

2009 B2B Social Media Benchmarking Study

Insights for Business-to-Business Companies from
Business.com's 2009 Business Social Media
Benchmarking Research

By
Ben Hanna, Ph.D.
VP, Marketing
R.H. Donnelley Interactive

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2009 B2B Social Media Benchmarking Study

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Introduction

In this companion report to Business.com's 2009 Business Social Media Benchmarking Study (<http://www.business.com/info/business-social-media-benchmark-study>), we examine the results from the perspective of business-to-business (B2B) company executives, B2B marketing professionals and/or marketing agencies serving B2B clients interested in the following questions:

- To what social media sites do business people turn when seeking the information they need to do their jobs on a day-to-day basis? And what are they looking for?
- What do people consider to be the most useful social media resources for business information (and, therefore, the most valuable social media sites on which B2B companies should participate in order to reach their target audience)?
- What are the most popular types of social media initiatives among B2B companies, and is the impact of these initiatives visible in business results?
- How do B2B companies judge social media success?
- Among B2B companies currently involved in the following types of social media initiatives, what web sites do they use, can they see the impact on business results and would they recommend participating on the sites to other businesses?
 - Managing business profiles/accounts
 - Participating in Q&A
 - Using social media monitoring tools
 - Sharing business content
 - Business content social bookmarking

It is important to note at the outset that the results reported here are from study participants already involved in using social media for business, either using social media as a business information resource, working for a company actively planning or engaged in one or more business social media initiatives, or both. As such, this research covers social media utilization by businesses and business people (e.g., among North American companies maintaining a profile on a social media site, what percentage do so on Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter, etc.). This study does not address the issue of business social media adoption (e.g., of all North American companies, what percentage maintain profiles on social media sites?). Given mounting evidence that social media usage is quickly becoming mainstream – for example, 46% of US adults now participate in social networks, and a quarter do so weekly¹ - we feel that the question about whether or not businesses, and business people, are adopting social media is rapidly becoming moot. Social media usage is a reality in today's business environment, and the question of utilization is much more interesting, and important, to company executives and marketers interested in identifying the most effective and efficient opportunities offered by this new medium.

This report is organized into two sections. The first focuses on identifying the most common and effective social media activities and sites through which to reach a business audience, essential information for planning B2B social media initiatives. The second section covers B2B corporate social media initiatives, benchmarking experience with social media for

¹Lenhart, Amanda. The Democratization of Online Social Networks. Pew Internet & American Life Project, October 8, 2009, <http://www.pewinternet.org/Presentations/2009/41--The-Democratization-of-Online-Social-Networks.aspx>.

business (both respondent and company), top social media activities and how B2B companies judge social media success today. This section also includes an in-depth look at five areas of business social media activity – business profiles on social media sites, participating in question-and-answer sites/forums (Q&A), social media monitoring, content sharing and social bookmarking – among B2B companies. For each of these areas, we cover what B2B companies are doing today, the extent to which they can see the impact on business results and how likely respondents are to recommend using specific sites for business purposes to a friend or colleague (the [Net Promoter Score](#), a loyalty metric originally developed by Satmetrix, Bain & Company, and Fred Reichheld).

Referencing this Study

A good benchmarking study should generate significant discussion and debate, and we hope that many of you will discuss one or more insights from this study in your own blog, web site, publication, conference presentation and/or in other forums. Since this research took considerable time and effort to produce – it is, after all, the largest study of business social media use within North American companies to date – we have two simple requests:

1. **When making use of any of the statistics or charts in this report, please include the following reference:**

Source: Business.com's 2009 B2B Social Media Benchmarking Study
(<http://www.business.com/info/b2b-social-media-benchmark-study>)

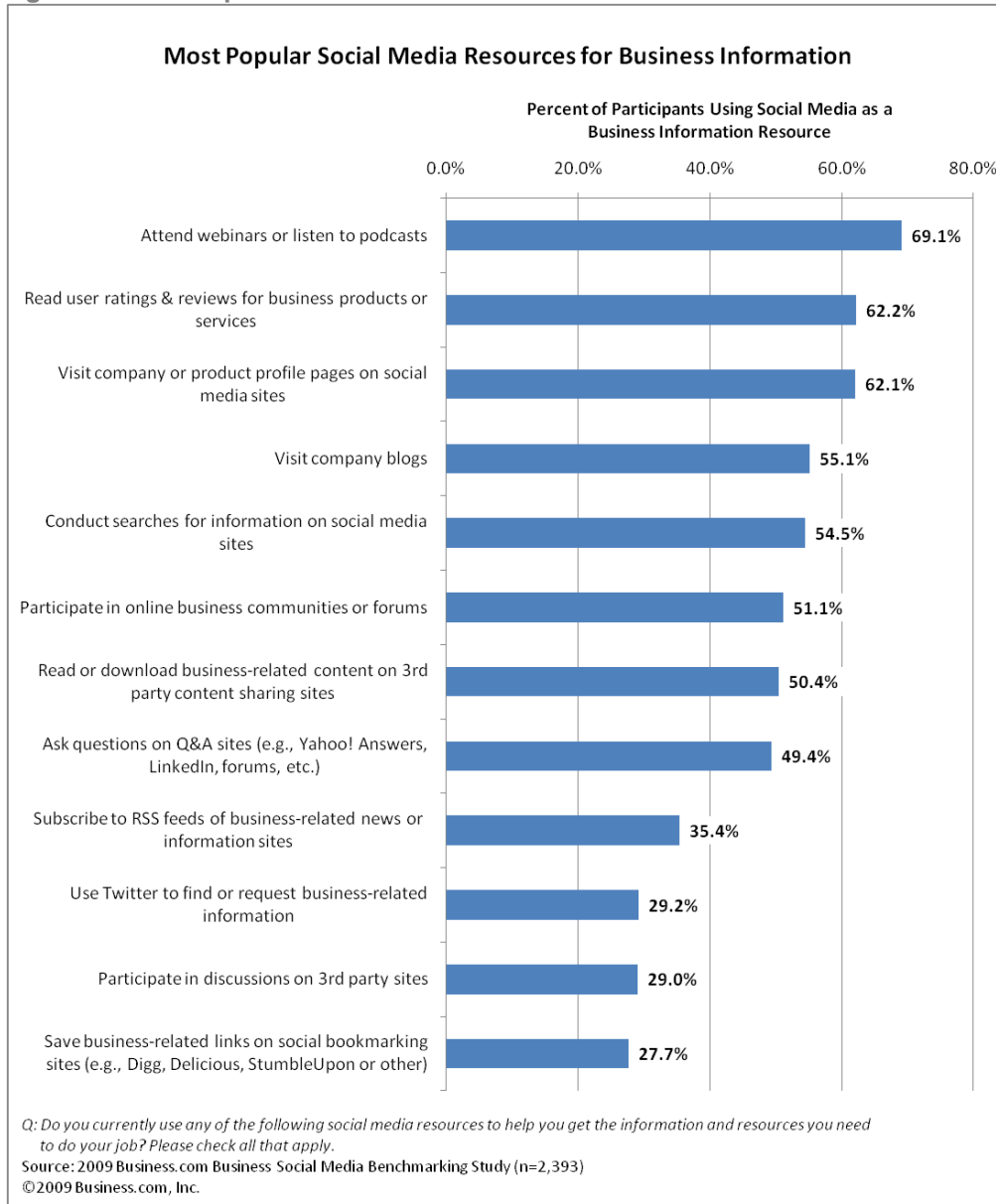
2. **Provide your readers with a link to the page on the Business.com site where they can download their own copy of the report.** Do not link to your own copy of the PDF stored on your own web site or other content sharing sites like SlideShare. While we understand the spirit of open content, the brief registration required to access the study is not particularly onerous or invasive, and also provides people interested in the study with the opportunity to indicate their interest in participating in future Business.com studies about other online marketing topics. Help us continue to provide top quality research at no cost by providing the following link to the download page:

<http://www.business.com/info/b2b-social-media-benchmark-study>

Reaching a Business Audience through Social Media

In our top-level [business social media benchmarking study research report](#), we summarized the most popular social media resources people turn to at work for the business-relevant information they need to do their day-to-day jobs. Based on responses from 2,393 study participants, this chart is reproduced below:

Figure 1: Most Popular Social Media Resources for Business Information



While this high-level view is a great starting point, digging more deeply into this issue provides key insights for better business audience targeting with social media initiatives.

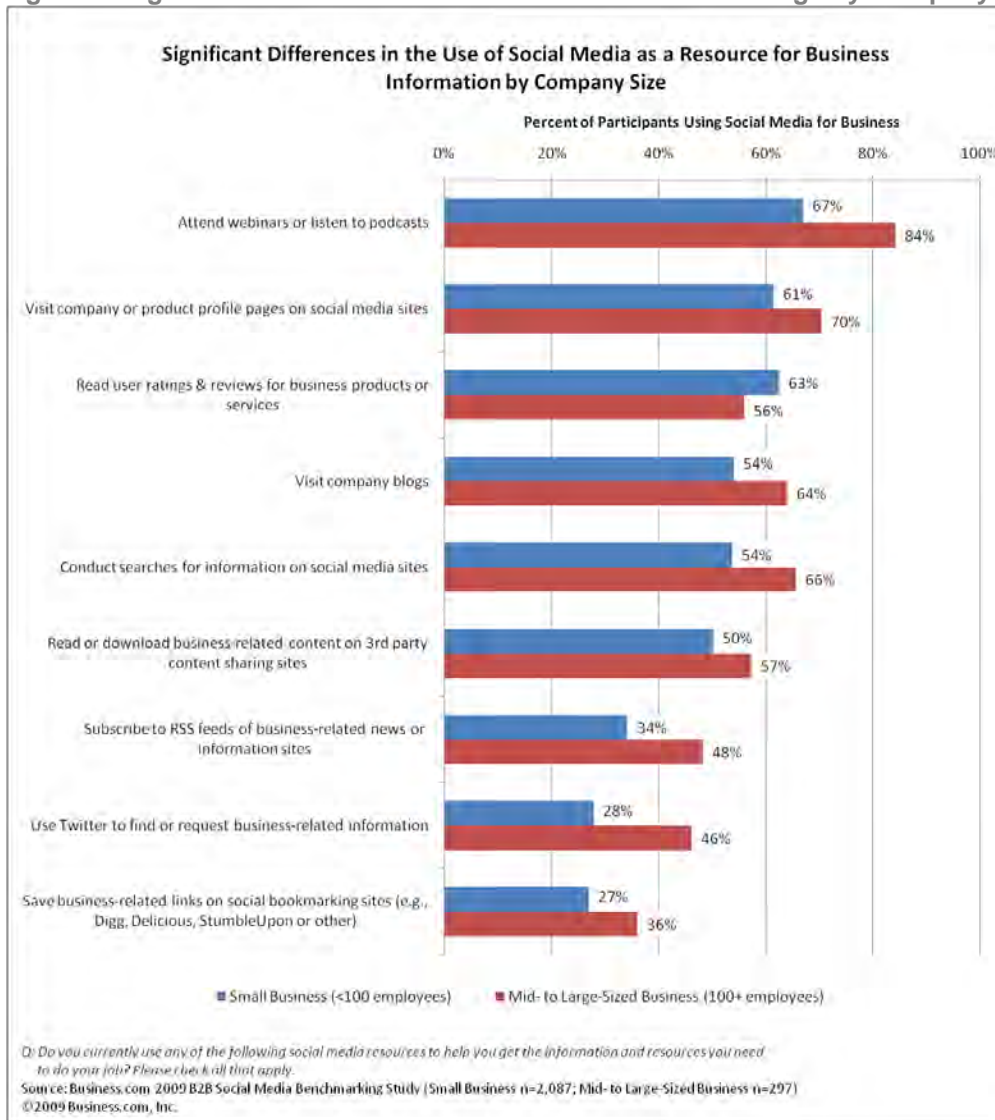
In this section, we'll explore differences in business social media usage by company size, industry, job level and job role to help B2B company executives, B2B marketers and marketing agencies serving B2B clients develop more effective B2B social media strategies.

Top Business Social Media Resources by Company Size

Overall, study participants from mid- to large-sized companies with 100 or more employees were more active users of social media resources for business information than their small company counterparts. The figure below shows significant differences in the use of specific social media resources by company size. For example, across the 2,384 participants using social media for business, nearly half (46%) of mid- to large-size company respondents use Twitter to find or request business-relevant information versus slightly more than one-quarter (28%) of small business respondents.

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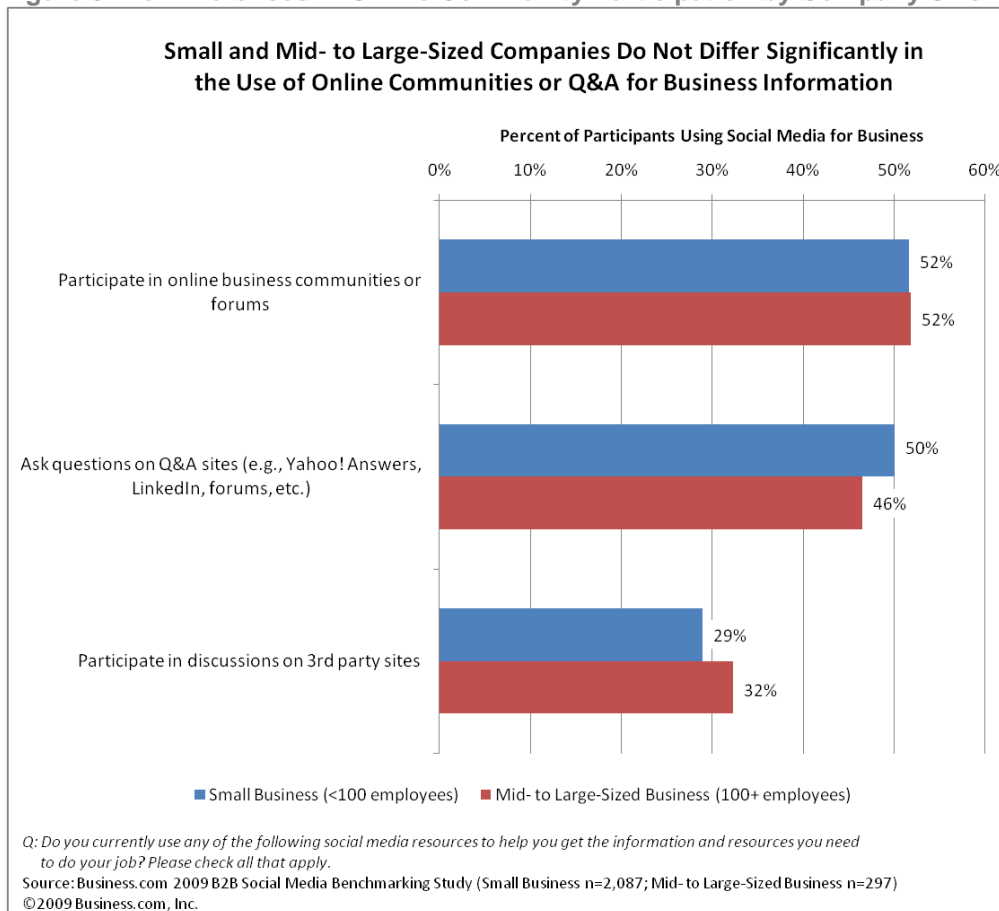
Figure 2: Significant Differences in Business Social Media Usage by Company Size



In all but one case – reading user ratings and reviews for business products or services – a higher percentage of mid- to large-sized company respondents reported utilizing a given social media resource than did small business respondents. The fact that small business respondents show more active interest in business product/service ratings and reviews makes sense – small businesses typically lack the more formalized purchasing process found in mid- to large-sized companies, and these ratings and reviews provide additional, useful information to support the purchasing decision process.

