Facebook for Wine Brands: An Analysis of Strategies for Facebook Posts and User Engagement Actions

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Abstract:

Purpose: This paper provides an insight into the strategies for Facebook posts of 12 Australian wine brands over a 12 month period. The results show the average post engagement figures, in addition to post scheduling implications regarding the time of day of Facebook posts and the day of the week of Facebook posts.

Design/methodology/approach: The data for this study was derived from Facebook Insights. Facebook Insights data was collected from 12 wine brands over a 12 months period. Descriptive analysis was undertaken to determine the average engagement metrics used to derive key results.

Findings: The findings demonstrate an alarmingly low rate of engagement among the fans of the wine brand Facebook pages. The average number of comments, likes and shares on a post are provided. The results also indicate that engagement actions vary depending on the day of the week and hour of the day in which the post is made.

Practical implications: Australian wine brands can use the findings from this paper as a guideline and benchmarking tool for assessing their own post performance and user engagement metrics on Facebook.

Keywords: Facebook, social media, Facebook Insights, engagement

1. INTRODUCTION

Social media has become a mainstream media platform that connects one-third of the world's population {Nelson-Field, 2012 #553}. It offers advertisers access to eighty per cent of global consumer expenditures, a $29 trillion market {Nuttney, 2010 #493}. Communications budgets continue to be re-balanced as advertisers move away from traditional media and invest greater resources into digital advertising and social media. For example, it is estimated that over 15 million brands globally are registered with the social media site, Facebook {Koetsier, 2013 #656}. The emergence of social media platforms and increasing customer adoption of these platforms has precipitated a paradigm shift, significantly altering the way customers communicate and interact with each other and with businesses. For example, there are more than one billion members of Facebook, and Twitter now has more than 280 million monthly active users {Stieglitz, 2014 #679}. Considering the high levels of competition within the Australian wine industry, it is not surprising that many brands are seeking new and innovative ways to communicate with consumers. Social media sites such as Facebook have become an increasingly popular customer touch point, with the viral and social capabilities of these online networks creating a new forum for customer interaction with wine brands {Barber, 2008 #33;Bulearca, 2010 #29;Keller, 2009 #24;Barber, 2008 #33;Bulearca, 2010 #29;Keller, 2009 #24}.

Marketing practitioners have been quick to recognise the value of social media platforms, rapidly integrating such platforms into the marketing mix {Stelzner, 2014 #552;Sinclair, 2014 #547;Bergen, 2014 #548}. There are currently more than 2.500 Australian and New Zealand wineries with a presence on Facebook {Mastermind, 2015 #770}. Wine is an experiential product {Bruwer, 2009 #634}, and as Australian wine brands compete to attract and retain consumers, many are embracing social media to reach their consumers and communicate their brand experience, quality and personality {Vinography, 2012 #771}. Further, research has suggested that 90 percent of wine drinkers use Facebook for at least 6.2 hours per week {Breslin, 2013 #772}. Some wine brands are achieving success through social media, with documented examples demonstrating that small and large wineries have achieved a positive return on investment through the implementation of successful social media strategies. Several scholarly studies have explored social media practices within the wine industry. Of wineries studied in Australia, Canada, New Zealand, Spain, Italy, South Africa and the US, 35% have reported using social media for the primary reasons of communicating with customers about events at the winery, and promoting wines {Alonso, 2013 #775}. Scholars have also suggested that social media assists with wine sales as word of mouth is particularly effective among wine consumers {Leigon, 2011 #777}, with the socialisation aspect of social media acting as an appropriate fit with wine, allowing consumers to exchange information and encourage others to try different wines {Wilson, 2012 #779}.

While the use of social media to interact with customers is increasing, many practitioners have identified a lack of awareness and knowledge regarding effective social media strategy, including limited understanding of how customers might engage with posts and post scheduling information. This has created a significant challenge as practitioners navigate this forum with little guidance and empirical understanding {Stelzner, 2014 #552}. In order to contribute to a deeper understanding of social media strategies for wine brands, this paper focusses on two main research questions and resultant contributions;

1. What data is available to wine marketing practioners and researchers to enhance knowledge regarding social media marketing strategies and user engagement within social media?
2. How does this data provide insight into the marketing activities of Australian wine brands and the corresponding performance metrics, such as post engagement scores, for these activities?

