

## CASE STUDY **Yell**

Directories company Yell works with Durrants and Prompt to track all of its coverage, on and offline, and uses Metrica for evaluation. It uses The Red Consultancy for product PR and its online arm, Shiny Red, for digital work.

Part of Shiny's remit is to engage potential Yell.com users online, through either 'traditional' online media – the online versions of offline magazines/newspapers – or by pitching stories direct to blogs, newsgroups and forums, and engaging in debate on the sites. A good example of the latter is coverage on Pet Forums of

usage trends on Yell.com, suggesting a rise in searches for dog walkers.

Yell has been generating coverage like this for some time and noticed that evaluation by Metrica gave a generic reach and AVE. But blogs typically do not take advertising and do not report on usage figures.

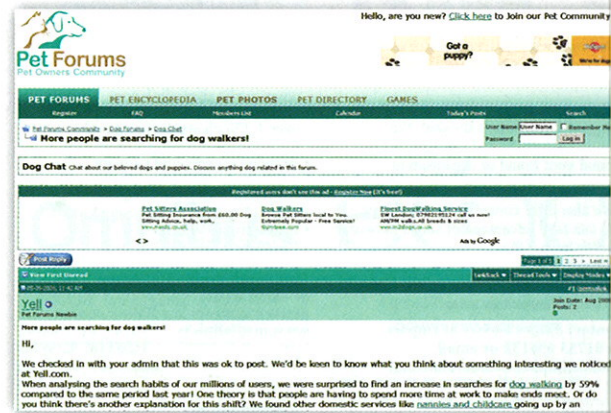
So the reach figure was misrepresenting the importance of the online coverage. Yell asked Shiny and Metrica to develop a bespoke method of online coverage evaluation.

A 'traditional' methodology was applied for some of the evaluation, such as type of

coverage, whether it was positive, inclusion of messages and so on. In addition, special categories were created for types of online coverage – blog post/message board – as well as rankings for reach based on three tiers of websites.

The tiers are based on ranking usage information from the blog search engine Technorati. When that is not available, Shiny uses its experience to include other sites based on Yell's audience and objectives.

'We set goals for each campaign, and what is important to us is the communication of key messages to Yell.com's target



**Engage in debate** Pet Forums usage revealed searches for dog walkers

audience – ABC1s 18-45,' says Yell senior PR manager Emma Jeffs. 'We're also beginning to consider setting goals on deep links into Yell.com for SEO

purposes, and also on amount of engagement with each post, or quantity of replies, particularly if they reference the original story.'

million web pages a day, hitting one million sites. Its CEO Giles Palmer says that while the technology is still short of amazing, it is developing fast and already good enough to be able to tell clients far more about what is being said about them online than they could find out for themselves.

Of course, those businesses already targeting social media are likely to have deeper insight than those that are more reticent to engage. Bayer Healthcare recently appointed Jam, the social media unit of i-level, to devise a social media strategy for its Berocca vitamin and mineral supplement brand. Jam identified that bloggers are a key target group that could benefit from Berocca and is offering aid to 'tired minds' in the form of a Bloggers' Relief Pack.

Sentiment Metrics, meanwhile, was selected to report on the online conversations about a mobile phone company's new touch screen handset. Positive messages spread by the PR agency could be seen in a 'buzz trend chart' it compiled that showed the agency achieving an ROI and led to its retention by the client.

Exposure director Maneeze Chowdhury says that her agency, which has a raft of

consumer clients, uses Market Sentinel for social media monitoring and Metrica for evaluation. Outsourcing in this way is helpful, she says, as it provides an important outside perspective: 'Our clients are finding it ever more important to look at online conversations people are having about their brands.'

Chowdhury says social media are now comparable to trade media as a starting point for many stories that subsequently snowball into national media coverage. Clearly having the right monitoring, evaluation and procedures in place enables a rapid response to maximize an opportunity or limit damage.

There are threats and opportunities – look at HSBC having to backtrack on student overdraft interest charges or Cadbury relaunching its Wispa bar. Both actions came in response to social media campaigns. No wonder online buzz monitoring is growing so strongly. ♦

**Watch Fishburn Hedges' Alex Pearmain discuss blog monitoring at [prweek.com/uk](http://prweek.com/uk)**

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## HOW TO find the right supplier

- ◆ Do you want a company with its own proprietary technology? Some service providers (often PR and search agencies, for example) 'white label' another company's technology, which is something you should be aware of, even if it is not necessarily a problem.
- ◆ Ask how the supplier gathers its data.
- ◆ Are you looking for something that ties in with your search engine optimization, which a search agency might therefore be well positioned to provide?
- ◆ How is data presented back to you? As the end-user of the technology, you need to have something user friendly. What type of dashboard features and functionality are on offer? What management reporting facilities can be produced? Can the data be visualised?
- ◆ To what degree is the information fully automated?
- ◆ If software is used exclusively to provide the data, how does this technology measure the sentiment of comments or conversation and influence of the source?
- ◆ If you are relying on your supplier for insight as well as technology, do they have people with a sufficient understanding of your business – and sector – to draw conclusions that will be valuable to your organisation?
- ◆ Does the supplier in question have case studies and testimonials that give you confidence that it can work effectively on your behalf?

Source: E-consultancy's Online Reputation and Buzz Monitoring Buyer's Guide 2008