When it comes to active participation on social media web sites, such as participating in online business communities or forums, or asking questions on Q&A sites like Yahoo! Answers or LinkedIn Answers, there were no significant differences between small company and mid- to large-sized company respondents.

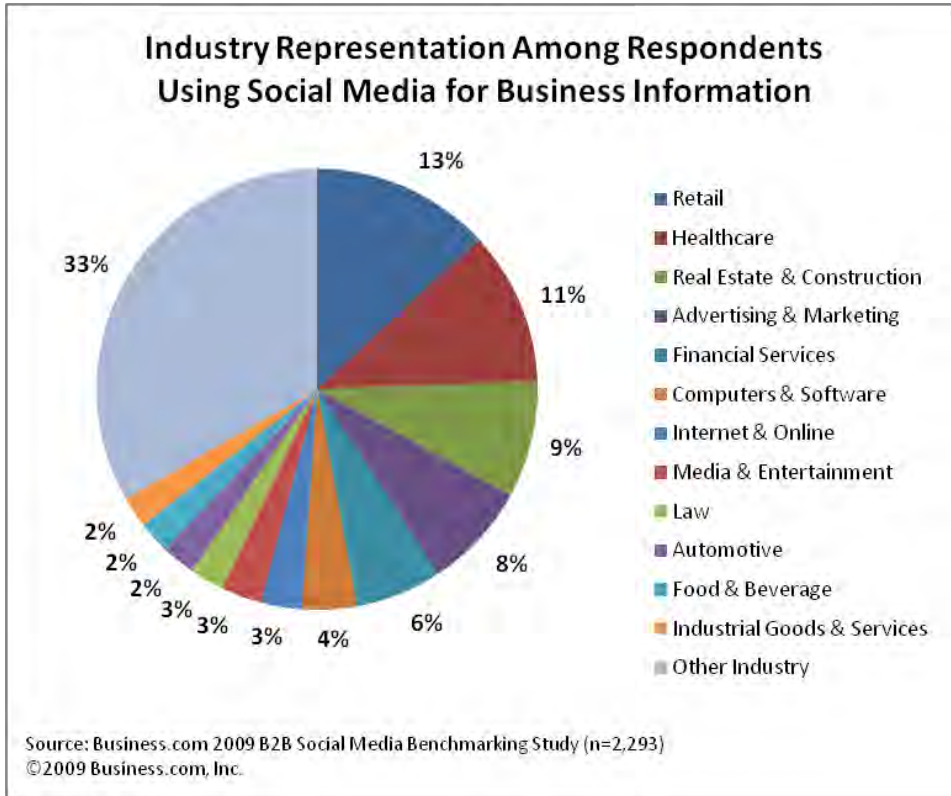
Figure 3: No Differences in Online Community Participation by Company Size



Top Business Social Media Resources by Industry

The use of social media resources as a source of business information also varies significantly by industry. As shown in the figure below, study participants using social media for business represent a wide range of industries with the highest percentage of respondents from retail (13%), healthcare (11%) and real estate and construction (9%).

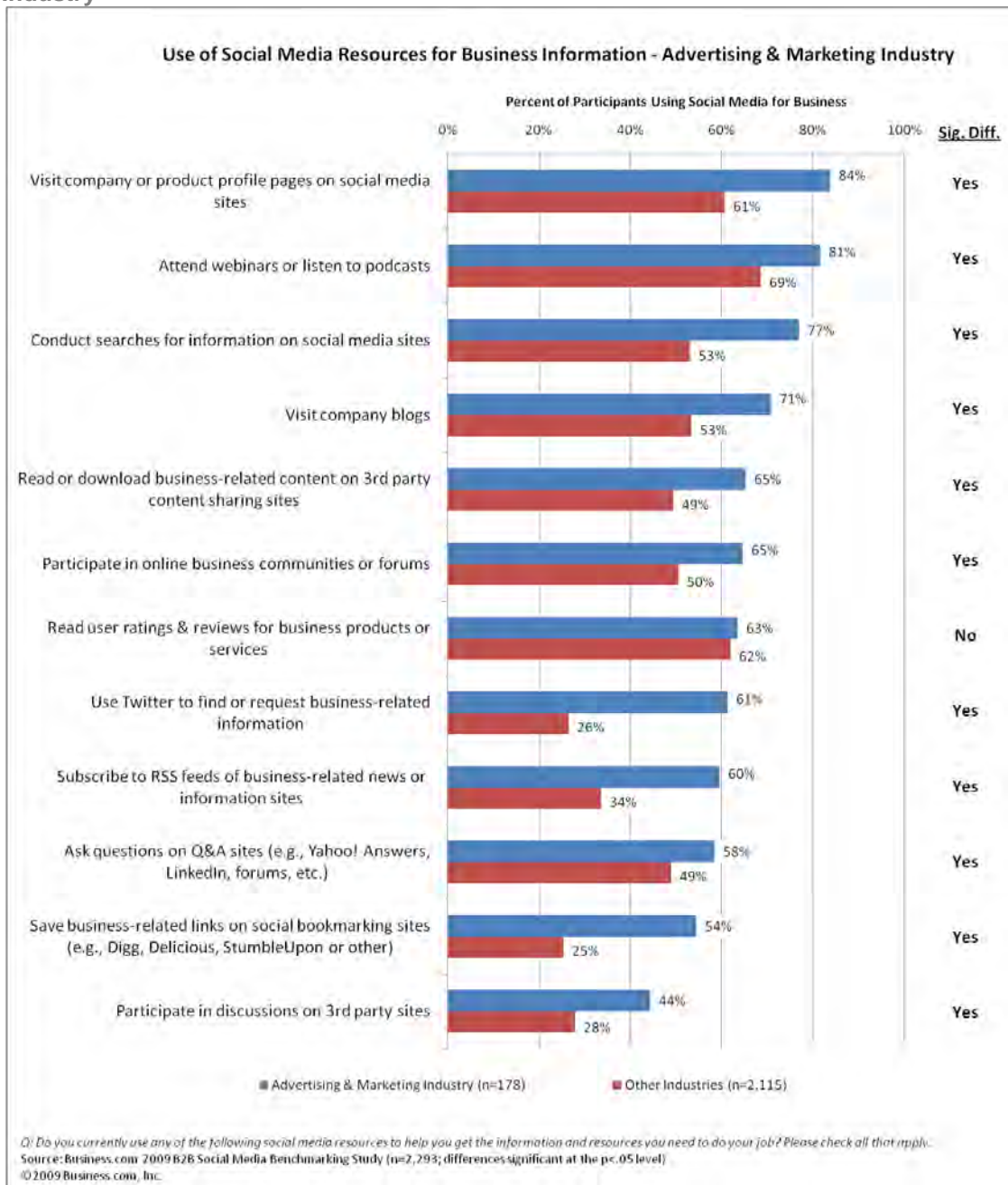
Figure 4: Industry Representation among Study Participants Using Social Media for Business Information



The rest of this section examines the use of different social media resource for business by industry, highlighting significant differences between use of those resources by respondents from a particular industry versus respondents from all other industries.

Study participants working in the Advertising & Marketing industry are much heavier users of social media for business information than those from other industries, with the exception of reading ratings and reviews for business products or services.

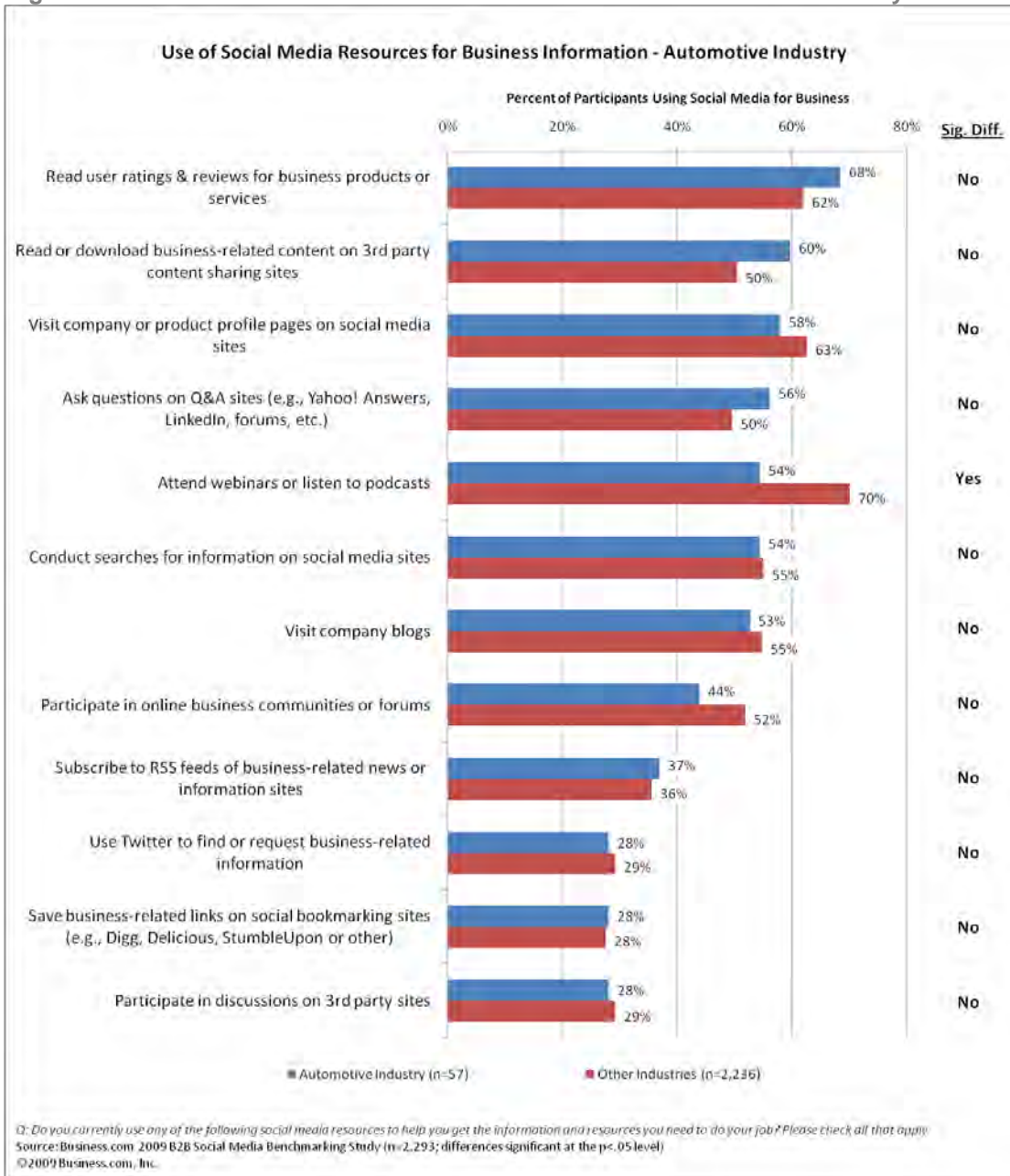
Figure 5: Use of Social Media for Business Information – Advertising & Marketing Industry



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Automotive industry respondents generally mirror the overall study population in their use of different social media resources for business information. The one exception is the use of webinars or podcasts, where those from the auto industry are significantly less likely to use these than respondents from other industries.

Figure 6: Use of Social Media for Business Information – Automotive Industry

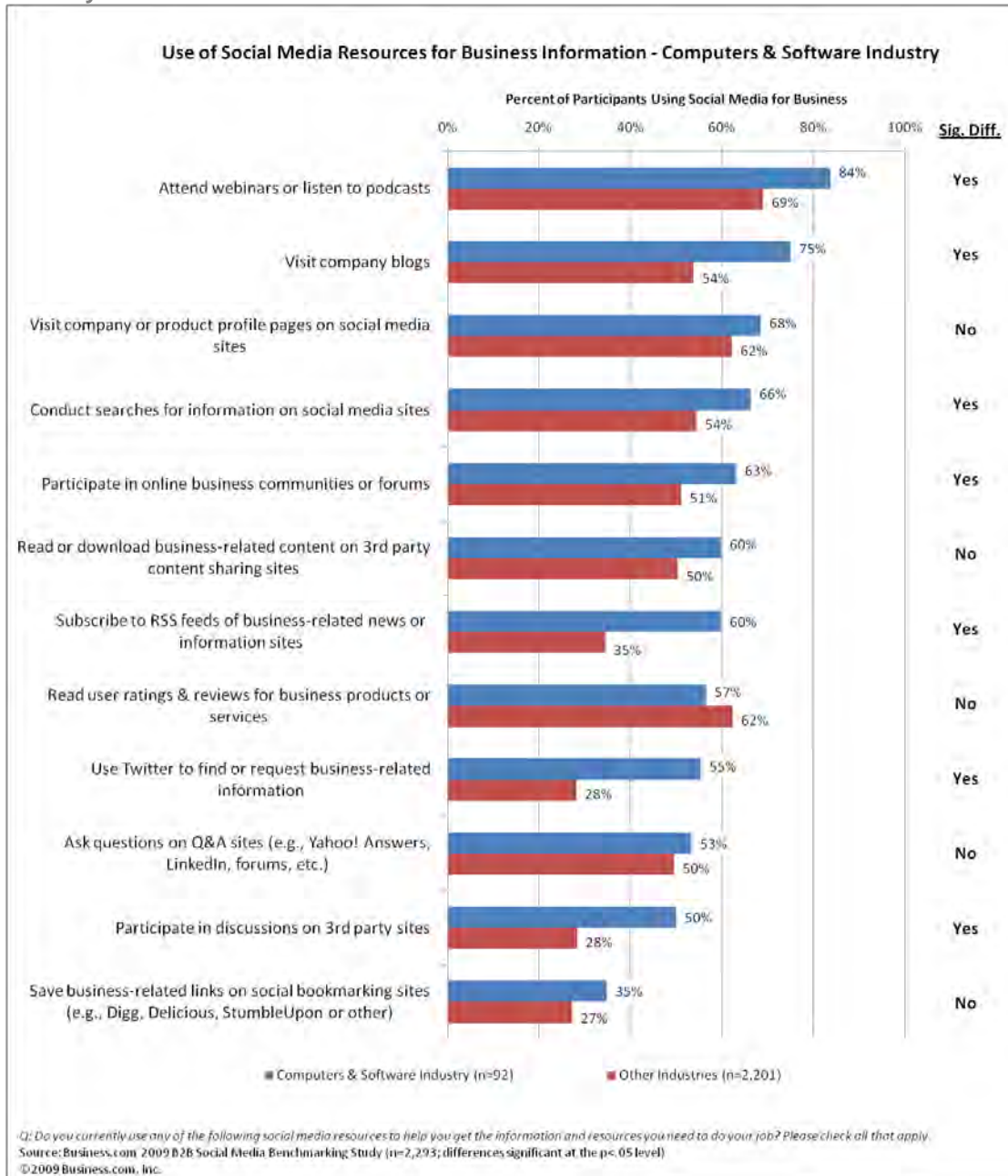


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Computers & Software industry respondents use significantly more social media resources for business information than those from other industries, and are much more likely to attend webinars or listen to podcasts, visit company blogs, search for business information on social media sites, participate in online communities, subscribe to RSS feeds, use Twitter for business and participate in discussions on 3rd party sites.