The research questions are addressed through the use of Facebook Insights data, a source of data available to the administrators of Facebook pages. By analysing this data, the paper contributes to our understanding of wine brand marketing efforts through social media by providing academics and marketing practitioners insight into the nature of the data available, and greater detail surrounding the design and delivery of social media content in the wine industry.

The paper is structured as follows. Firstly, the research method is introduced, outlining the use of Facebook Insights data derived from Australian wine brands. The key results derived from this data are presented, including insights into post engagement in terms of the average number of comments, clicks, likes, shares, dormancy and negative feedback on Facebook posts. Key findings regarding post scheduling are also presented, including analysis of the post time of day and day of the week.

2 RESEARCH METHOD

In order to address the first research question, this paper demonstrates how Facebook Insights data can be used by wine marketing practitioners and researchers. This study is conducted with data derived from the Australian wine industry. Facebook Insights is a tool accessible by administrators of Facebook brand pages which enables high-level monitoring of the activities on occur on that page. Facebook Insights allows administrators to download data concerning the performance of a post. The post performance metrics used in this study are provided in Table 1.For each of the 12 wine brands that participated in the study, Facebook Insights data for 'Post Performance' was captured for all posts from the 1st of January 2013 through to the 31st of December, 2013. Each 'Insights' data set was collated into a master excel file which was then uploaded into SPSS Statistics v22 for further analysis. Descriptive results were generated using the descriptive statistics function of SPSS Statistics v22.

Table 1 provides a summary of the metrics used in this study as sourced from Facebook Insights.

Table 1. Facebook Insights Post Metrics

Metric	Description
Type	Status, photo, video
Comments	Total number of comments made in response to the page post
Likes	Total number of likes received by the page post
Shares	Total number of shares received by the page post
Created Time	Date, day and time that the post was created
Clicks to play	Relevant to video post type only. Total number of time the video way clicked to play
Link click	Total number of clicks on a link within the page post
Other click	Number of clicks on the page post (excluding link clicks, clicks to play video and photo view clicks)
Photo view	Total number of times the page post photo was viewed
Post reach	Post reach is the number of people who have seen the post. The post counts as reaching someone when it's shown in the "News Feed". Figures are for the first 28 days after a post was created and include people viewing the post on desktop and mobile.
Negative Feedback	Total number of negative feedback clicks, separated into four metrics; 'hide post', 'hide all posts', 'report as spam' and 'unlike page'
Post time	Time of day in which the post was delivered by the wine brand to the fans news feeds
Post day	Day of the week in which the post was delivered by the wine brand to the fans news feeds
Post month	Month of the year in which the post was delivered by the wine brand to the fans news feeds

4 RESULTS

4.1 Overall Post Engagement

Table 2 presents the average results for post engagement for the entire data set, irrespective of the type of the post, post time of the day or post day of the week. The average number of times a post is commented on is 2 times. This figure is extremely low. To put this in to perspective, the average number of people a post reached was 730. This means that less than 1% of users who see the Facebook post, make a comment. The highest number of comments a post received was 121. Posts receive on average 22 'likes'. This is just 3% of people who saw the post in their news feed. On average posts are shared 2 times, within a maximum of 105 shares achieved. Again, this is a very low level engagement, with less than 1% of the total fans reached (average reach = 730) engaging by sharing a post. These findings coincide with an alarmingly high rate of dormancy. The figures in Table 2 indicate that on average only 10% (90% dormancy rate) of users who see a post from a wine brand in their news feed engage by actions such as commenting, liking, sharing, watching video, clicking on the post, viewing photos, hiding post, reporting posts or un-liking the page.

Table 2 Descriptive Results for Post Engagement

Engagement action	Min	Max	Average
Comments	0	121	2
Likes	0	629	22
Shares	0	105	2
Click to play video	0	36	0.1
Link click	0	76	2
Other click	0	491	27
Photo View	0	473	17
Dormancy*	14%	100%	90%
Hide all posts	0	6	0.2
Hide 1 post	0	2	0.04
Unlike page	0	3	0.05
X button	0	8	0.2
Report post as spam	0	2	0.01

*Dormancy = percentage of people who saw the post in new feed (post reach) and did not engage through commenting, liking, sharing, clicking to play video, clicking on link of photo, or giving negative feedback through hiding all or one post, 'un-liking' page, clicking 'x' button or reporting post as spam.

