, usually in chronological order like a journal. Blogs are usually managed by one or more ‘bloggers’.

### Key stats

- 60% of bloggers are 18-44 and two out of three are male
- 96% of bloggers are amateurs

### Definitions

✓ **RSS Feed** – this is a technology that allows readers to subscribe to websites’ feeds and have updates aggregated into one place as they are released. This content can be viewed in an RSS reader or via email.

### Our findings

Only 8% of the retailers we looked at had a blog on their website and of those who did, the posting was infrequent, with only 38% posting daily. 50% posted monthly, with a further 12% not even managing this level of regularity.

Half of those that had a blog used it for product updates or company news. Only 25% used it for marketing (e.g. sales promotions) whilst 38% reported links to interesting or relevant articles.



### Star example: Topshop

(<http://insideout.topshop.com>)

Topshop’s ‘Inside Out’ blog is a great example of how a brand can effectively use a blog site to add something extra to its website and convey more of the brand’s personality.

The content of the blog is a mixture of product information and additional ‘lifestyle’ editorial that its target demographic would likely be interested in.

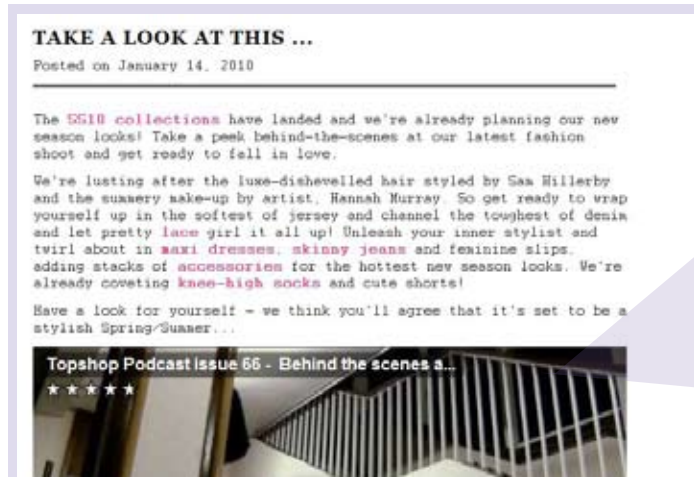
The former is always put in context and doesn’t just read like a dry product description.

The content takes a variety of forms, with text updates appearing alongside images and videos.

The large number of comments demonstrates the high level of engagement that Topshop has with its customers through the blog site.

## Section 3 Analysis - Blogging

### Star example: Topshop





### Top 10 tips for retailers who blog:

1. **Study the web analytics for your blog site** – which posts pulled a high volume of traffic or generated the most comments? This will help you create the most compelling content for future posts.
2. **Shorter is better** – writing for a blog requires different skills than normal copywriting. Take a leaf out of the book of tabloid newspapers and keep your sentences and paragraphs short and to the point.
3. **Publicise your posts on social media** – make sure you notify Twitter or Facebook followers about your latest posts to drive traffic back to your site.
4. **Don't make your posts too commercial** – it's not all about sell, sell, sell! Your readers are likely to come back if there is plenty of useful content that resonates with them without pushing products too heavily.
5. **Make your headlines snappy** – keep your headline short and intriguing to encourage visitors to click through and read the full post.
6. **Always respond to comments** – if someone leaves a comment – good or bad – always reply. This will let users know you care about feedback and encourage real engagement by generating rapport.
7. **Embrace the blogosphere** – a great way to increase awareness of your blog is to read other blogs, making sure you leave a comment so others know you are active in the blogosphere.
8. **Invite guest bloggers** – why not invite a customer to blog, or even a partner or supplier? It will help to keep content varied and high profile names can attract new followers.
9. **Include keywords in your posts** – use your blog to drive SEO. Ensure your blog site is hosted on a separate IP to your ecommerce site and include plenty of keywords with links back to your main site to help drive SEO.
10. **Blog often** – infrequent blog posts aren't really going to cut the mustard. Blogging on a regular basis will help build up and maintain a following.



**USER GENERATED CONTENT (UGC)** – this refers to content that is created by an end user and made publically available.

In the context of this report we looked for UGC that took the form of:

- » User forums
- » User reviews
- » User ratings
- » User polls/voting

Whilst these forms of UGC are not social networks in their own right, they provide ideal viral content for sharing through social media.

