

# Global<sup>TM</sup> CMO

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# The Zones Framework

A Different Way Of Understanding  
The Landscape Of Social Media

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# The Zones Framework

## A Different Way Of Understanding The Landscape Of Social Media

Tracy Tuten FGMN

Social media are a daunting universe of communication channels and vehicles. As marketing managers attempt to plan social media marketing strategies, they often seek out organisational frameworks which may assist them. Some of the most well known frameworks include those by Richard Scoble, Brian Solis, and Fred Cavazza.

Though there's value in seeing their organisational frameworks, the complexity and volume of activity encompassed in these frameworks can be intimidating for social media marketing managers – and even more so for amateurs. A common issue is how can one distinguish between what is Web 2.0 versus “social media”, activities versus channels, and social software versus channels. This is what Dr. Michael Solomon and I have sought to address in our “zones” framework.

Before we go any deeper, let's start with what social media means. It means communication that is online, participatory, and shareable. That's it! If you are playing Angry Birds on your mobile phone alone and not sharing your scores, that's digital, but it's not social. If you are playing Words with Friends, it is. Blogs in and of themselves are not social. The sharing and commenting features make blogs social. Get it?

Many industry experts agree that we are very close to a time when all media will be social. That means we need to be especially clear about how to create value for our target audiences that will encourage them to participate and share. Without those two actions, social media have no power at all.

So let's dig in. When considering what are social media, the first step is to separate the nature of the social universe from social media itself. Solomon and I have done this here in Figure 1 (on the following page).

What you can see in this figure is that nothing is possible that isn't possible in Web 2.0 (and no, we have NOT hit Web 3.0 yet!). We rely on channels like Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, and Pinterest to host our content. There is a never ending demand for content in the social web and so we and regular people (user-generated content) rely upon social software which enables the relatively easy creation of publishable content. Our audience may consume this content on any number of devices which

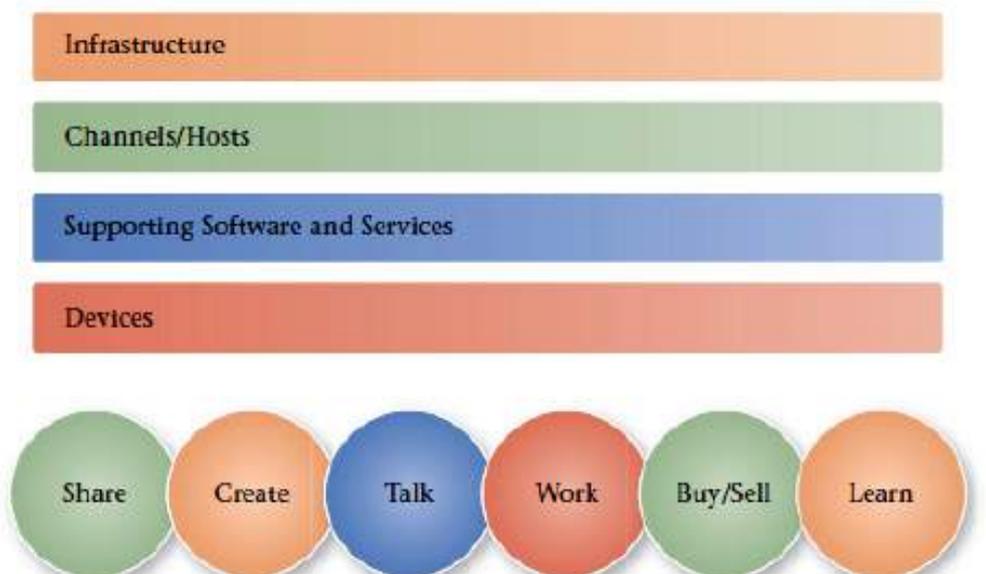


Figure 1: The Social Universe

affects what content we develop and how. Within this infrastructure, the collective we talks, listens, shares, works, plays, buys, and on and on.

What of social media marketing then? Let's take a look at social media. Michael Solomon and I have identified four zones of social media (see our book, Tuten & Solomon, Social Media Marketing, 2012, from Pearson):

1) social community, 2) social publishing, 3) social entertainment, and 4) social commerce.

These are depicted in Figure 2.



Figure 2: The Zones of Social Media Marketing

## The Zones Of Social Media Marketing

You'll note that some areas overlap two or even more zones. That's the nature of social media. All social media are networked around relationships, technologically enabled, and based on the principles of shared participation. But for our purposes, we focus on how marketers are using the approach to categorize the zone.

### Zone 1: Social Community

Social communities describe channels of social media focused on relationships and the common activities people participate in with others who share the same interest or identification. Thus, social communities feature two-way and multi-way communication, conversation, collaboration, and the sharing of experiences and resources. All social media channels are built around networked relationships, but for social communities the interaction and collaboration for relationship building and maintenance are the primary reason people engage in these activities. Many of the channels in which you already participate likely reside in this first zone. The channels in the social community zone include social networking sites, message boards and forums, and wikis. All emphasize individual contributions in the context of a community, communication and conversation, and collaboration.