4.2 Post Type

Within Facebook, wine brands have the option of posting various types of content. This includes text only status updates, photos and videos. Of the 2,236 posts collected over the 12 month period, the most common type of post used by Australian wine brands was the use of photos. A total of 1,500 photos were shared by the wine brands analysed (67.1% of posts). The second most common type of post used was a status, posted 687 times (30.7% of posts). Of the 2,336 posts made, only 49 were videos (2.2%).

It is interesting to compare how the engagement metrics provided through Facebook insights data vary with regard to the three types of posts. In Table 3, it can be seen that posts which are photos have the highest average number of comments (3 comments). Additionally, posts which are photos have the highest average number of likes (28 likes). Posts which are photos also have a slightly higher average number of shares (2 shares) than posts which are statuses or videos.

Table 3 Average Engagement Actions by Post Type

| Post type	Frequency	Average comments per post	Average likes per post	Average shares per post
Status	687	1	8	1
Photo	1500	3	28	2
Video	49	1	6	1

4.3 Post Scheduling

4.3.1 Day of the week

Previous studies of temporal interaction patterns have shown that most of the user activities on Facebook are undertaken during workdays {Golder, 2007 #579}. Further, studies have shown that click through rates of online advertisements decrease significantly on weekends, and people perform less internet searching during weekends than on weekdays {Rutz, 2011 #580}. It can be seen that the lowest level (4.8%) of activity in terms of number of posts

delivered by wine brands over a seven day period occurred on Saturdays with 107 occurrences, while the highest number of posts were shared on Thursdays with 476 occurrences (21.1%).
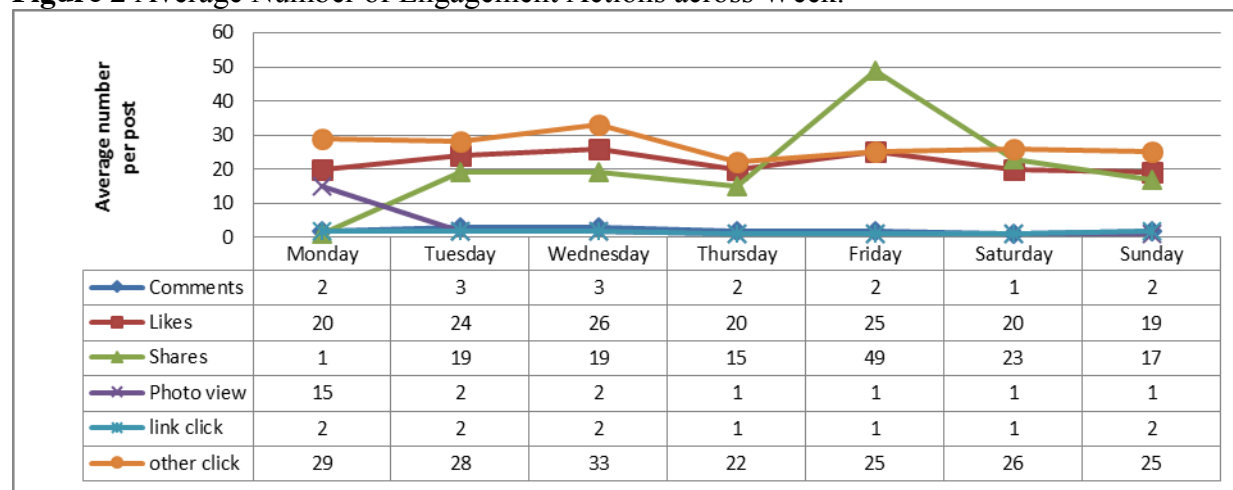
Figure 1 Post Distribution by Week

