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S'pore marketers not chirping to Twitter's tune

Summary: *Microblog site takes "backseat" in marketing campaigns, say Singapore marketing agencies, which instead point to Facebook as their preferred platform of choice.*

By [Liau Yun Qing](#) | July 30, 2010 -- 03:07 GMT (11:07 SGT)[Follow @YQLiauZDNetAsia](#)Comments **0**★ Votes **0**f Like **0**[more +](#)

Marketing via Twitter has not picked up in Singapore, where it sits in the backburner with businesses preferring Facebook over the microblog site as a delivery platform, say local marketers.

Gerard Lim, managing director at digital marketing agency Convertium, noted that while clients do ask the agency to consider Twitter as part of their marketing strategy, the platform "always takes the backseat" when marketing plans are eventually rolled out.

In an e-mail interview with ZDNet Asia, Lim said most of his clients still see Twitter as a "fringe marketing platform" due its smaller adoption rate and younger user base in Singapore [compared to Facebook](#).

Damien Duhamel, managing partner at Solidiance Asia-Pacific, concurred that Twitter is still a novelty and a "teen-tool adopted by teens-wannabees".

He told ZDNet Asia in an e-mail that Singapore and the rest of Asia still have "miles to go" before adopting Twitter as a marketing platform, primarily due to low returns on investment (ROI).

Comparing marketing via blogs to Twitter, Duhamel explained: "Unless you are in the top 10 blogs in Singapore, the ROI for marketing via blogs is close to none.

"Marketers who rushed to blogging have now left in big way. The same is likely to happen with Twitter," he said. However, he added that as it is still a new channel, Twitter should be given some time for trial and error.

For now, Facebook is the first thing that businesses think about with regard to marketing.

Ng Ju Ann, account manager at Oasis Interactive, pointed out in an e-mail that while [clients' resistance to social media is fading](#), most still [do not know about Twitter](#).

"They say, 'let's try Facebook first'," Ng added.

Another reason for the lack of Twitter marketing is the conception that messages on the microblog site have a shorter lifespan compared to Facebook.

In an e-mail interview, Euan Wilcox, business director at The Upper Storey, explained: "For Twitter, the life of a message is about 15 minutes before it is buried under subsequent messages. For Facebook, this might be extended to six hours depending on how active [users'] friends are."

Floating on promoted tweets

Once criticized for [not having a clear business model](#), Twitter in April unveiled plans to let businesses push "[promoted tweets](#)" via the microblog site.

The initiative allows the advertiser's tweet to be ranked on top of search results when users search for certain keywords. The promoted tweet will be labeled accordingly to distinguish it from regular messages.



Search results for **starbucks**

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Starbucks On 4/15 bring in a reusable tumbler and we'll fill it with brewed coffee for free. Let's all switch from paper cups.

<http://bit.ly/9ZDP6N>

about 8 hours ago via CoTweet by [bradnelson](#)

Promoted by Starbucks Coffee 100+ Retweets

Credit: Twitter

The Promoted Tweets platform is currently in its "first phase", according to Twitter, and is opened to limited companies in the United States.

The returns on investment for businesses that adopt this advertising model is still unclear. Twitter did not respond to ZDNet Asia's queries on how advertisers are charged and how advertisement impressions will be calculated.

Another advertising channel Twitter offers is the Promoted Trends where advertisers buy keywords which will be displayed on the site along with other Trending Topics, or keywords that are currently popular in tweets.

Social media news blog, Mashable, reported that [Coca-Cola's Promoted Trend](#) advertising campaign during the World Cup generated 86 million impressions with a 6 percent engagement rate.

Convertium's Lim said he would recommend Promoted Trend as an advertising channel to clients that have targeted audience with suitable demographics and technological affluence.

However, Solidiance's Duhamel said his company is unlikely to suggest such marketing strategies as it is "not a fan of paid advertising". The agency prefers instead to focus on publicity efforts.

[Bloomberg BusinessWeek](#) reported that corporate demand for [social media-savvy employees](#) is increasing and American business schools are adding social media into their MBA curriculum.

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About **Liao Yun Qing**

The only journalist in the team without a Western name, Yun Qing hails from the mountainous Malaysian state, Sabah. She currently covers the hardware and networking beats, as well as everything else that falls into her lap, at ZDNet Asia. Her RSS feed includes tech news sites and most of the Cheezburger network. She is also a cheapskate masquerading as a group-buying addict.

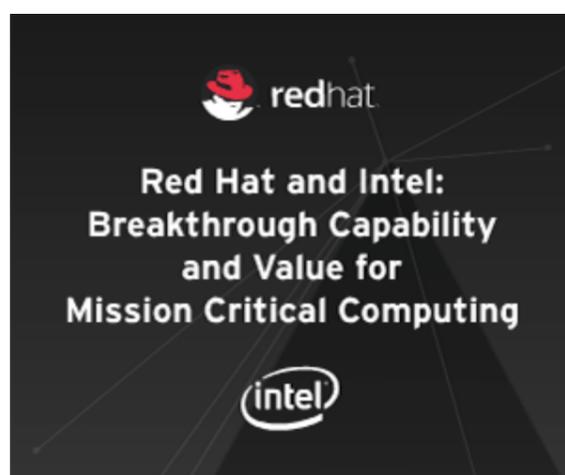
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