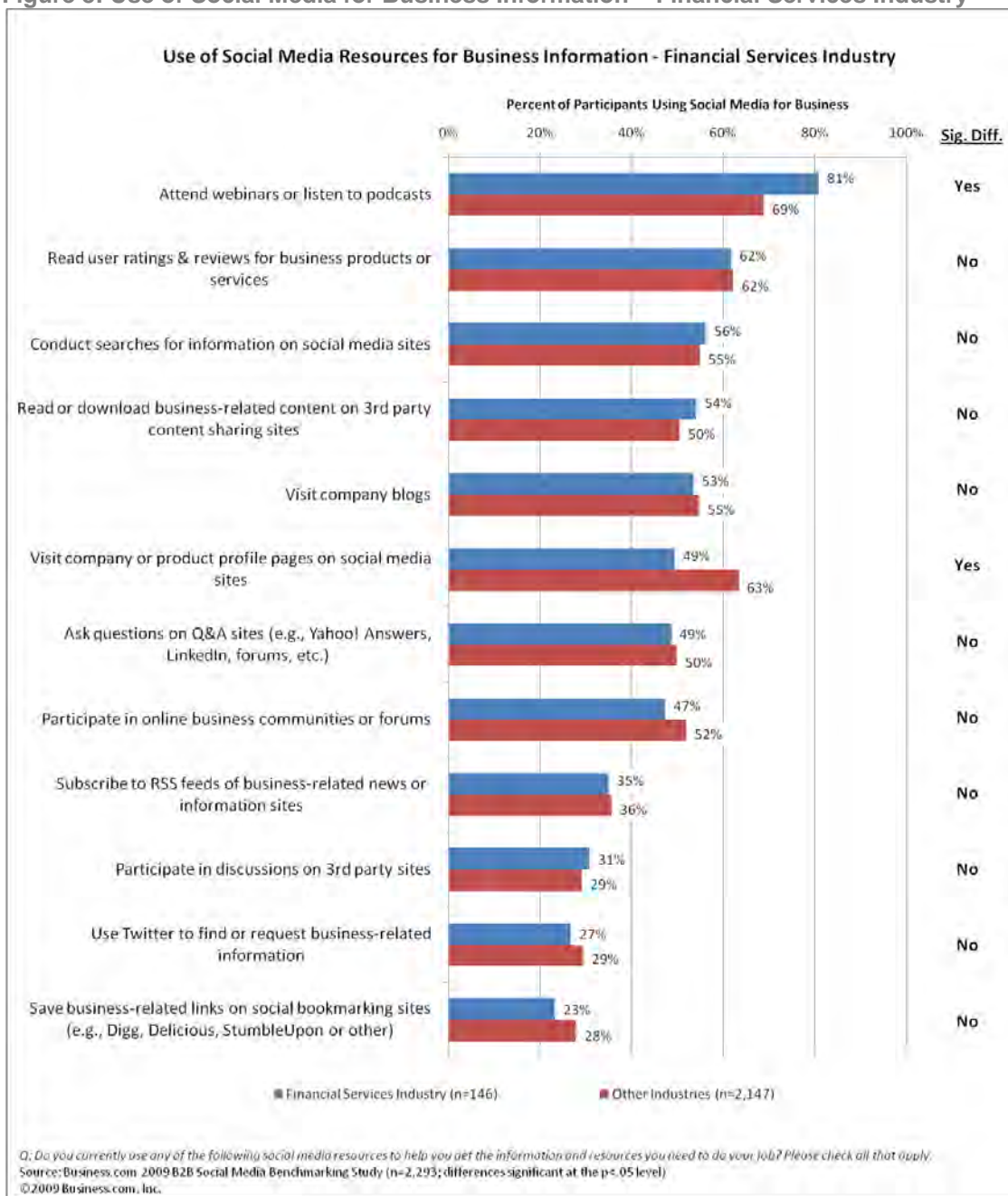
Figure 7: Use of Social Media for Business Information – Computers & Software Industry

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Financial Services industry respondents using social media as a resource for business-relevant information are very similar to those from other industries with two exceptions – they are significantly MORE likely to attend webinars or listen to podcasts, and significantly LESS likely to visit company/product profile pages on social media sites like Facebook or Twitter.

Figure 8: Use of Social Media for Business Information – Financial Services Industry

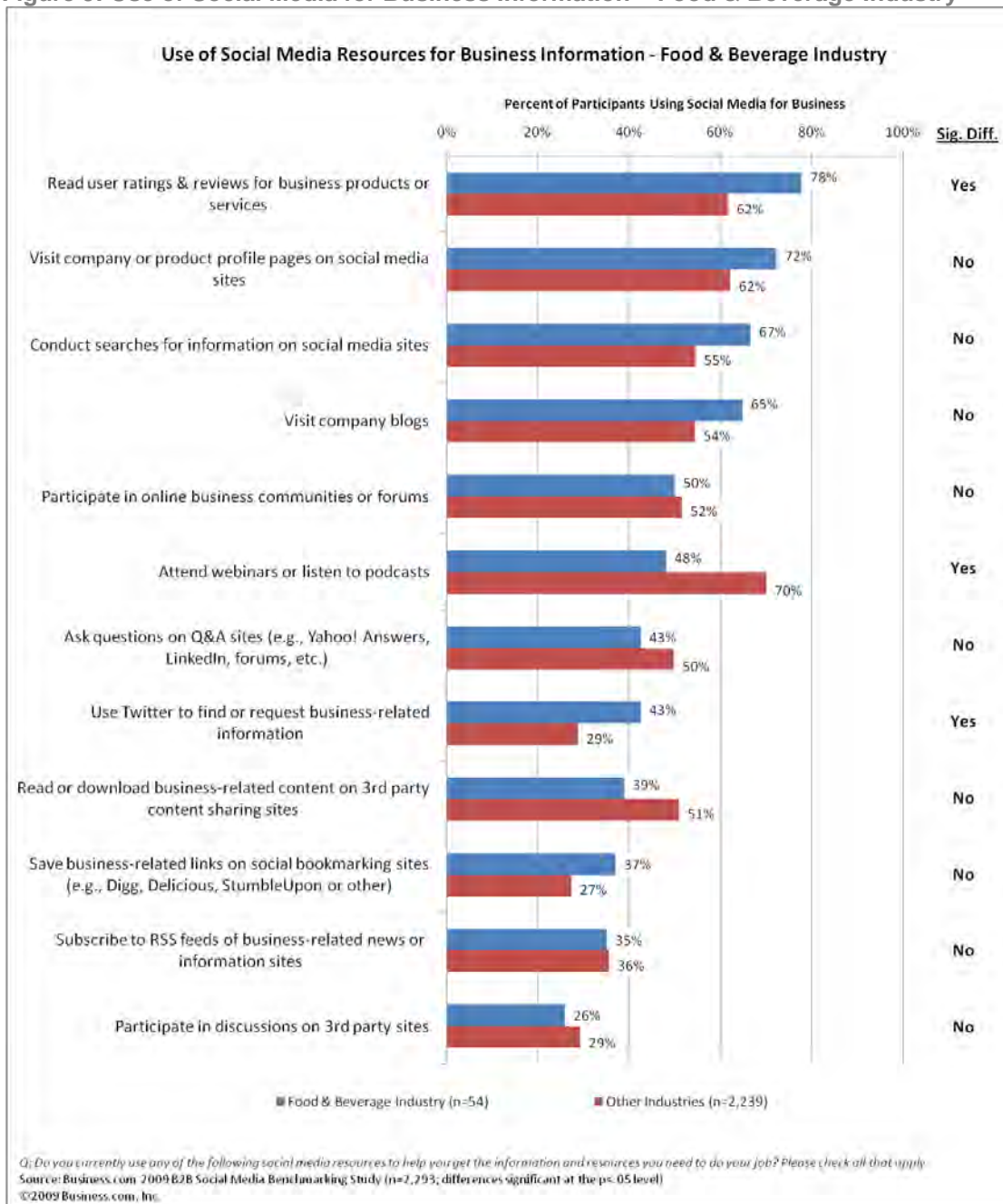


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Food & Beverage industry respondents using social media as a source of business information are significantly more likely to read ratings and reviews for business products or services and use Twitter to find or request business-relevant information, but are significantly less likely to attend webinars or listen to podcasts.

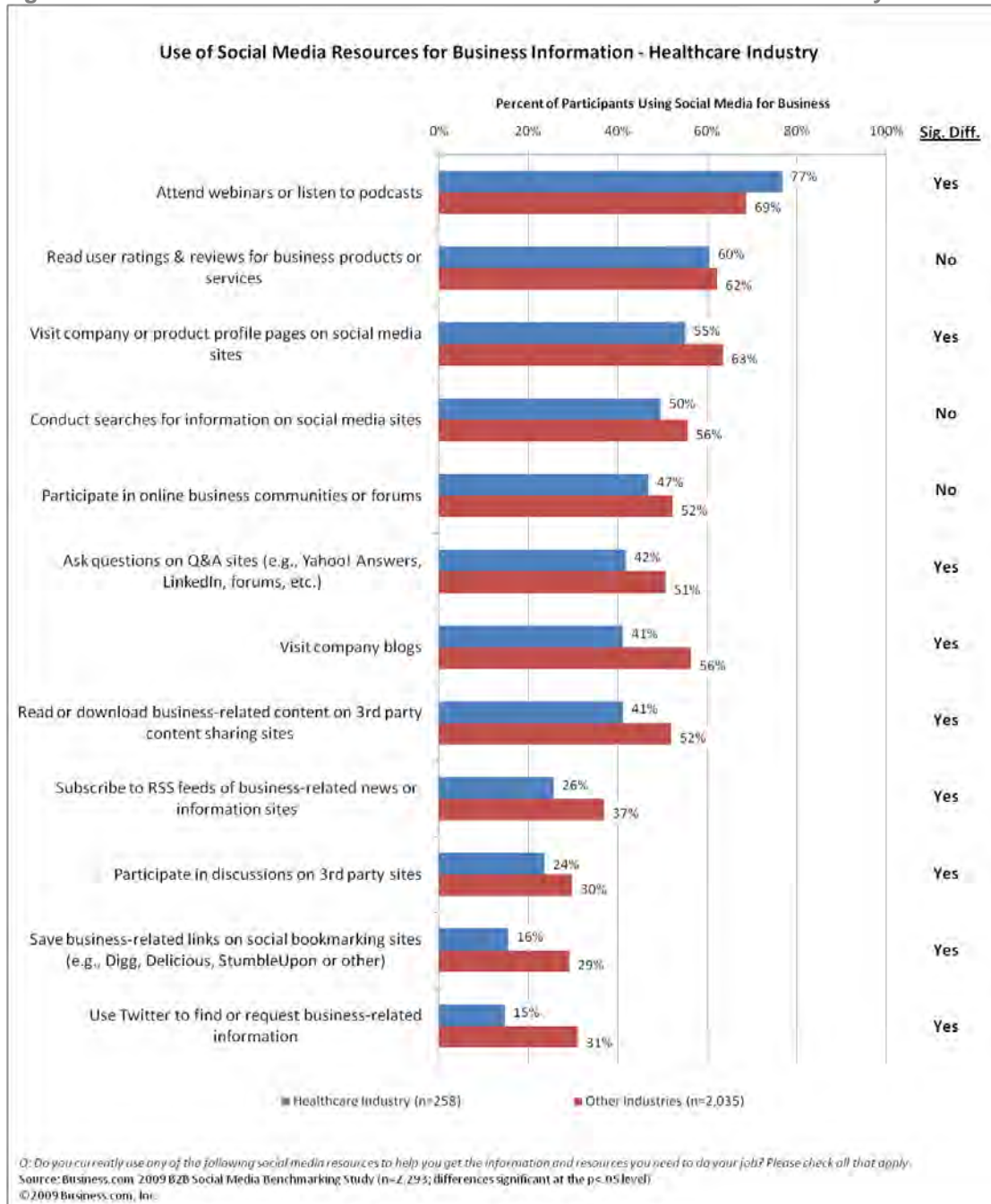
Figure 9: Use of Social Media for Business Information – Food & Beverage Industry

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Healthcare respondents were significantly less likely to seek-out business-relevant information from company/product profile pages on social media sites like Facebook or Twitter, ask questions on Q&A sites, visit company blogs, read or download business content on content sharing sites, subscribe to RSS feeds, participate in discussions on 3rd party sites, engage in social bookmarking and use Twitter for business than those from other industries.

Figure 10: Use of Social Media for Business Information – Healthcare Industry

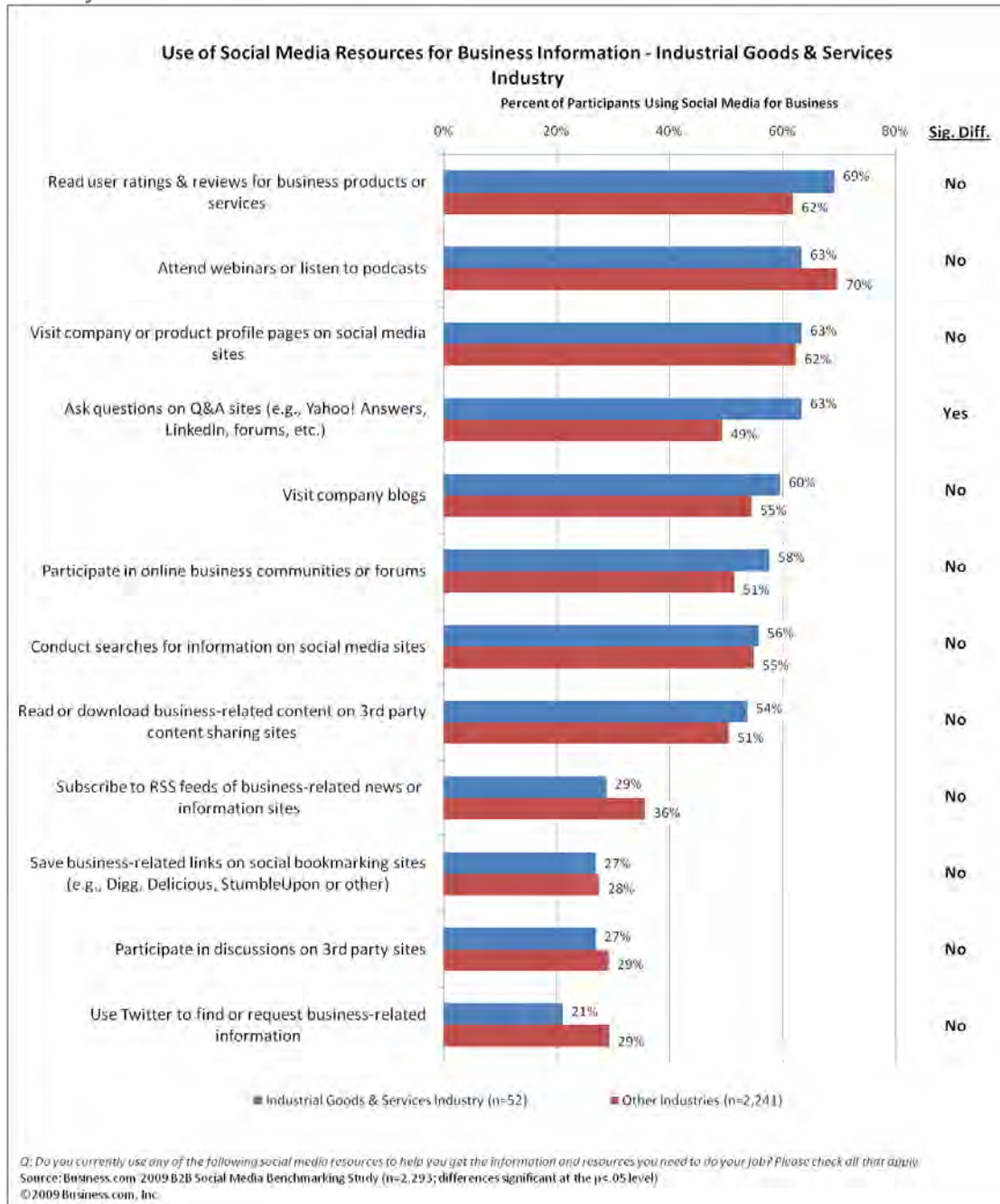


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Apart from being more likely to ask questions on Q&A sites such as Yahoo! Answers and LinkedIn Answers, respondents working in the Industrial Goods & Services industry were similar to the overall average in their use of various social media resources for business information.