Distribution of posts by day of week
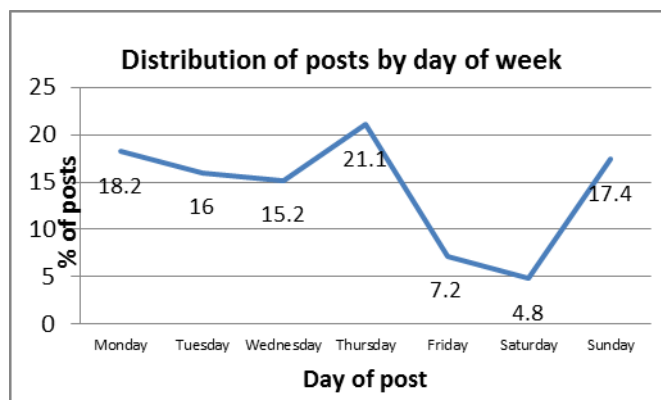
Table 4 Post Distribution by Week

Post Day	No. Posts	Percent of posts (%)
Monday	408	18.2
Tuesday	357	16.0
Wednesday	341	15.2
Thursday	472	21.1
Friday	162	7.2
Saturday	107	4.8
Sunday	389	17.4
Total	**2236**	**100**

A comparison of engagement actions across each day of the week provides an interesting insight for wine brands, as shown in Figure 2 below. Figure 2 shows the distribution of average engagement actions across each day of the week. The average number of comments made on a post remains relatively stable across each day of the week. Similarly, the average number of likes made on a post is relatively consistent across each day of the week, with a slight peak on Wednesday (average = 26 likes). The average number of shares made on a post is significantly higher on Fridays (49). Interestingly, only 7.2% of the total posts were made on a Friday. The average number of times a photo is viewed is higher on a Monday (average of 15 times) and consistently low for the remainder of the week. Similarly, the average number of times a link is clicked on is consistently low regardless of the day of the week. The average number of 'other clicks' on a post are slightly higher on Wednesdays, compared to other days of the week.

Figure 2 Average Number of Engagement Actions across Week.

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
Comments	2	3	3	2	2	1	2
Likes	20	24	26	20	25	20	19
Shares	1	19	19	15	49	23	17
Photo view	15	2	2	1	1	1	1
link click	2	2	2	1	1	1	2
other click	29	28	33	22	25	26	25

4.3.2 Time of the day

The distribution of posts by time was also included the study. Social media users have been

found to engage less during the morning and early afternoon, with increased engagement toward the evening, reaching a steady, high level during the night {Golder, 2007 #579}. Hence, if a post is created in the period when Facebook fans are more active, there is a greater possibility for the brand post to be seen on the wall, resulting in greater potential engagement. Based on this reasoning, this study also controls for the effect of posting time. Figure 3 shows the lowest level of activity in terms of number of posts shared by the wine brand across the day occurs at 10am (.0%, 1 occurrence). The highest number of posts were shared between 5.00 and 7.00pm.
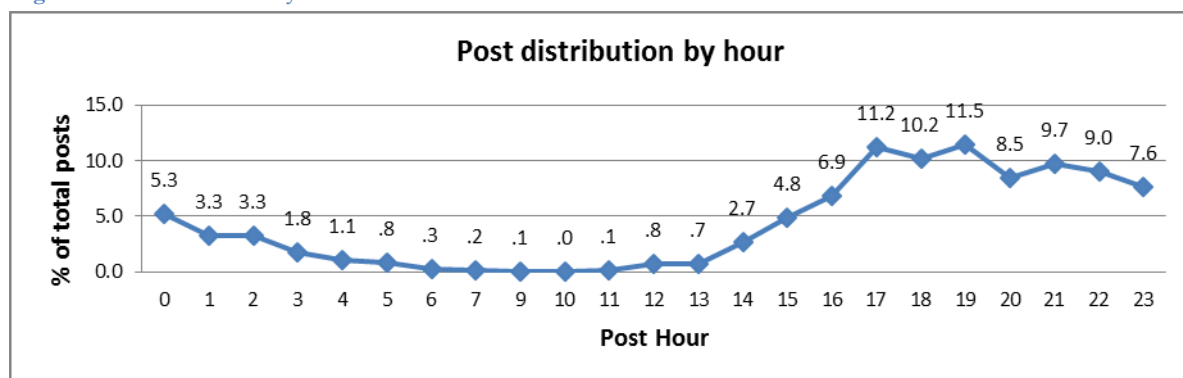
Figure 3 Post Distribution by Hour

Table 3 provided descriptive statistics for post engagement. A comparison of engagement actions across the day provides an interesting insight for wine brands, particularly with regard to post scheduling in order to enhance engagement.

