



Starcom MediaVest Group™
The Human Experience Company

WAITROSE WINNING SUPERMARKET WAR IN SOCIAL MEDIA THIS CHRISTMAS

- New study shows Waitrose is best at converting social media users into paying customers, with Sainsbury's and Tesco activity having the least impact -
- Shoppers engaging with a brand on social media are twice as likely to shop there this Christmas, according to new *Supermarket UK* study -

Waitrose is winning the social media war this Christmas, converting the most online visitors into paying customers and brand advocates, accordingly to the latest *Supermarket UK* study from Starcom MediaVest Group (SMG). Waitrose, with its focus on engaging content, is having a far higher impact on consumer behaviour than Sainsbury's and Tesco.

The study also revealed that shoppers taking an action on a supermarket Facebook page are twice as likely to shop there this Christmas, with 87% intending purchase compared to 43% of those that just visit the page. On YouTube this is even greater, with 89% of those interacting online planning purchase, versus 36%. The insight also shows Twitter activity is a strong sign of brand commitment, with 92% of followers and 93% of those tweeting about a brand intending purchase this Christmas.

The research was undertaken in late November 2011 by leading communications strategy, media buying and management agency, SMG. Using its proprietary research tool to measure the value of a fan on social media, the Social Media Behaviour Index (SMBI) has analysed the strategies of the 'Big 6' supermarkets in the UK – Waitrose, Tesco, Sainsbury's, ASDA, Morrisons and the Co-Operative.

SMBI looks beyond a simple 'like', investigating the value of social media actions – for example posting a comment, viewing a video, playing a game, tweeting or entering a competition. It provides brands with a benchmark to help improve content to influence brand advocacy and purchase intent. As SMBI takes account of many differing factors, it is never seen as a positive or negative, rather as a bespoke measure of the strength of relationship between content and its influence on consumer behaviour. So the higher the SMBI score, the more opportunities have been identified to improve influence and the lower the score, the less opportunity because the brand is already doing well here.

Supermarket UK - Social Media Behavioural Index of Facebook - November 2011

	Impact	Purchase Intent		SMBI
	<i>Positive reaction to Facebook – average initial response across sensory, emotional & intellectual measures</i>	<i>Of those taking an action</i>	<i>Of those not taking an action</i>	<i>Strength of relationship between interaction and purchase intent (high score = level of opportunity identified; low score = brand already doing well)</i>
Waitrose	60%	92%	59%	155
The Co-operative	47%	87%	30%	291
ASDA	46%	85%	38%	223
Morrisons	53%	84%	35%	239
Tesco	45%	83%	42%	196
Sainsbury's	42%	76%	32%	240

Jim Kite, strategic development director, Starcom MediaVest Group said: *“In a difficult economic environment every pound spent on media and marketing is scrutinised closely for return on investment. Last Christmas the big six supermarkets spent a combined £69m on media support for their festive campaigns, and all indications are pointing toward a similar investment in 2011. Yet up until now, no one has been able to measure the impact of social media with any certainty.*

Waitrose will therefore be very pleased to see SMBI independently verifying that its increased investment in social media this Christmas is converting site visitors into paying customers and brand advocates at a higher rate than its competitors. Waitrose’s clever mix of cooking videos and recipes from well-known cooks, expert Q&A, and interactive step-by-step Christmas roast planner are clearly resonating strongly with site visitors and adding value to their shopping experience. By comparison, the Tesco and Sainsbury’s content is having less impact on consumer behaviour.”

The SMBI tool measures responses to brand content on social media platforms like Facebook, Twitter and YouTube. Since June 2011, it has measured the responses of 8,000 consumers to 37 brands in seven categories, including 1,500 people across a mix of age and social grades in the retail sector. Understanding interaction and the influence this has on brand advocacy and purchase intent helps brands and planners optimise social media content to have the strongest impact on behaviour. SMG is the only UK media agency investigating the value of social media actions to this degree.

Supermarket UK is an industry-wide series of studies into the changing values and behaviours of shoppers to the big six supermarkets - Tesco, ASDA, Waitrose, Sainsbury’s, Morrisons and the Co-Operative. It investigates the effect of societal changes - including the economy, new technologies and social media - on supermarket consumer behaviour, and examines trends for the future. A third phase of research will be released in Q1 and will culminate in a full report to be published in 2012.

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More information

A full research deck is available detailing the results of the SMBI research. SMG’s blog site www.emergingspaces.co.uk is a great resource for insight.

Spokespeople

Jim Kite, strategic development director for Starcom MediaVest Group
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Stewart Easterbrook, chief executive of Starcom MediaVest Group

About Starcom MediaVest Group

Starcom MediaVest Group (SMG) is a global leader in communications strategy, media buying and management, response media, internet and digital communications. SMG London operates as the EMEA Centre of Excellence, driving change across the media industry through investment in digital, content, social media, technology, data and research.

SMG’s purpose, as ‘The Human Experience Company’, is to transform human behaviour by creating uplifting, meaningful experiences in real time, enabling clients to forge a deeper connection with their consumers. SMG operates two separate agencies under the group banner –MediaVest and Starcom– each built around a distinct focus and expertise set, representing global brands such as Proctor & Gamble, Samsung and Honda.

SMG London picked up an Arquiva for the Kiss radio and Blackberry partnership this year and SMG was the most awarded global media agency at the Festival of Media Awards 2011, winning eight category awards and

two commendations.

SMG is part of Publicis Groupe, the world's second largest media counsel and buying group, the world's third largest communications group and a global leader in digital communications. With global activities spanning more than 104 countries on five continents, the Groupe employs around 44,000 professionals. With sister agencies ZenithOptimedia, Denuo, Digitas and Razorfish, SMG is a member of Publicis Groupe's VivaKi, a global digital knowledge and resource centre that leverages the combined scale of the agencies to develop new services, tools and partnerships.

For more information, visit @SMG_London on Twitter, on LinkedIn and on emergingspaces.co.uk.