Figure 11: Use of Social Media for Business Information – Industrial Goods & Services Industry

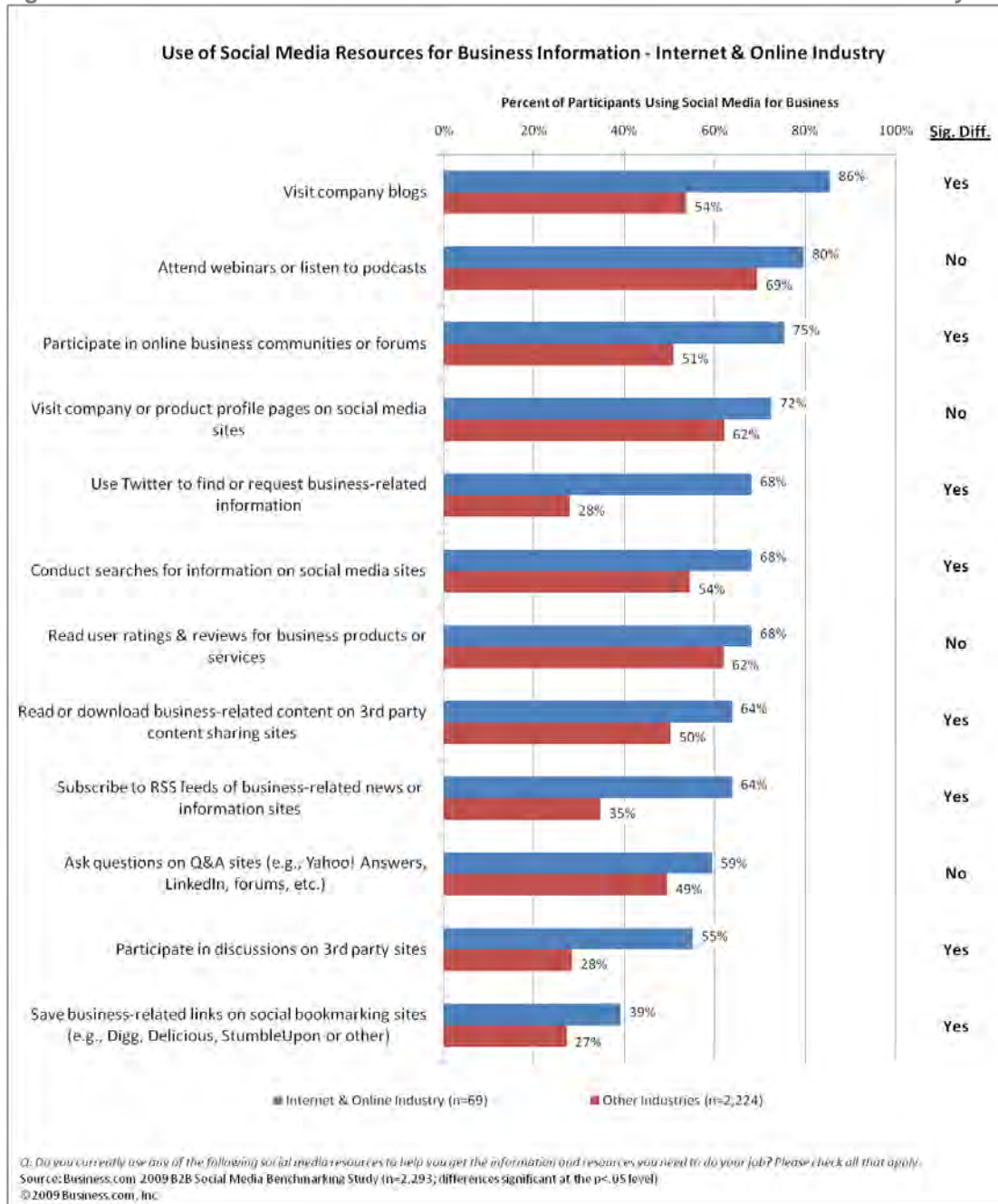
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Not surprisingly, respondents working in the Internet and Online industry are more active users of social media for business information. In particular, they are much more likely to visit company blogs, participate in online communities and discussions, search Twitter and other social media sites for business-relevant information, use content sharing sites, use RSS feeds and save business-related links on social bookmarking sites.

Figure 12: Use of Social Media for Business Information – Internet & Online Industry

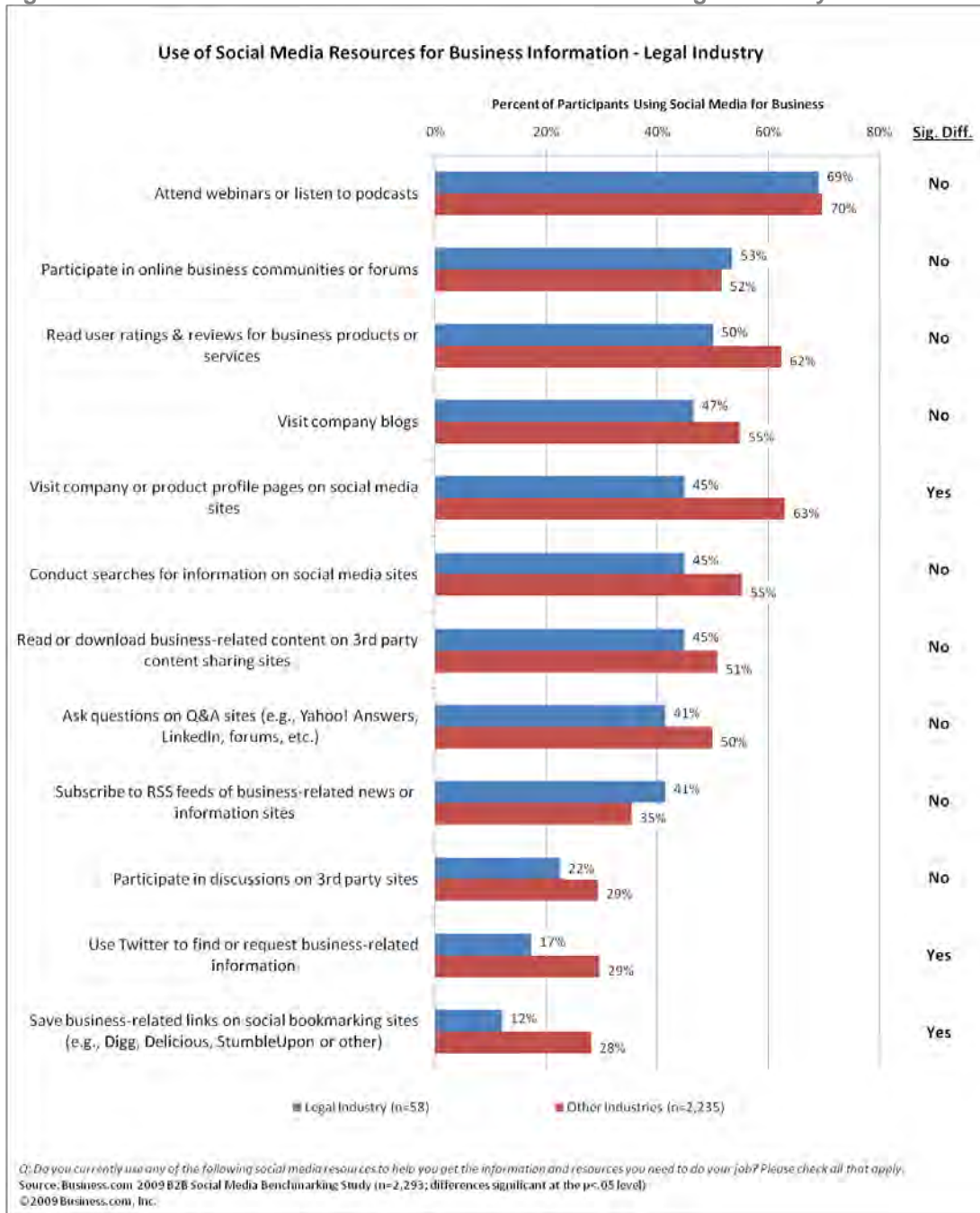
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Respondents working in Law use fewer social media resources for business information than those from other industries overall, and are significantly less likely to seek-out business-relevant information from company/product profile pages on social media sites like Facebook or Twitter, use Twitter to find business-related information and use social bookmarking.

Figure 13: Use of Social Media for Business Information – Legal Industry

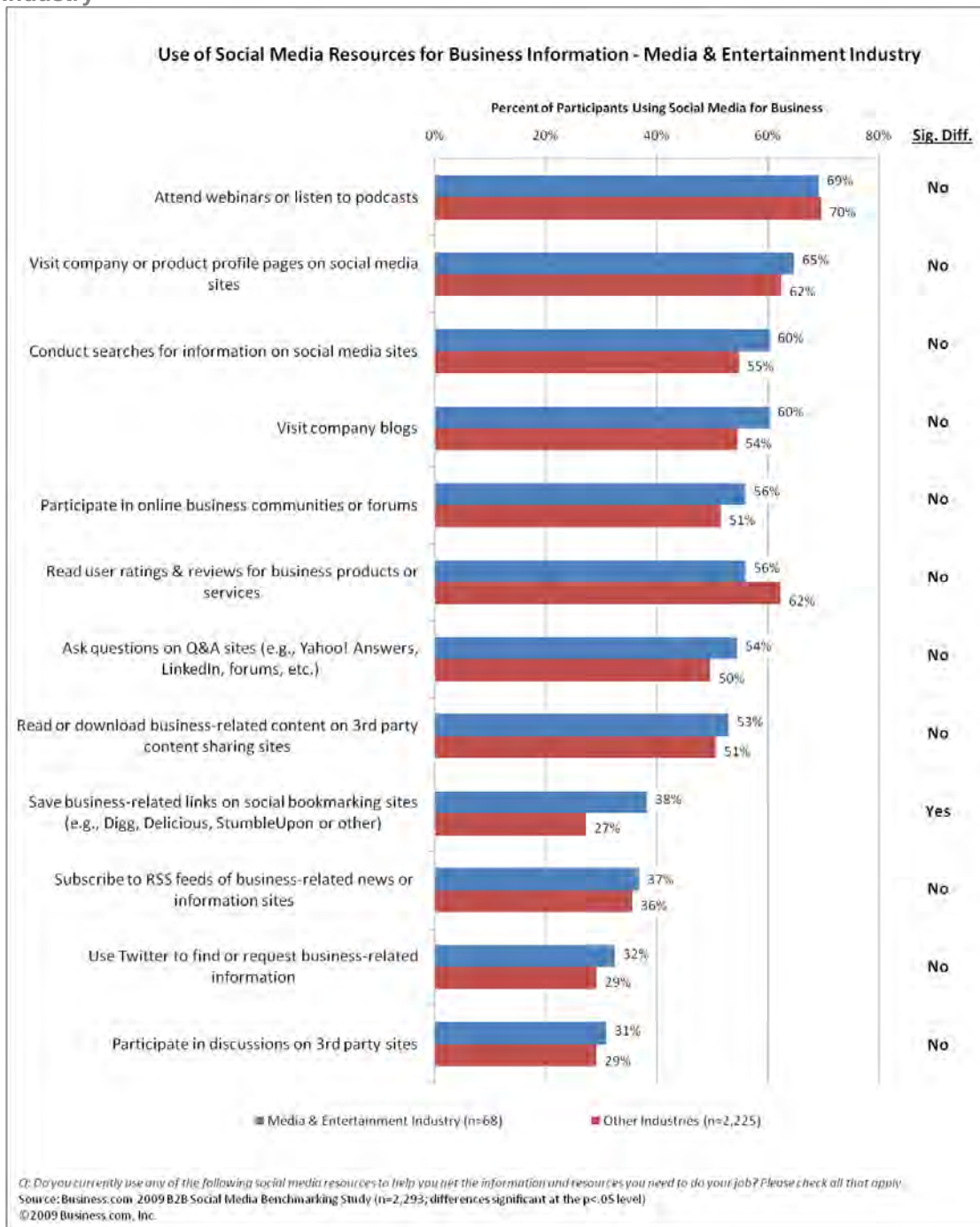
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Media & Entertainment industry respondents closely mirror average use of social media for business information – the only significant difference is a greater propensity to save business-related links on social bookmarking sites such as Digg, Delicious or StumbleUpon.