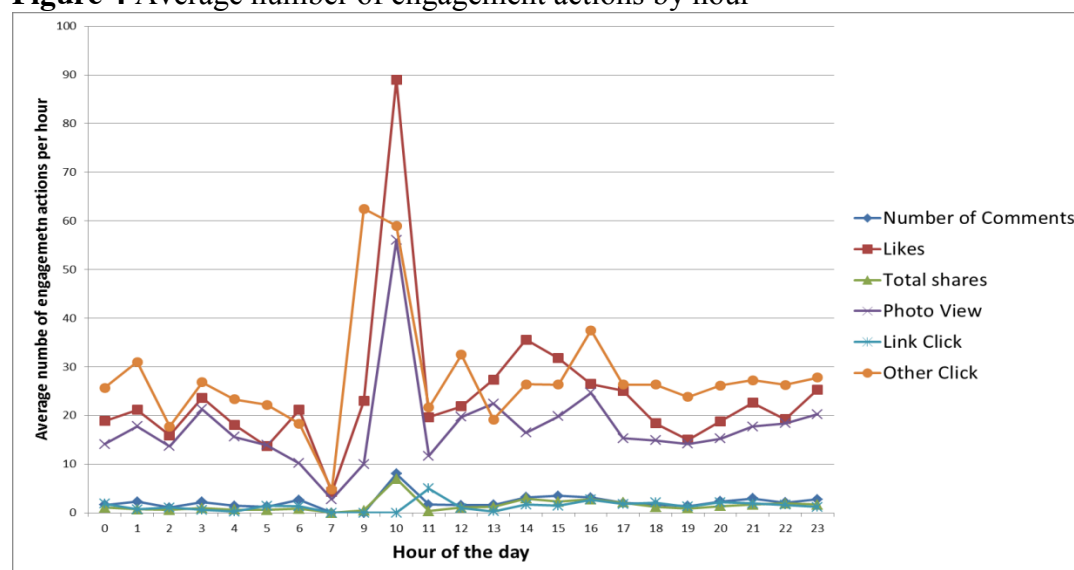**Figure 4** Average number of engagement actions by hour

Figure 4 above shows a sharp increase in the average number of engagement actions between 7am and 11am. Interestingly, Figure 3 showed that wine brands rarely deliver Facebook posts at this time of the day.

5. MANAGERIAL IMPLICATIONS

The high dormancy rate shown in Table 2 demonstrates that there is a significant challenge for marketers who seek to stimulate engagement amongst their brand fans within social media. A majority (90%) of wine brand fans remain dormant and do not actively engage with wine brand content within Facebook. The results also provide significant implications with

regard to determining effect post scheduling strategies in terms of day of the week. Whilst we see in Figure 1 that a majority of posts are made on Thursdays, Figure 2 shows that engagement actions increase on Fridays. It is important for the wine industry to take into consideration when consumers make purchases and consume wine, and schedule their content to be delivered at the relevant time. The {ABS, 2015 #783@@author-year} reported that consumption of wine is greatest on weekends (Friday, Saturday, and Sunday). It is recommended that Australian wine brands interested in analysing their own post performance and user engagement metrics could use these figures to determine industry averages and benchmarks.

6. CONCLUSIONS

This paper provided an overview of the posts made by Australian wine brands on Facebook. A total of 2,236 posts were collected over a 12 month period through the use of the program Facebook Insights. The nature of posts was considered, with specific consideration of the post scheduling patterns and the types of posts used by Australian wine brands. Brands most commonly post photos through Facebook, which have the highest average engagement rates from the number of comments, likes and shares. Analysis of post distribution across the week showed that Australian wine brands post most frequently on Thursdays, and rarely on Saturdays. This was compared to an analysis of how the average number of engagement actions made by users changes across the week, which showed that engagement actions occur more often on Fridays and Wednesdays. A similar analysis was conducted in order to investigate the number of posts made by hour. A large number of wine brand posts are made between 4pm and 9pm. However, Figure 4 showed that the average number of engagement actions is higher for posts made between 8am and 10am. Future research is required to empirically test the relationships between the provision of social media posts and their embedded content with the engagement behaviour of users. This will allow enhanced understanding of how wine brands can strategically design and deliver content in order to facilitate increased engagement amongst users.

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