### Key stats

- More than half of UK online customers say reviews are ‘extremely important’ or ‘very important’ in making an online purchase, and more than half say they have more trust and respect for brands that show product reviews.

### Definitions

- ✓ **Viral** – a process whereby content is passed ‘virally’ between users rather than being pushed out by the content publisher.

### Our findings

Building user trust and confidence is key to the success of an ecommerce site. Peer recommendation and UGC are highly effective tools for this, adding credibility to existing content and helping to nurture confidence in the online brand.

Only 1% of the retailers we studied included any form of user generated content on their website. This 1% included user reviews, albeit sparingly, but ignored other types of UGC such as polls or videos.

Remember, ‘social researchers’ make up a growing and increasingly significant proportion of online shoppers. They will seek out and find the product reviews and UGC they need, before they make their purchase decision. So give them what they need.

## Section 4 Analysis - User generated content



### Star example: Amazon

(<http://www.amazon.com>)

It wouldn't be right to talk about UGC in retailing without mentioning Amazon!

The US-based company helped to pioneer the concept of user reviews which are now a key part of their product pages. User reviews quickly and easily generate more content for the site, all contributed by customers.

By allowing visitors to vote on the comments that have been left, Amazon is effectively able to filter out anything that is not useful or relevant, again by remaining passive and giving control to users.



### Top 10 tips for retailers using UGC:

1. **Start a user forum** – encourage users to discuss your products, offer suggestions, share experiences and post queries for other users to answer. Helping your customers to help themselves is a great way to build a sense of community around your brand and build trust.
2. **User reviews** – encourage customers to write their own reviews about your products. This will help build trust in your site and help users to reach a purchase decision.
3. **Video reviews** – video reviews submitted by users will help potential buyers to see your products in action, and increase user engagement.
4. **Run competitions** – to encourage UGC uploads, run a competition with a prize each month for the best submission.
5. **Build UGC into product pages** – make product pages more engaging and dynamic by incorporating UGC, such as user videos, image galleries and comments.
6. **Encourage UGC in post-transaction emails** – suggesting to customers that they review their latest purchase is a great way to boost UGC submissions.
7. **Use the community to self-regulate** – use ‘alert’ buttons on comments or reviews to prioritise helpful posts and report offensive or unhelpful material.
8. **Enable user review voting** – encourage visitors to vote on the best reviews to make the UGC even more useful and relevant for shoppers.
9. **Set up channels on Flickr or YouTube** – add a more ‘social’ element to UGC submissions by setting up channels on sites like Flickr or YouTube.
10. **Add ‘Share this’ social links** – to encourage viral spread of the UGC and your site.

In addition to the social media and UGC already covered, there is a vast array of different social networks and channels out there, which retailers can further tap into.

These can provide more targeted channels to suit particular retailers, e.g. LinkedIn for B2B retailers, and MySpace for youth orientated retailers.

### Definitions

- ✓ **LinkedIn** – a niche social network geared towards professionals
- ✓ **MySpace** – a social network targeted at a younger demographic than Facebook. Now focuses very heavily on music
- ✓ **YouTube** – a video sharing site on which users can upload, share, view and comment on videos including video blogs and user generated video content
- ✓ **iPhone apps** - 3rd party software and applications available the Apple iPhone

### Our findings

Only 6% of the retailers we assessed used any social media other than the networks already discussed. The other external social media channels used were YouTube, Flickr and iPhone Apps.



#### Star example: Asda

<http://www.youtube.com/user/savingyoumoneytv>

<http://www.marketingweek.co.uk/news/asda-launches-money-saving-youtube-tv/2064498.article>

Asda's 'Saving You Money TV' YouTube channel is a good example of a brand adding value to its customers using social media.

The popularity of YouTube and video in general is soaring on the internet and Asda uses this to good effect with a range of short films and video blogs that provide practical advice for consumers looking to save an extra bit of cash during the recession.

The videos themselves feature real people - e.g. Asda staff and customers - and are nicely geared towards their target consumer. There are a number of seasonal videos too which are likely to make them even more popular and relevant to viewers.



# Conclusion

Our study clearly shows there is a lot more that online retailers – both large and small - can do to exploit the growing opportunities presented by social media marketing.

Many retailers are merely dipping their toes into the water of social media and not making significant efforts to engage with their customers directly through the most relevant social channels. Whilst there are some examples of online retailers doing a great job of using social media channels to their full advantage, the majority are missing out on these opportunities.