Figure 14: Use of Social Media for Business Information – Media & Entertainment Industry

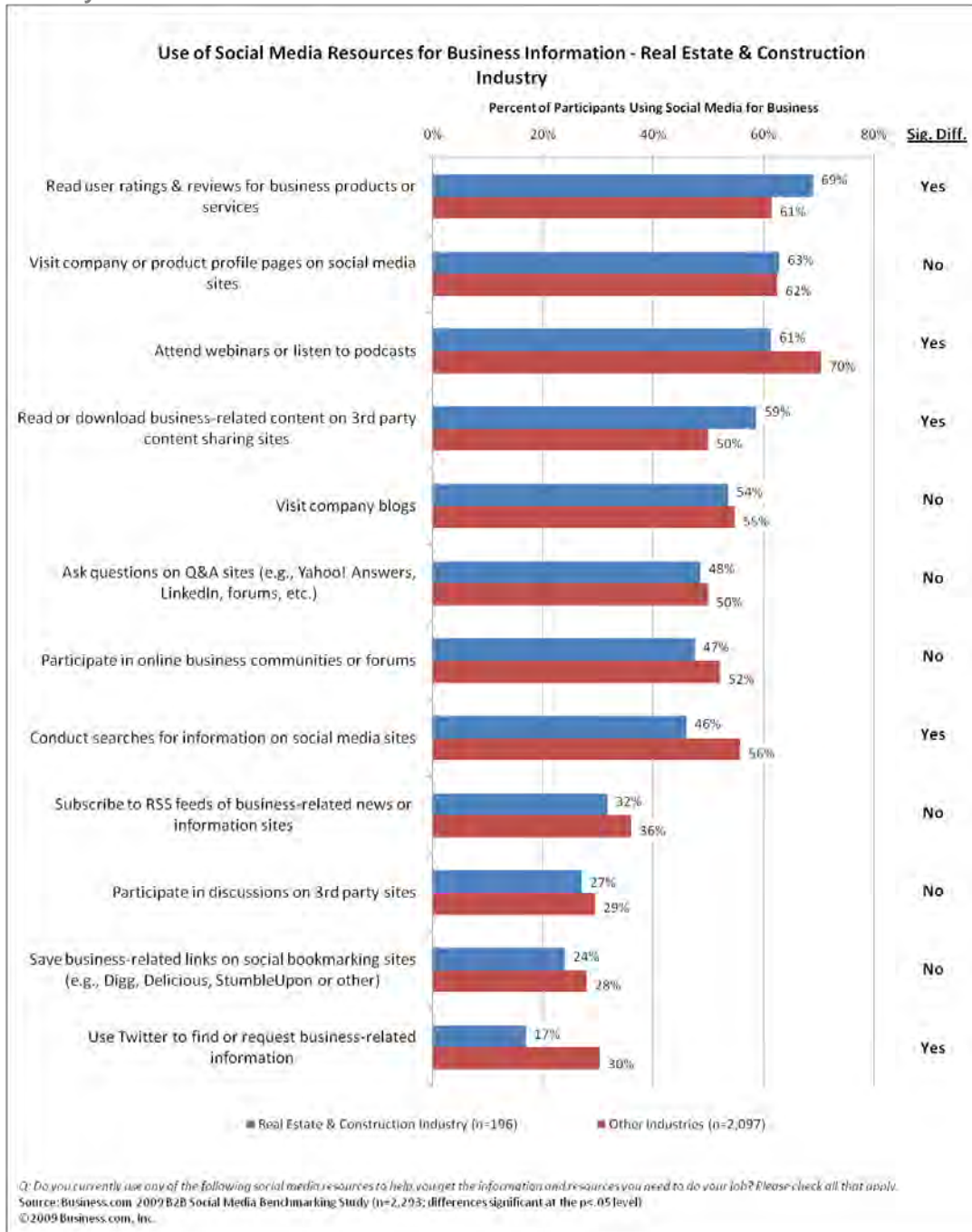
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Real Estate & Construction industry respondents use ratings and reviews most widely used, likely due to a high concentration of small businesses, and are more likely to use content sharing sites for business. On the other hand, they are significantly less likely to use webinars or podcasts, search social media sites for business info and use Twitter for business.

Figure 15: Use of Social Media for Business Information – Real Estate & Construction Industry

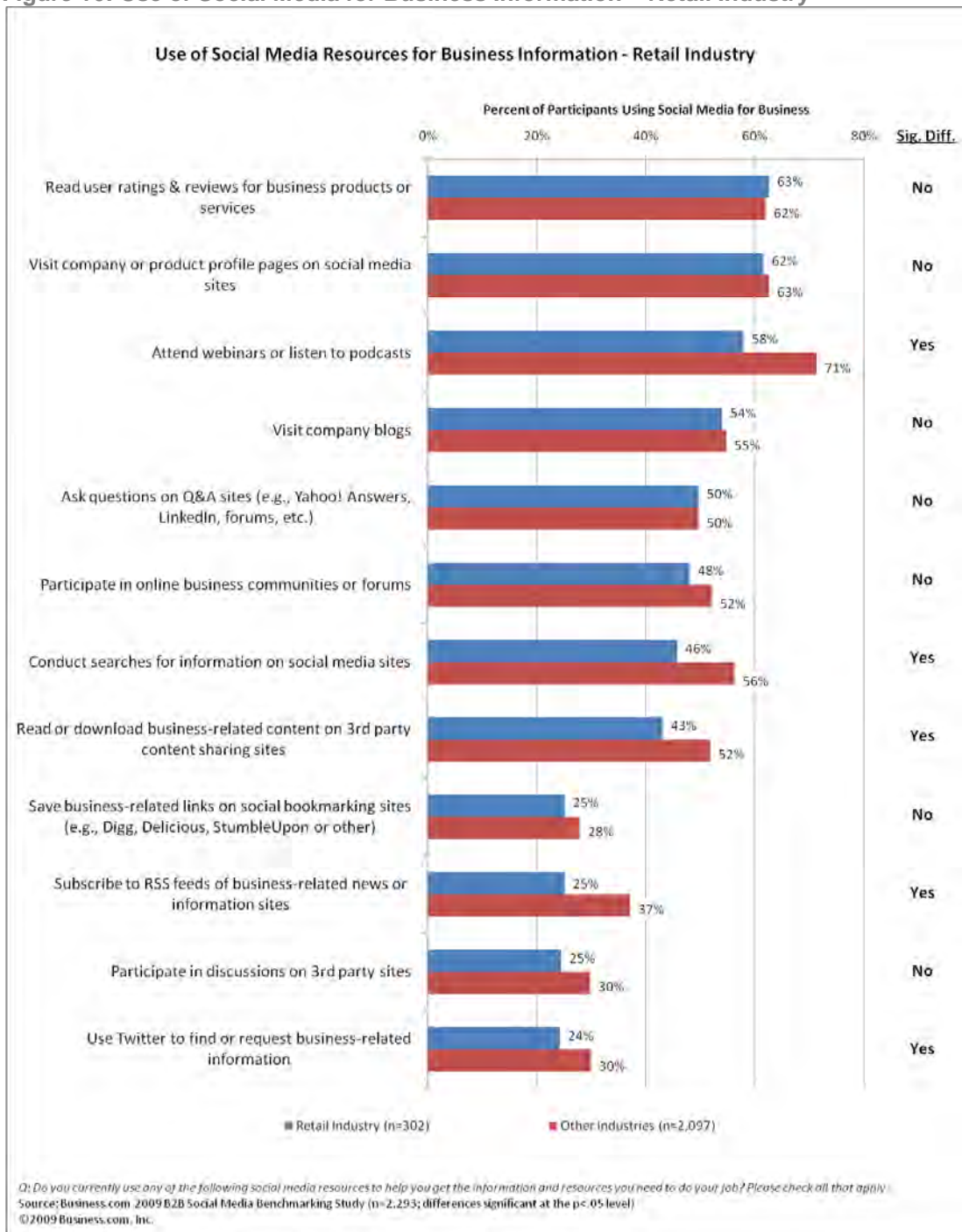
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Retail industry respondents seeking business information through social media use fewer social media resources overall and are less likely to attend webinars or listen to podcasts, search for business-relevant information on social media sites, get business information from content sharing sites, use RSS and use Twitter for business than those from other industries.

Figure 16: Use of Social Media for Business Information – Retail Industry

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Top Business Social Media Resources for Senior Management

Any analysis of the value or effectiveness of different communication channels to reach senior management (C-level, EVP, SVP, VP, GM) must also consider company size – the communication channels used by the head of a six person company and a Fortune 500 SVP may be different in important ways.

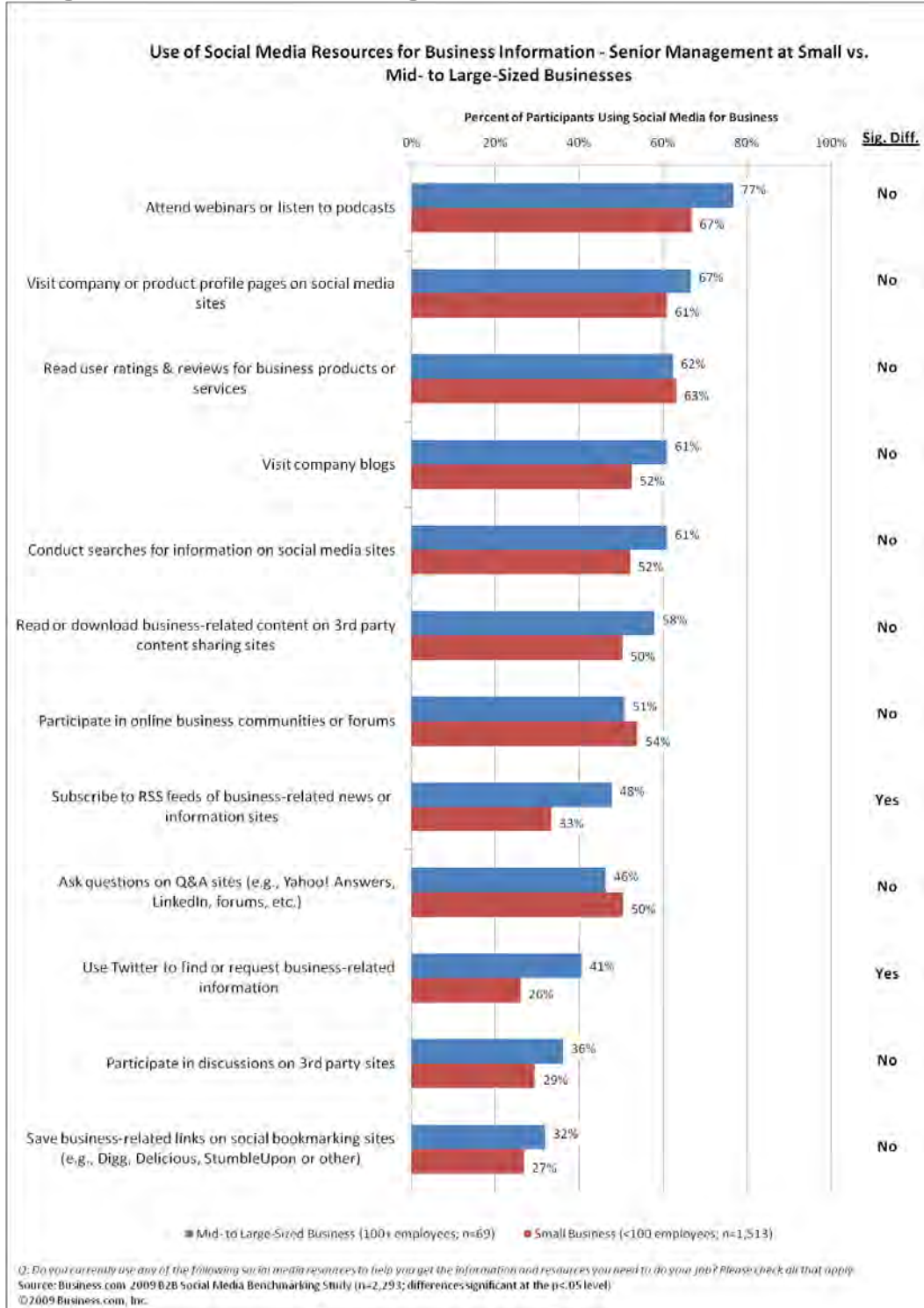
Overall, the senior management participants in this study working for mid- to large-sized companies with more than 100 employees use significantly more social media resources for business information than small business (<100 employees) senior management participants. Also, as shown in the figure below, senior management members in mid- to large-sized companies are significantly more likely to:

- Use RSS feeds for business-relevant information, and
- Use Twitter to find or request business-related information

The implications for B2B companies are that while VP and above level senior managers at companies of all sizes are turning to social media for business information, providing RSS feeds and having a company presence on Twitter are more important when targeting senior management at mid- to large-sized companies than when targeting small company executives.

Figure 17: Use of Social Media Resources for Business Information – Senior Management at Small vs. Mid- to Large-Sized Businesses

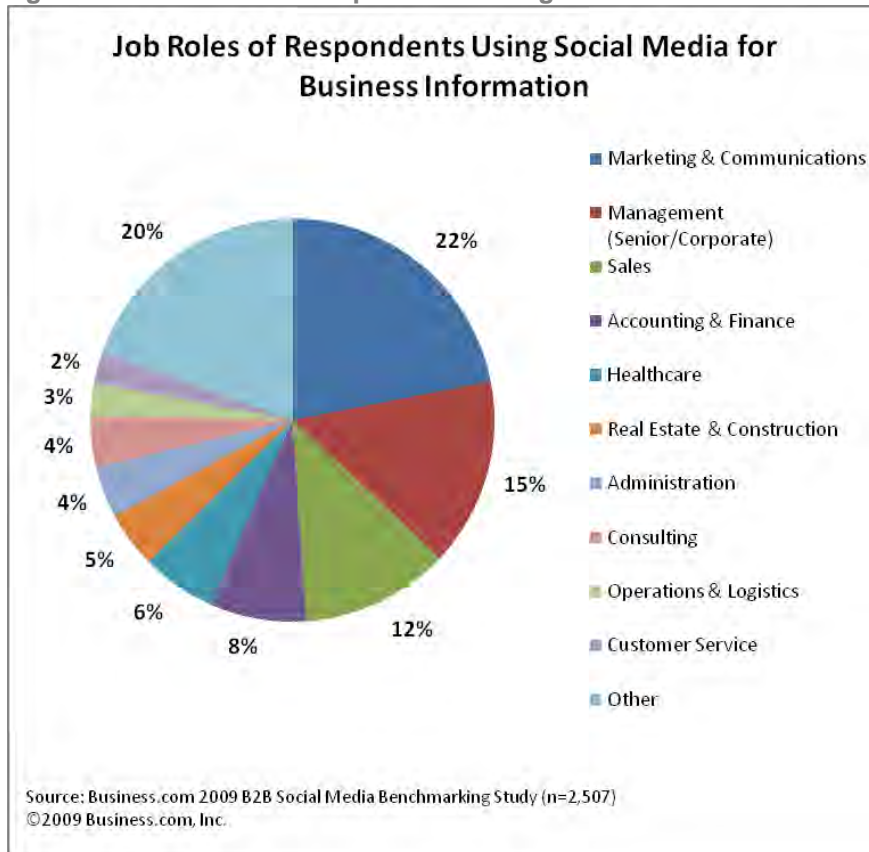
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Top Business Social Media Resources by Job Role

As with industries, participants in this study using social media for business information represent a wide range of job roles or functions within their companies.

