

Client



Company:
Pursuit

Website:
www.pursuitnow.com

Headquarters:
Austin, Texas, USA

Industry:
Consulting and Marketing Strategy

Solution:
Alterian SM2

Results:

1. SM2 gives Pursuit a quick and practical way to examine the social web
2. Ability to customize searches makes it easy to find the right insights
3. Support from Alterian helps agency overcome any new client challenges
4. Monitoring context and emotion of conversations delivers high value to Pursuit's clients

Improving engagement through social media monitoring

Overview

Pursuit is a marketing consultancy which places consumer understanding at the heart of everything it does. Working across digital marketing, consumer insight, product design and media integration, the team's clients are spread across the healthcare, technology and retail sectors.

"We position ourselves as a different kind of strategic partner for clients – part consultancy, part research firm, part communications agency," explained Andy Hunter, Head of Brand Experience Strategy and Marketing Innovation at Pursuit. "Underpinned by various types of market research and ethnographics, our work establishes a rounded picture of a consumer which then drives improved client engagement." Recent client projects for the consultancy have included The State of Texas, the American Legacy Foundation and Dell.



Monitoring context and emotion

Due to its focus, Pursuit applies the monitoring of social media in a different way to many agencies, examining more the emotional side of what is being said, rather than the statistics, as Hunter explained: "We believe that mining for contextual and emotional data and not just looking at the numbers behind social web activity, delivers higher value to clients, as it helps us understand the reasons behind consumer engagement at a deeper level."

While looking for a monitoring platform for the social web, Pursuit reviewed several tools. "Some were unnecessarily expensive, some were PR-focused, or were good at just giving a snapshot of what was happening with a brand. We wanted something with more breadth and depth of functionality and was easy to customize – most we looked at were too constrained. Alterian SM2's flexibility really impressed. It gave us the ability to use it as a brand planning tool or a consumer insight tool at a higher level," said Hunter.

Another key benefit Pursuit has found in working with Alterian is the degree of support received. "The customer service is very unique and something which we greatly appreciate," explained Kristi Diaz, Head of Integrated

Marketing and Digital Planning at Pursuit. "Dealing with masses of data can bring some challenges, but Alterian is always available to help out so we get the answers we need."

The team at Pursuit put Alterian SM2 to work amongst a suite of brand insight tools, including traditional methods such as consumer surveys and focus groups. As social media and the internet have created the world's biggest online focus group, Pursuit needed SM2 to examine the digital space, right down to the individual level if necessary.

Pursuit has been using SM2 for brand audits and corporate marketing projects, establishing a starting point upon which to create a strategic framework for clients. "With brand audits you never know what you might find, so it really helps if you have lots of different ways of discovering intelligence. SM2 makes it feasible to monitor multiple topics and keywords, while results are easy to navigate using powerful drill-down into results," said Hunter.

Understanding the wider blogosphere

Brand audits regularly reveal opportunities for Pursuit's clients, through searching for brand names, products or service names and subsequently analyzing results using categories like brand references, sentiment, share of voice and themes.

One particular audit created for a high-end, grocery store chain in North America, helped validate several of its merchandising strategies. Already well-established in social media marketing, the organization had blogs and a social network presence but the content strategy was fairly narrow, only interacting with consumers within these home-grown channels.

"The company couldn't see how people were talking about them in comparison with their competition, out in the wider blogosphere and this is where the true value is achieved," commented Diaz. "With SM2, we quickly set-up search profiles to show the client how it ranked against its top three competitors and what people were saying about their brand and how they were sharing their feelings in comparison to the competition."

Pursuit identified the strongest conversation topics and themes for each company, revealing which positioning was working best for the client and demonstrated that it was more strongly associated with themes like 'organic' or 'gluten-free', for example, against its competitors.

SM2's various reports showed how consumers were defining the brand and how their conversations aligned back to its product marketing. "It's important to get an

Alterian Case Study

Pursuit

initial first stage view of the situation but then dig deeper to understand the context of a conversation. Some of the competitor tools didn't allow working with search results at all these different levels. One of the things I like most about SM2 is being able to go as high, or as deep, as we want," said Diaz.

Overall, the audit helped the brand validate some of its product decisions and showed how consumers regarded it as a preferred supplier of some specialized goods, versus its competitors. "Often brands go-to-market with a new product and unless they're willing to do a market research project, they don't always know what the immediate impact is," explained Diaz. "SM2 is a quick and cost effective way of obtaining a snapshot of consumer opinion and evaluating the online conversation."

Increasing proactive engagement

The team at Pursuit also provides the catalyst for a shift in client marketing strategy via its social media audits. Working for a premium casual dining chain, Pursuit had been tasked with finding out what consumers thought about some newly created menu items but also how its coupons and special offers were being received and shared online.

Starting with a high-level examination looking at sentiment, Pursuit worked to validate this by drilling into the conversation to understand its context. The team then began creating its strategic recommendation. The social web opportunity really became clear for the brand when reviewing share of voice. Seeing how and why people were more passionate when talking about them, compared to their competitors, helped it understand that by creating more chances to engage, it could significantly out-manoeuvre its competitors.

"Alterian SM2 helped us demonstrate the power of the social space and now the brand is using it to drive a two-way process, steer the conversation and fully engage with its audience. SM2 allowed us to find answers quickly and get a view of the client on the social web – we didn't have to do a month of research," concluded Diaz.

Identifying what matters to consumers

Looking at emotional metrics from the social web, not just statistics, is helping Pursuit develop valuable services for clients. By listening to consumers at deeper levels than before and creating empathetic views of what they are saying, the team's recommendations become stronger.

"Alterian SM2 gives us valuable contextual relevance and shows why things matter to consumers," said Hunter. "Our company ethos is 'people-centric innovation' and listening to consumers in this way lets us create strategies which tell clients the right way to engage with people."

Alterian

Alterian (LSE: ALN) empowers marketers with an integrated marketing software platform combining database, online and operational marketing applications on a shared data infrastructure. The Alterian Integrated Marketing Platform makes it practical and cost effective for marketers to use actionable insight to execute an integrated marketing strategy across online and offline channels.

It is the unique integration of analytics, content and execution through our industry leading tools, such as the Alterian Messenger email platform, and the award winning Content Management solutions, which enables marketers to drive a seamless, multi-channel customer experience.

Alterian's analytically-led software is delivered to approximately 1,000 marketing departments, across 26 countries, and an international network of more than 100 business partners, including marketing services providers, agencies and systems integrators. Its partners, such as Accenture, Acxiom, Allant Group, Cap Gemini, Carlson Marketing, Experian, Epsilon, InfoUSA, LogicaCMG, Merkle, Ogilvy One and Euro RSCG Worldwide, deliver Alterian software alongside their own domain and services expertise to help market leaders such as Princess Cruises, General Motors, Zurich, Astra Zeneca, HSBC, Limited Too, AEGON, Avis, Worldwide Wrestling Entertainment, Dell, Amnesty International and Vodafone integrate marketing processes and drive competitive advantage. For more information about Alterian, products within the Alterian Integrated Marketing Platform or our Partner Network, please visit www.alterian.com.

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