I really like to focus on zone 1 as the customer relationship management zone. It's where the relationships are built. "Influence impressions", the term coined by Josh Bernoff and Charlene Li, occur. It's where the informal "word of mouth" communication happens – whether about brands or just regular life.

### Zone 2: Social Publishing

Social publishing sites aid in the dissemination of content to an audience. The channels of social publishing include blogs, microsharing sites, media sharing sites, and social bookmarking and news sites. In recent months, this zone has grown to include content curation as a form of content in its own right. Pinterest, Storify, and other social curation channels are invigorating this zone.

For B2B companies, social publishing is arguably the most important zone. This is the zone where thought leadership is built. This is where marketers can illustrate their competence, quality, and continuous improvement. If you know the theory behind advertising, you'll recognize this zone as a high "central route processing zone" according to the Elaboration Likelihood Model.

### Zone 3: Social Entertainment

The zone of social entertainment encompasses channels and vehicles that offer opportunities for play and enjoyment. These include social games and gaming sites, socially enabled console games, alternate reality games (ARGs), virtual worlds, and entertainment communities. At this stage in the development of social media, social games are by a substantial margin the most advanced channel in the social entertainment zone. What is so exciting to us, though, is the development of social music and social art! Since Michael and I first developed the zones framework, we knew that this zone would incorporate gaming/sport, art, and music. Finally, the zone is emerging as we imagined. Spotify and Pandora are evidence of the development in social music and Google's museum work and Intel's Museum of Me point the way to the development of art as a social entertainment venue. We suspect film will come on strong too.

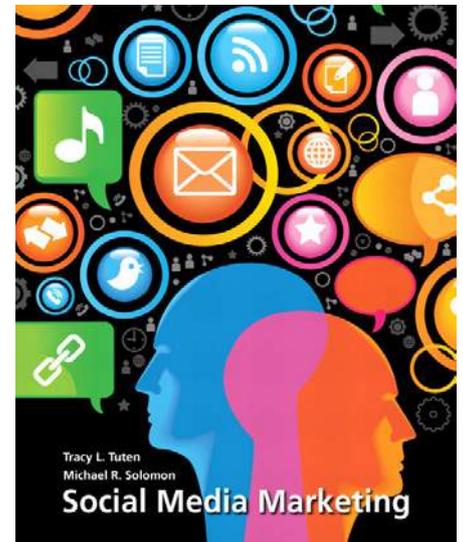
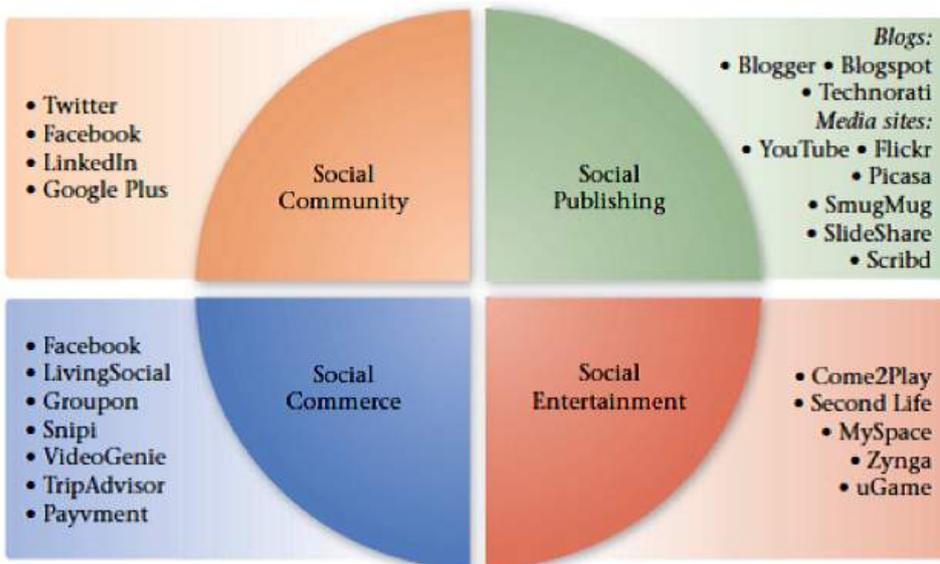


Figure 3: Some examples of players within each zone.