Figure 18: Job Roles of Respondents Using Social Media for Business Information

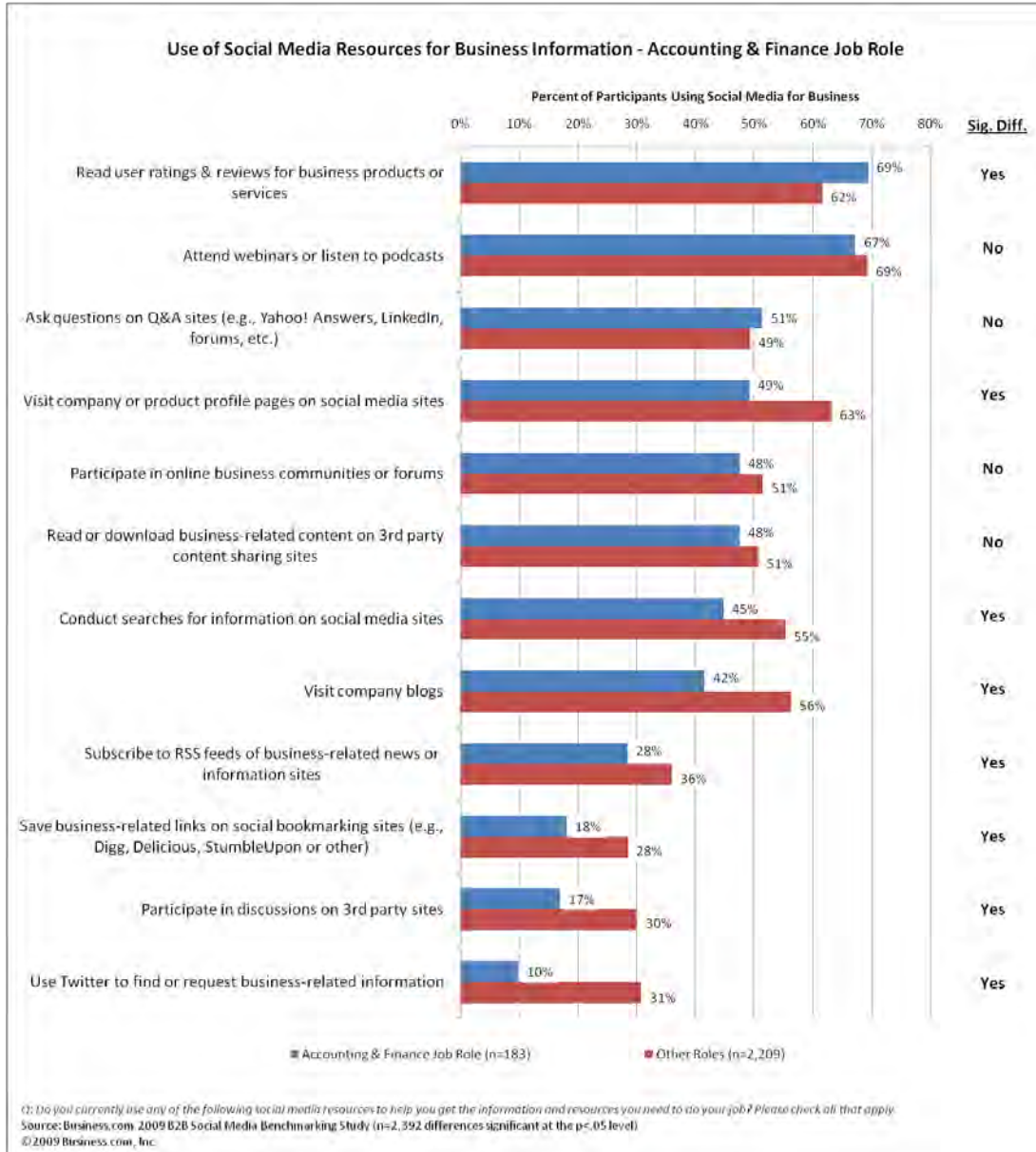


Similar to our analysis of business social media usage by industry above, the rest of this section will focus on highlighting the top social media resources used for business information by study participants in different roles.

Respondents in Accounting or Finance roles used a narrower than average set of social media resources for business information. However, a higher proportion of those in Accounting or Finance used ratings and reviews of business products or services, a valuable resource supporting the business purchasing process.

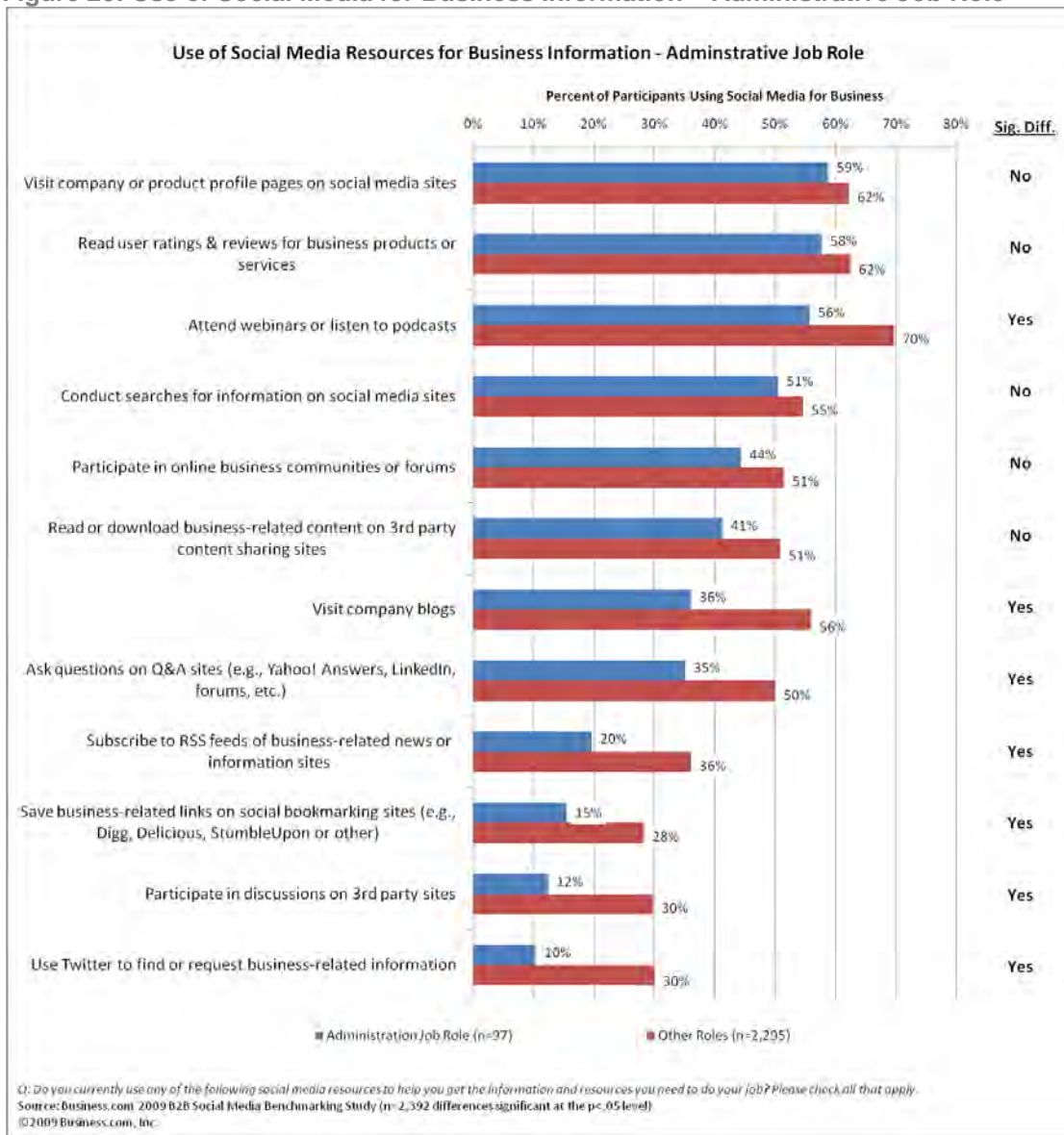
Figure 19: Use of Social Media for Business Information – Accounting & Finance Job Role

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Administrative professionals turning to social media for business-relevant information were most likely to visit company profiles on social networking sites such as Facebook or Twitter. However, relative to those in other roles, administrative professionals were less likely to use any given social media resource for business, and in most cases significantly less likely.

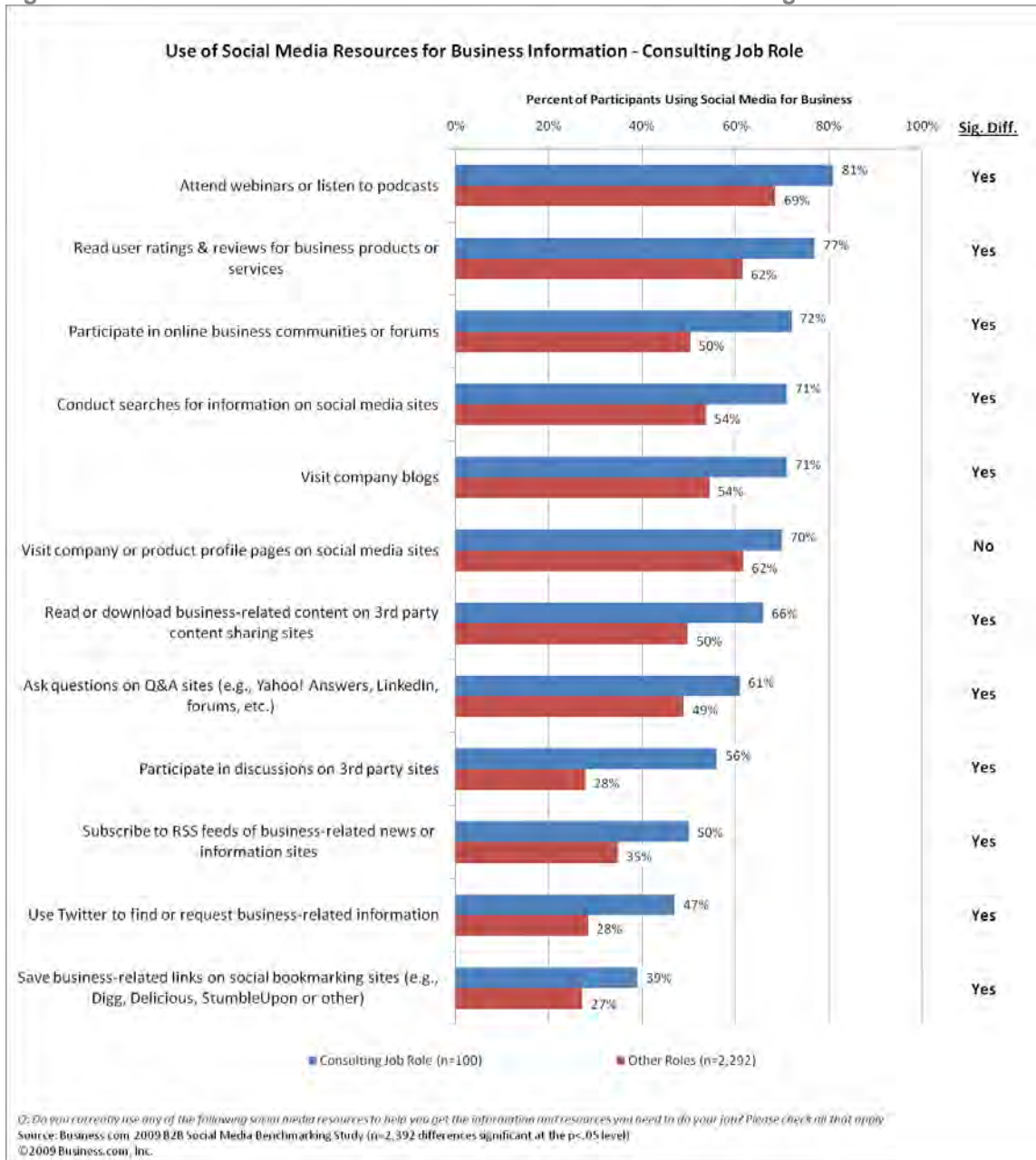
Figure 20: Use of Social Media for Business Information – Administrative Job Role



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Consultants are very active in their use of social media channels to find information relevant to their businesses and day-to-day jobs. In all but one case – visiting company/product profiles on social networking sites – consultants were more likely to use a given social media resource for business information than respondents in other roles.

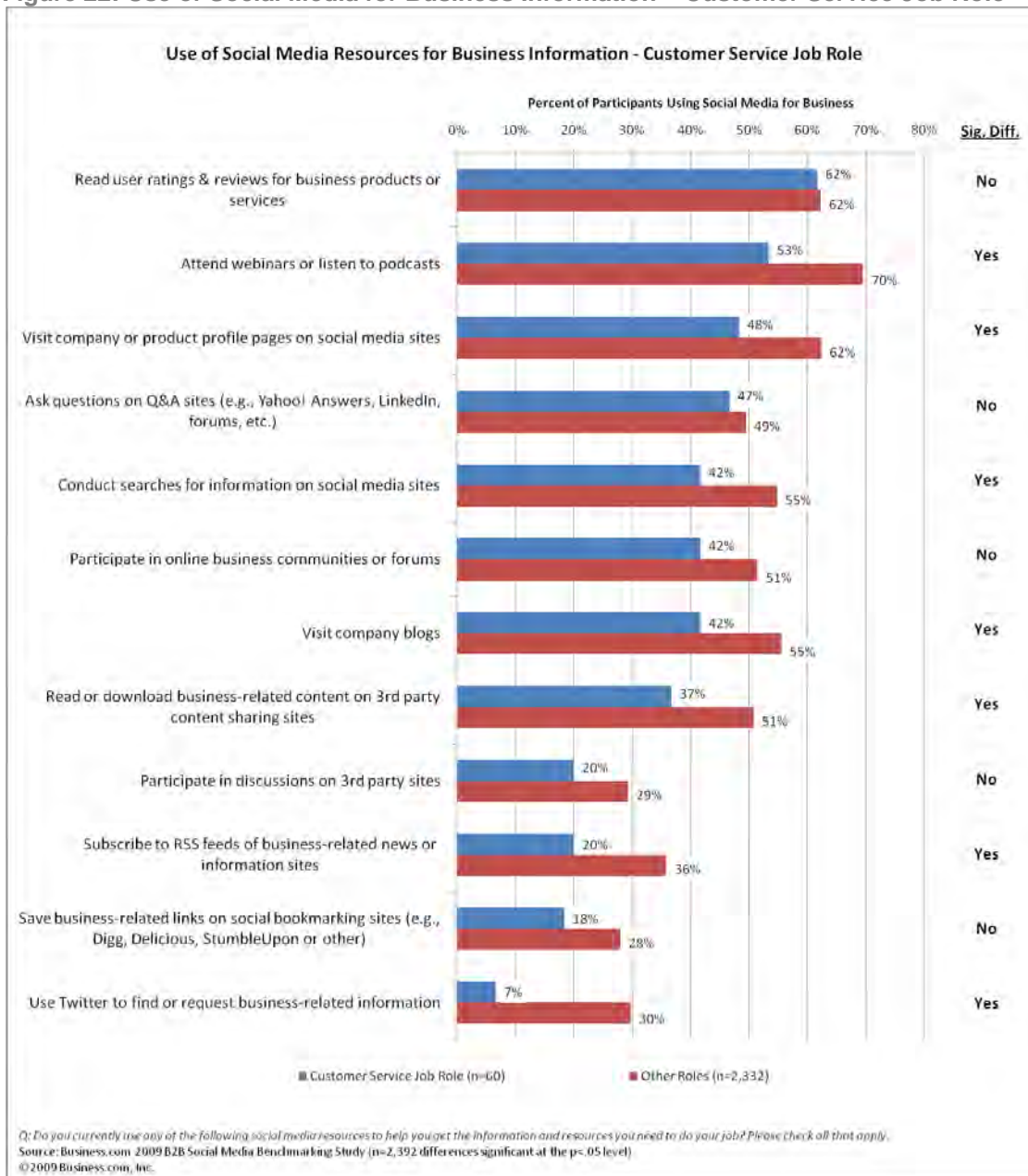
Figure 21: Use of Social Media for Business Information – Consulting Job Role



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Customer service professionals are not highly active users of social media resources for business information. Similar to administrative professionals, in almost all cases customer service professionals are less likely to use a given social media resource for business than respondents from other industries.