Entry costs into social media marketing are low, and the potential for spreading marketing messages virally through social media sites is high. In today's challenging economic climate, no online retailer can afford to miss out on the highly cost-effective audience reach and influence these channels can offer.

## What's Next?

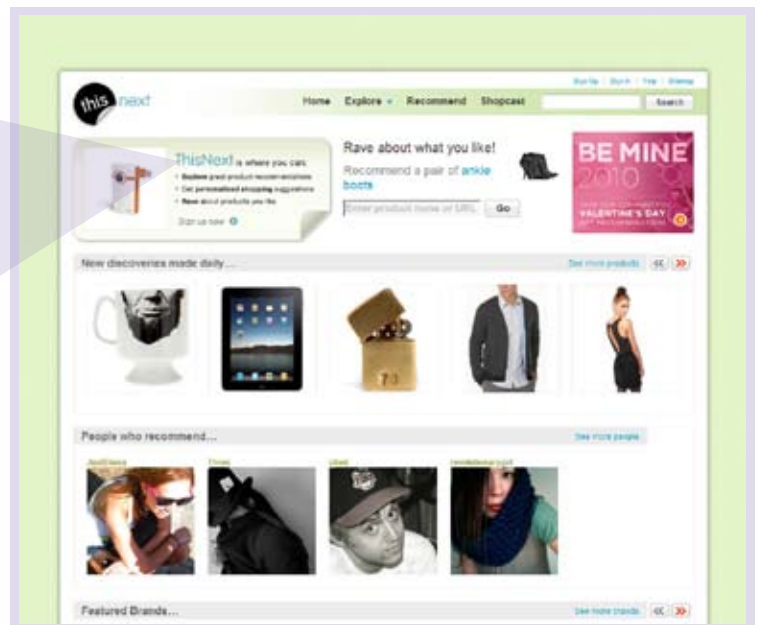
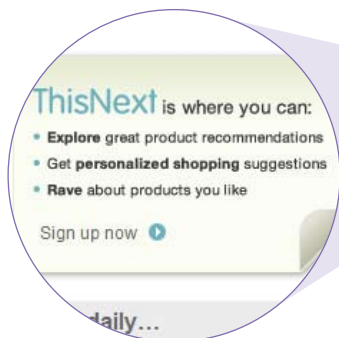
When it comes to the fast pace of social networks, the flavour of the month now may be next month's old hat. It's important for retailers to monitor emerging social media trends to maximise their potential benefits.

At dotCommerce, we've picked out some of the new developments to watch out for in 2010:

### Product Sharing: 'This is next'

<http://www.thisisnext.com>

Sites like [www.thisisnext.com](http://www.thisisnext.com) use 'product sharing' which allows users to subscribe to and post their own product recommendations and 'shopcast' these across their social networks creating a highly engaged community of online shoppers.



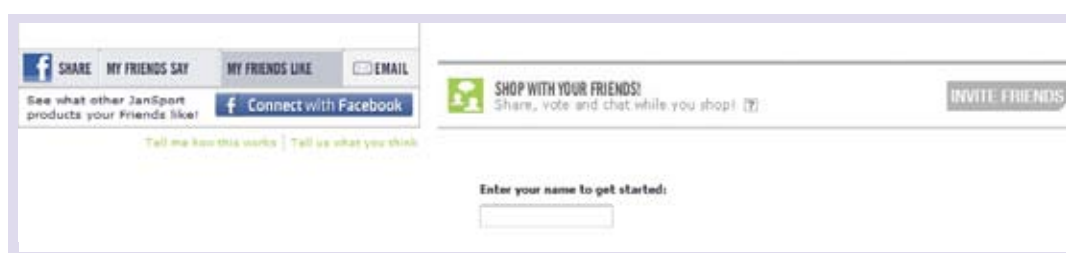
# Conclusion



## Shop with Your Friends

In a similar vein, 'Shopping with Your Friends' has the potential to change the way users make their purchase decisions online. A 'Shop with Your Friends' link lets users invite their friends into the online stores they are shopping in, to chat about the items they are viewing and picking. Users can also see how their Facebook friends rate the products they are picking and what other products they prefer.

It is likely that more online shops will incorporate features like these to change the way online buyers review and recommend products. In doing so, they will really take advantage of the collaboration and engagement brought by social media to build loyal customers and even extend their customer base.