## Zone 4: Social Commerce

Our fourth zone is social commerce. Social commerce refers to the use of social media to assist in the online buying and selling of products and services. Social commerce leverages social shopping behaviours when online shoppers interact and collaborate during the shopping experience. Social commerce channels include reviews and ratings (on review sites or branded e-commerce sites), deal sites and deal aggregators (aggregate deals into personalized deal feeds), social shopping markets (online malls featuring user-recommended products, reviews, and the ability to communicate with friends while shopping), and social storefronts (online retail stores that sometimes operate within a social site like Facebook with social capabilities). When we first developed the zone framework, we saw a big push towards s-commerce – truly socially integrated e-commerce options. What we are seeing now is a shift to “socially-enabled e-commerce”. Take a look at Amazon if you need an example. I can shop online, share a wish list with my friends, publish my desires to Facebook, etc., but I can’t truly “shop together.” It seems thus far, people want the freedom of asynchronous shopping online while having the value of their “friends’” opinions too.

### Tracy Tuten FGMN

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Dr Tracy Tuten is the GMN Programme Director of Digital Marketing and Social Media and Associate Professor of Marketing at East Carolina University where she teaches advertising and social media Marketing.

She is one of the leading voices in the area of digital Marketing and social media and brings to GMN a huge amount of experience in developing customised executive education programmes for a number of organisations around the world.

Her first book, **Advertising 2.0: Social Media Marketing in a Web 2.0 World** was published in the fall of 2008. Most recently, she has co-authored a text on **Social Media Marketing** with Professor Michael Solomon.

Tracy’s publications have appeared in such journals as Journal of Marketing Communications, Psychology & Marketing, and Journal of Business Research, among others. She has consulted and/or taught in Korea, Germany, France and Argentina. For several years, she served as a guest scientist for the Center for Survey Research and Methodology in Mannheim, Germany. As a Fulbright Scholar in Korea (2001), she taught International Marketing and Marketing in Cybertrade at the Graduate School of International Studies at Korea University. Following that experience, she partnered with Korea University to develop a Chief Marketing Officer course for Samsung Electronics and taught in the program for three years. In 2007, she served as a Fulbright Senior Specialist, working with the business programs at the Universidad Argentina de la Empresa to redesign curriculum in the areas of Internet Marketing and Marketing research. In 2010, she served as ad:tech New York’s Social Media Marketing Master.



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**A Different Way  
of Understanding  
the Landscape of  
Social Media**

with  
**Tracy Tuten**  
GMN Programme Director

# Learn the Latest Digital Marketing and Social Media Practices with Global Marketing Network

Global Marketing Network is proud and delighted that Dr Tracy Tuten is its Programme Director for Digital Marketing and Social Media.

The marketing landscape has changed dramatically in recent years and nowhere is this more visible than online. The penetration of internet usage varies substantially by country and region, but increases daily, particularly as more Internet-enabled devices become available.

Digital media, and in particular social media like Youtube, Facebook, Blogs, and Twitter, represent radically new tools for reaching customers, collaborating with them, building relationships, and spreading ideas virally. Digital distribution channels change the relationship between manufacturers and retailers, and destabilize entire industry ecosystems,.

Dr Tuten delivers one-day and two-day masterclasses as part of the GMN Global CMO Programme. Aimed at the Marketing leaders of today this masterclass is designed to fully prepare you to expand your organisation's presence online, using digital media and Marketing strategies, and importantly, to achieve better performance for you and their organisation.

Later this year you will also be able to participate on the new GMN Digital Marketing and Social Media Certification Programme developed by Dr Tuten. Delivered through a combination of online delivery and tutorial support this intensive programme is designed to enable the Marketing Leaders of tomorrow to expand their organisation's presence online, using digital media and marketing strategies. By the end of the programme participants will be able to:-

- Understand the digital marketing environment
- Discuss the roles of owned, paid, and earned media and how these forms of media translate to an online marketing strategy
- Understand the characteristics of consumer segments active online
- Conceptualize the design of a digital marketing strategy
- Understand the applications of search engine marketing and search engine optimization
- Evaluate the options for online advertising
- Understand the potential for social media marketing including the channels, tools, and executions possible
- Conceptualize the uses of social data for conducting consumer research



## 10 Do's for Social Media Marketing Strategy

1. Review your existing marketing plan and ask - what here can be stretched across social channels?
2. Inventory your brand assets - how can these be deployed throughout your social channels?
3. Assess your target audience - where are they in the social media landscape?
4. Explore your resources - who will create content? who will manage timing and responses?
5. Specify objectives for social media marketing - what exactly do you wish to accomplish?
6. Review your motivations - why are you utilizing social media marketing?
7. Make it relevant - with all the clutter in social media, how can you really add value for your target audience?
8. Make it an experience - why would you treat social media as paid media when it can be experience media?
9. Partner - how could you co-brand your social media experiences with relevant partners?
10. Measure - assess, assess, assess - and update your plan!

Global Marketing Network is also able to develop and deliver customised training programmes specifically for your organisation.

**To obtain more information about these programmes or to find out how you can book Dr Tracy Tuten for a future event or conference please [contact us here](#).**



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