Figure 22: Use of Social Media for Business Information – Customer Service Job Role

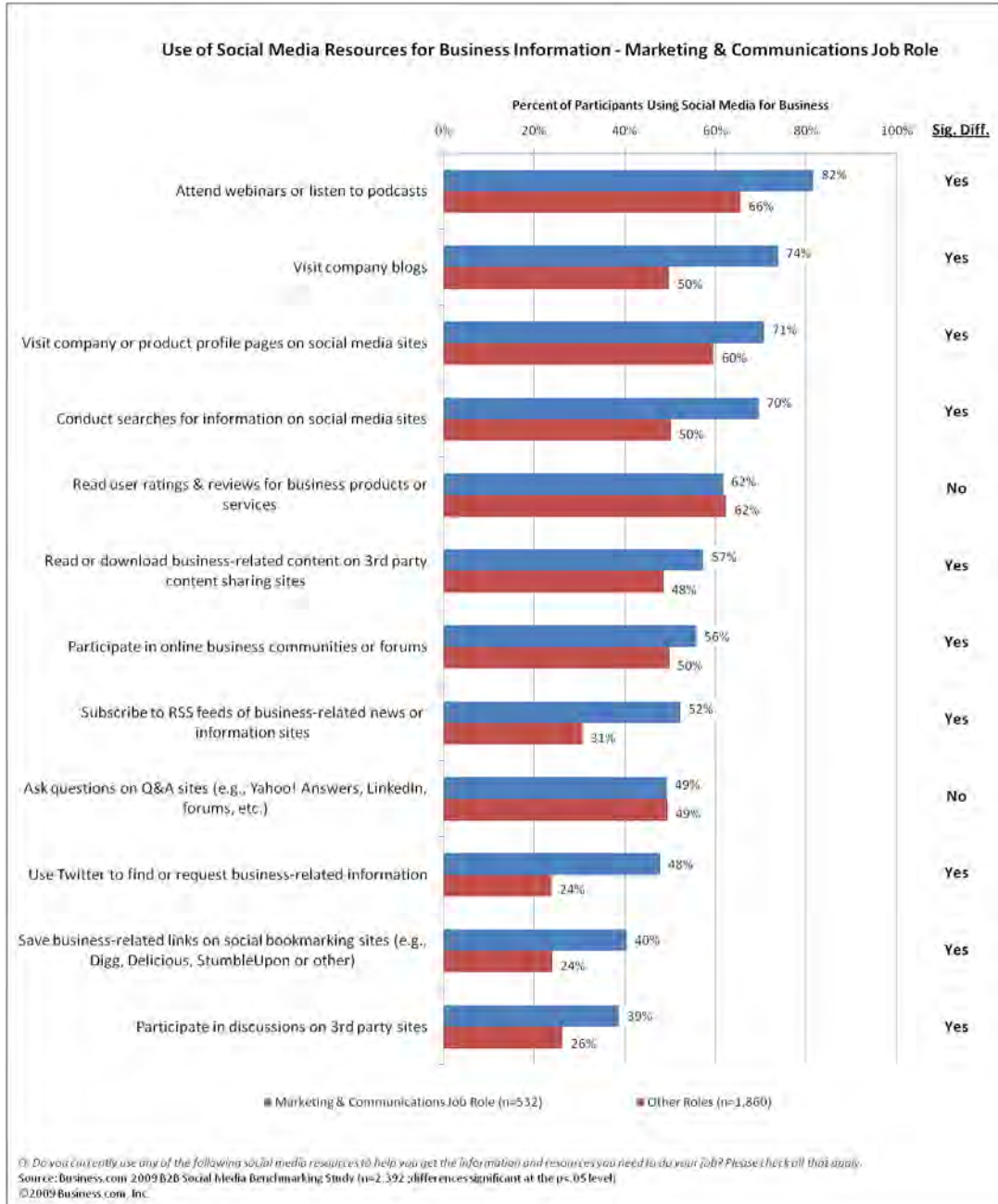


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Marketing and Communications professionals are also broad users of social media channels for business information. The only social media resource Marketing and Communications professionals do not use for business more than average are ratings and reviews for business products or services.

Figure 23: Use of Social Media for Business Information – Marketing & Communications Job Role

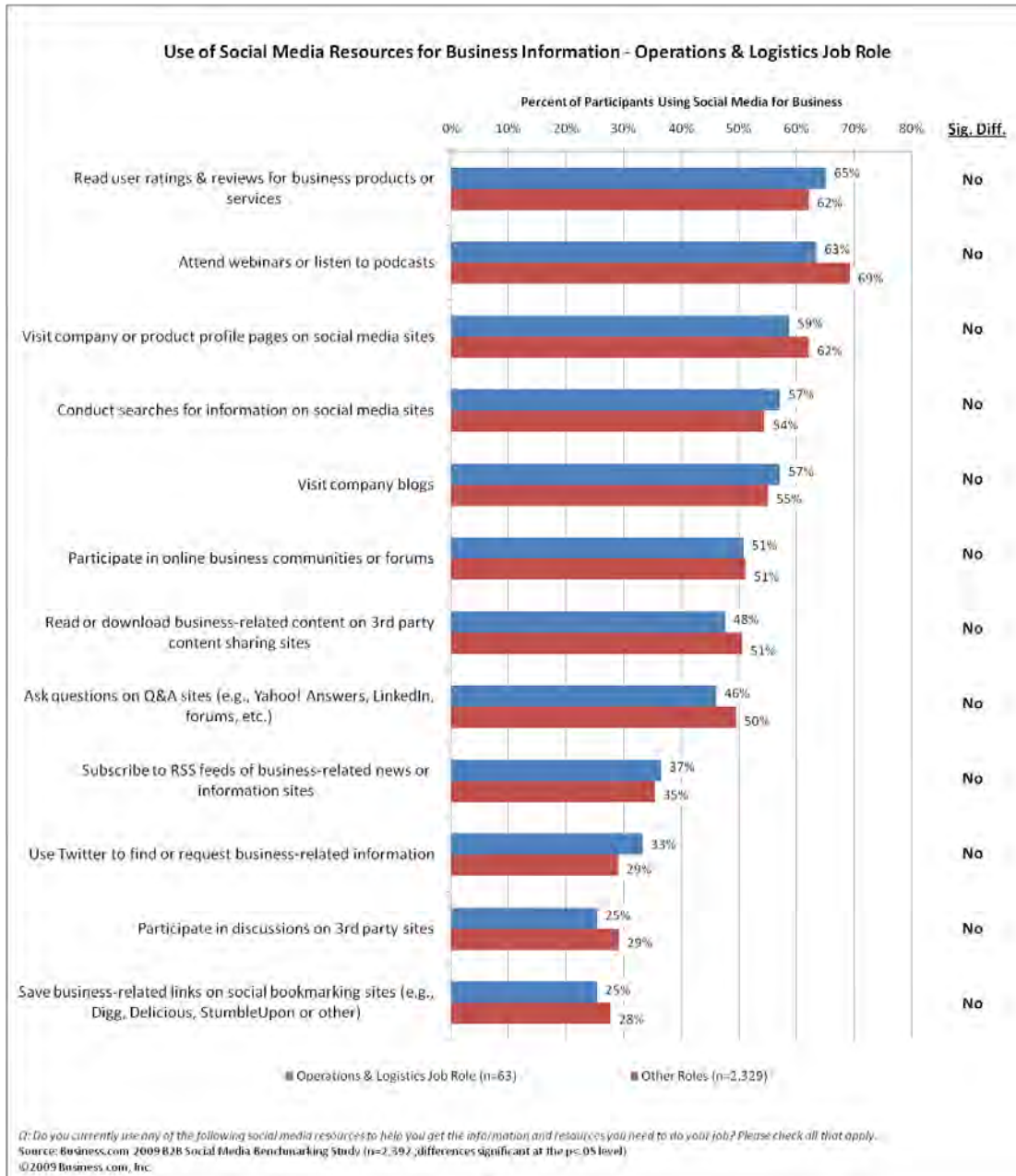
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Operations & Logistics personnel are fundamentally average when it comes to the use of social media resources for the information they need to do their jobs on a day-to-day basis. This group did not significantly differ from the average of all other job roles across any of the business social media resources included in the study.

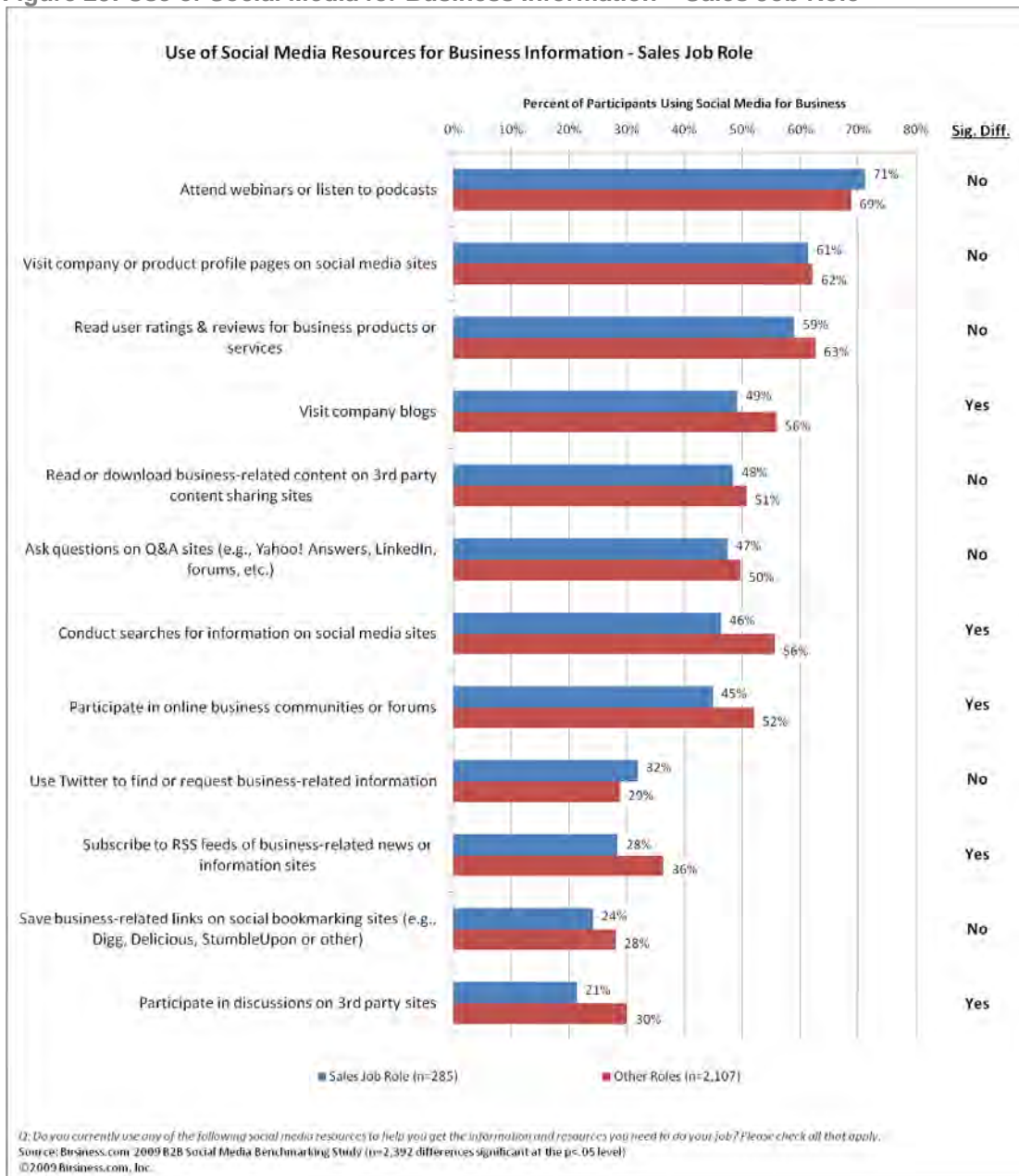
Figure 24: Use of Social Media for Business Information – Operations & Logistics Job Role

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The 285 study participants working in a Sales role used slightly fewer social media resources for business information overall than participants in other job roles. In addition, they were significantly less likely to turn to company blogs, search social media sites, participate in online communities or discussions, and use RSS feeds for business information.

Figure 25: Use of Social Media for Business Information – Sales Job Role



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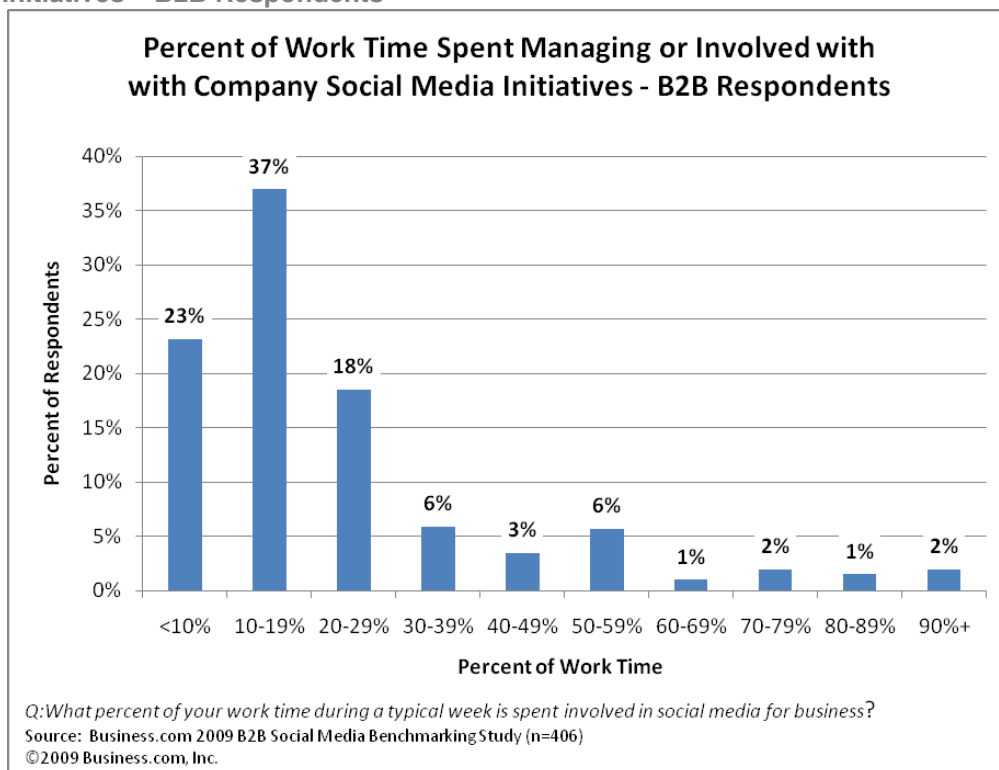
Social Media Initiatives at B2B Companies

This study focused on understand business social media utilization – among those business professionals and companies using social media for business today, what are they doing and where do they find the most value?

Here, we define a business-to-business (B2B) company as one where two-thirds or more of company revenue comes from sales to other businesses. The About the B2B Social Media Benchmarking Study section provides additional details, but 564 study participants worked for B2B companies by our definition, and 434 (77%) of these worked for a B2B company currently involved in planning or managing social media initiatives.