# Conclusion



## Top 10 tips for retailers using social media:

- ✓ **Objectives not channels** - focus on the objectives and overall strategy first as that will determine the right channels to use
- ✓ **Decide who you want to reach first** – analyse your audience and then work out the most appropriate social media channels to reach them
- ✓ **Measurement is important** – as with all marketing, measuring the effectiveness of what you are doing is crucial so make sure you have criteria in place. Use tracking URLs to track clicks and traffic from social media links to your website
- ✓ **Monitor what is being said** – set up alerts so that you can see who is saying what about your brand, and where
- ✓ **Act and react** – if someone has mentioned you on a social network, make sure you reply or take action as quickly as possible
- ✓ **Be honest** – if you make a mistake, own up and put it right; social media is not the place for ‘cover-ups’
- ✓ **Use social sharing links** – add ‘share this’ links to your pages and emails to encourage users to share your content
- ✓ **Add value** – Creating great content that really helps your visitors and customers is absolutely vital to successful social media marketing
- ✓ **Avoid being too self-promotional** – don’t just talk about your own brand and offers all the time; try to include more general content which will interest your target audience as well
- ✓ **Be part of the community** – social media is all about people. So personalise your brand and join in the conversation

To download this report in full follow this [social media ecommerce solutions](http://www.dotcommerce.co.uk/socialmedia) link or go to [www.dotcommerce.co.uk/socialmedia](http://www.dotcommerce.co.uk/socialmedia)

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# Sources

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Twitter has 5.5 million users in the UK alone

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/technology/twitter/6593765/Profile-of-a-Twitter-user-young-Labour-and-from-London.html>

The median age of a Twitter user is 31, compared to 27 on Facebook

<http://www.clickymedia.co.uk/2009/12/uk-facebook-user-statistics-december-2009>

Facebook has around 23 million users in the UK

<http://www.clickymedia.co.uk/2009/12/uk-facebook-user-statistics-december-2009>

50% of active Facebook users log on to Facebook in any given day

<http://www.clickymedia.co.uk/2009/12/uk-facebook-user-statistics-december-2009>

60% of bloggers are 18-44 and two out of three are male

<http://technorati.com/blogging/article/state-of-the-blogsphere-2009-introduction>

96% of bloggers are amateurs

<http://technorati.com/blogging/article/state-of-the-blogsphere-2009-introduction>

700m photos are uploaded to Facebook every single month

[http://www.youtube.com/t/fact\\_sheet](http://www.youtube.com/t/fact_sheet)

More than half of UK online customers say reviews are extremely or very important in making an online purchase, and more than half say they have more trust and respect for a brands that show product reviews

Econsultancy/Bizaarvoice/Vizu Research 2007



# About dotCommerce

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## Affordable, flexible, *total* ecommerce

dotCommerce offers the key advantages of a pre-built platform - affordability and fast deployment. The unique difference is, we can tailor dotCommerce to fit your specific business needs, just like a bespoke solution.

So you enjoy the best of all worlds.

Developed by the creators of dotMailer - the much loved, leading email marketing platform – dotCommerce is designed to fit the needs of any business that wants an ecommerce site that drives traffic, drives conversions and drives growth.

## Outstanding value, proven performance

Whether you sell 10 products or thousands of products, dotCommerce comes in a choice of flexible packages so that whatever your set-up and goals dotCommerce will deliver outstanding value to your business:

- ✓ **A fully managed setup**  
We'll handle all the work and technical issues for you – from scoping and spec, to wire frames, design, tailoring, deployment and hosting
- ✓ **Unbeatable ongoing support**  
Our client care team are here to make your life easier
- ✓ **Future-proof, flexible and extensible features and functionality**  
It's easy and affordable to grow your site as your business needs grow
- ✓ **Includes dotEditor – powerful CMS for page creation and editing**  
Easily manage all your site content
- ✓ **Includes a free dotMailer Enterprise licence and sends – worth over £1,000**  
For powerful, integrated email marketing and triggered emails
- ✓ **Entry level pricing – with access to enterprise level functionality**

## Interested?

Get in touch for more details and pricing.

Give us a call on: 0208 239 1146  
Send us an email: [info@dotCommerce.co.uk](mailto:info@dotCommerce.co.uk)  
Visit us online: [www.dotCommerce.co.uk](http://www.dotCommerce.co.uk)

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