The vast majority (94%) of these respondents are directly involved in planning or managing social media initiatives for their companies and spend, on average, 21% of their time in a given week on business social media activities. This is higher than the overall study average of 18% of time.

Figure 26: % of Work Time Spent Managing or Involved with Company Social Media Initiatives – B2B Respondents

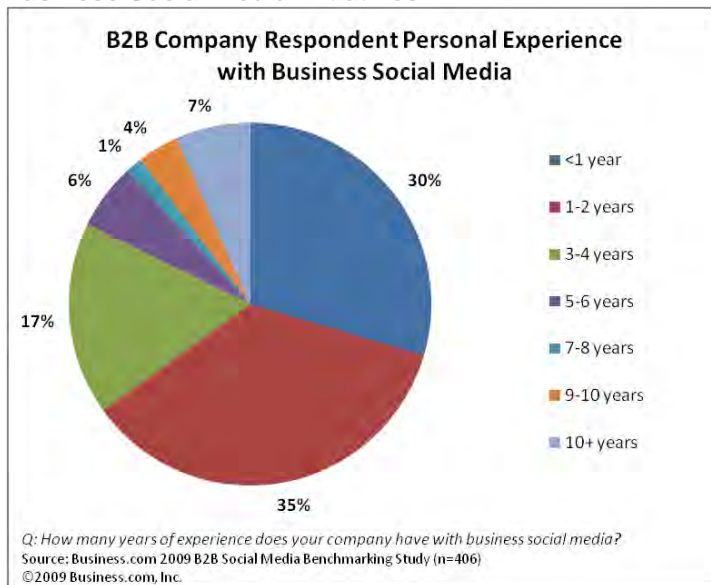


Respondent and Company Experience with Business Social Media

B2B company respondents have somewhat more experience with business social media initiatives than their peers in B2C and mixed companies – 30% of B2B company respondents have less than one year of business social media experience versus 35% across the study

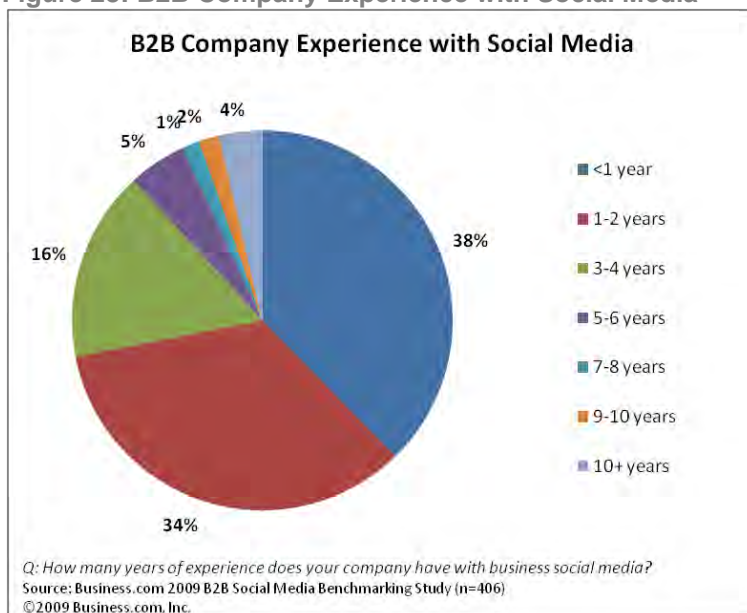
overall. However, 65% of B2B company respondents have less than two years of business social media experience which is the same for the overall study. While B2B respondents are slightly more experienced, the people involved in social media initiatives at B2B companies are still very new to the social media for business.

Figure 27: Experience with Business Social Media For Those Currently Involved with Business Social Media Initiatives



The B2B companies for which these respondents work lag their B2C and mixed-company peers in business social media experience, with 73% of B2B companies having less than 2 years of experience versus 71% for the study overall.

Figure 28: B2B Company Experience with Social Media

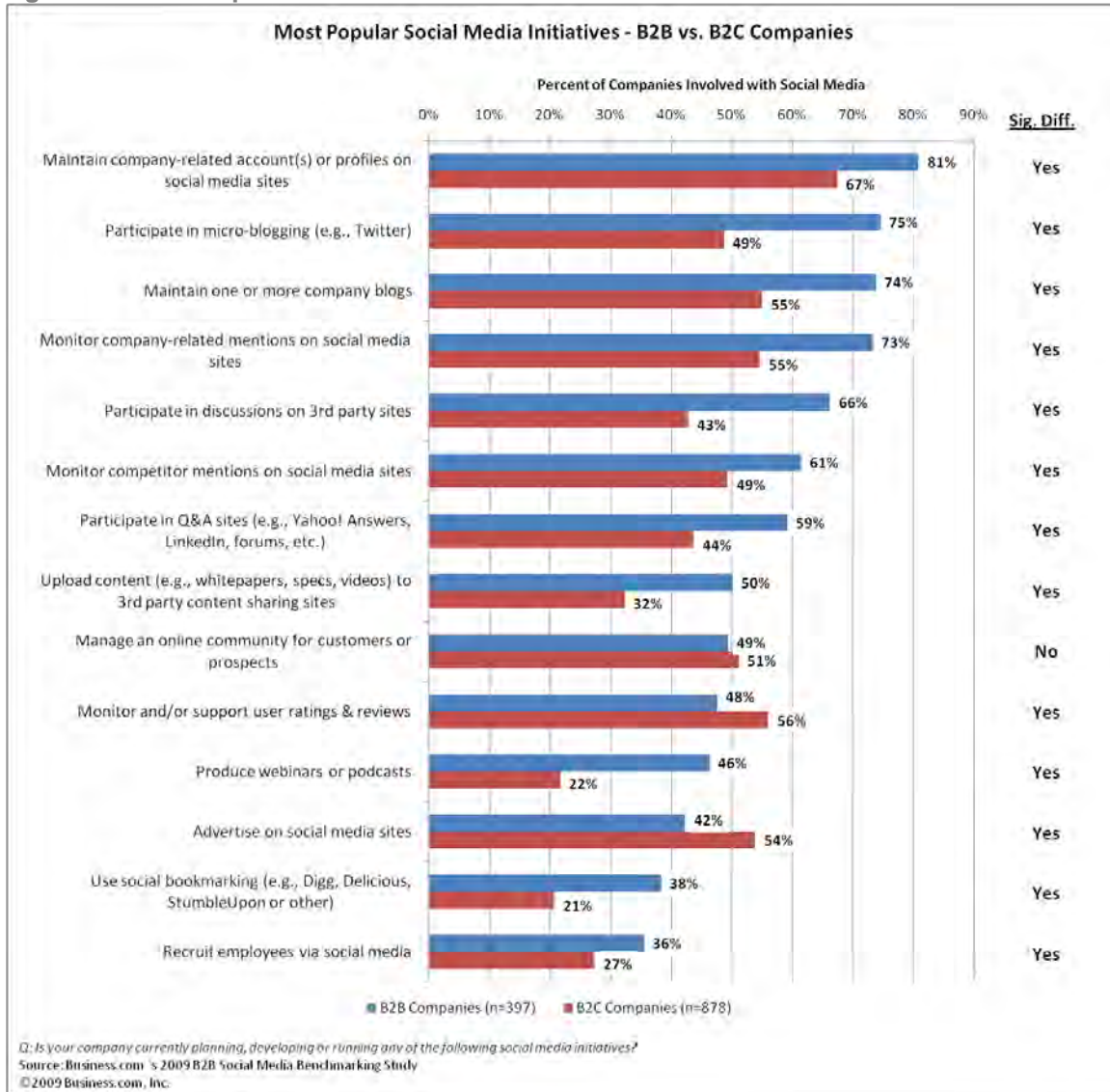


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Top B2B Company Social Media Activities

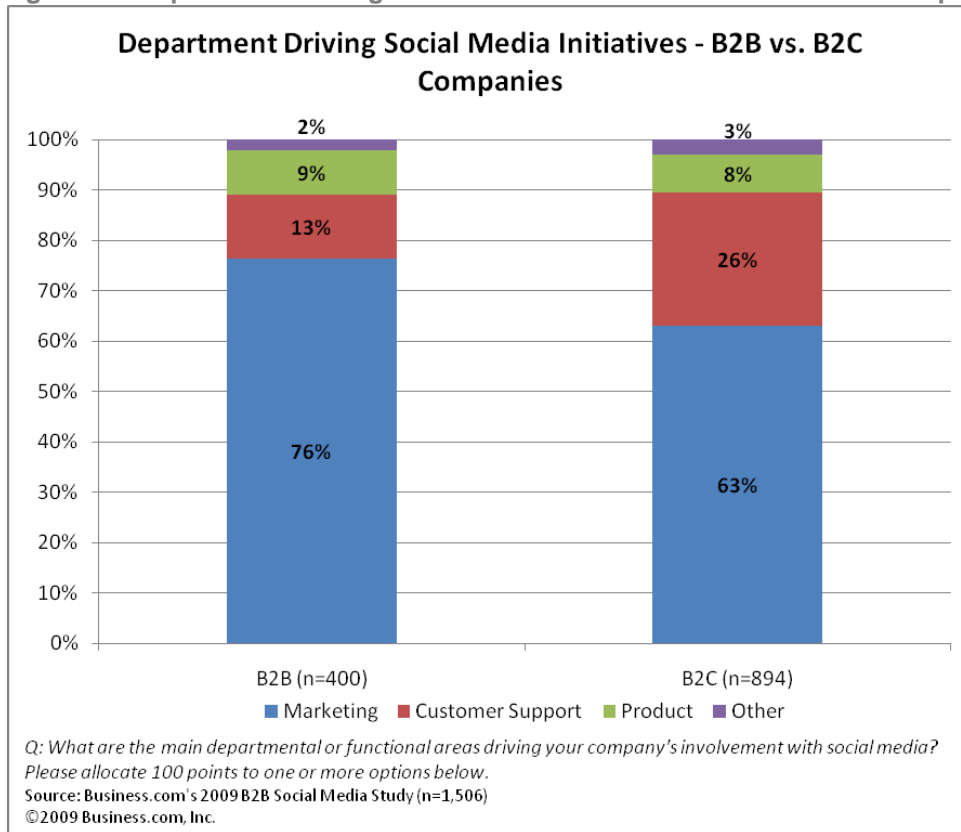
B2B companies are much more active with social media than their B2C counterparts with three exceptions – there’s no B2B versus B2C difference in the percentage of companies managing online communities, and B2B companies are significantly less likely than B2C companies to monitor online ratings/reviews of their products or services and to advertise on social media sites. B2B companies do, however, maintain a presence on social media sites, with 81% maintaining one or more accounts or profiles on sites like Facebook, Twitter or LinkedIn. B2B companies are also much more likely to engage in micro-blogging on Twitter than B2C companies.

Figure 29: Most Popular Business Social Media Initiatives



In B2B companies, the Marketing department is much more likely to be driving social media initiatives than in B2C companies as shown in the figure below.

Figure 30: Department Driving Social Media Initiatives – B2B vs. B2C Companies

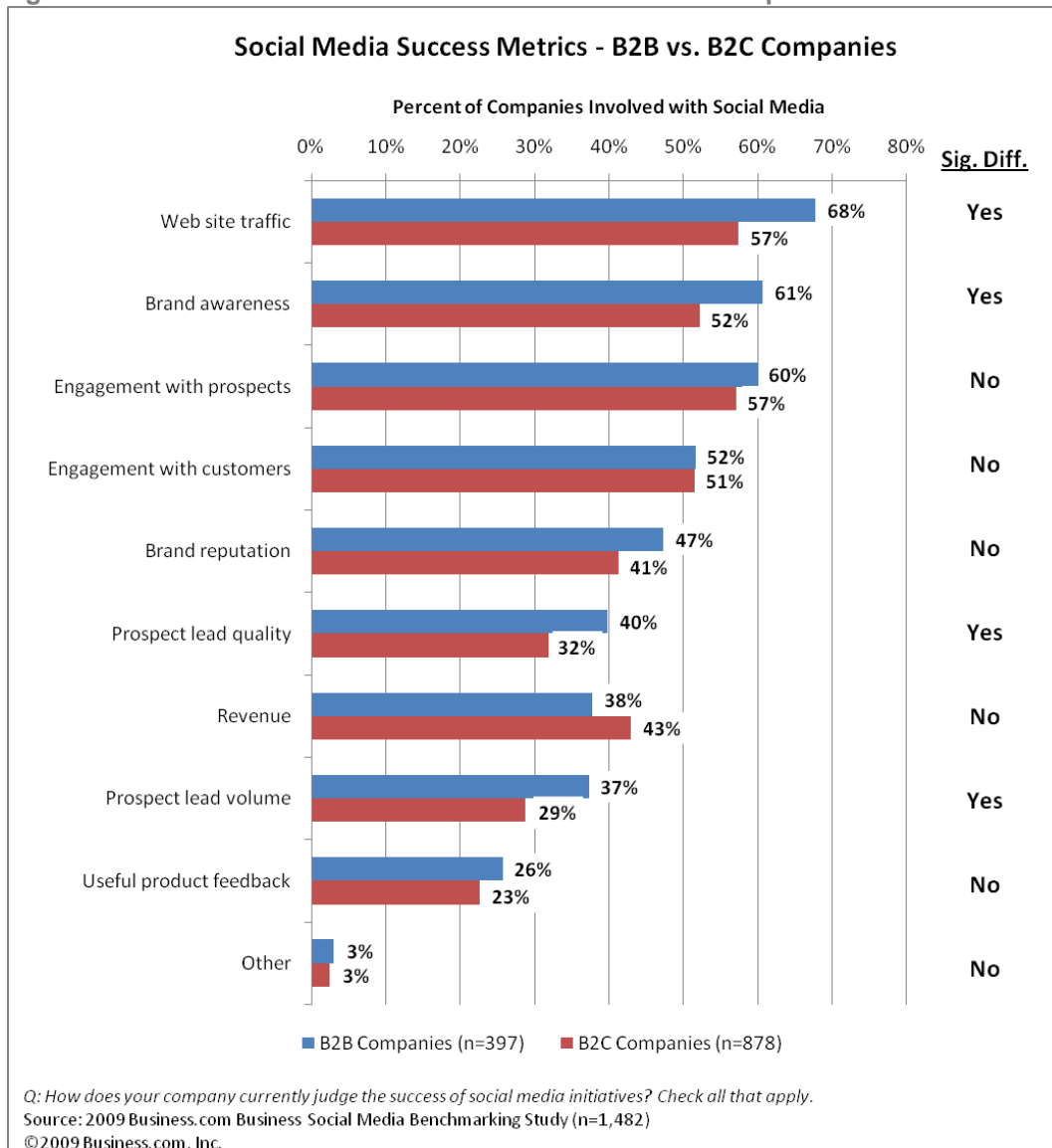


RESEARCH REPORT

How B2B Companies Judge Social Media Success

Web site traffic is the most common social media success metric used for both B2B and B2C companies, but a significantly higher percentage of B2B companies (68%) use this metric than B2C companies (57%). B2B companies are also more likely to use brand awareness, prospect lead quality and prospect lead volume as social media success metrics than are B2C companies.

Figure 31: Social Media Success Metrics – B2B vs. B2C Companies



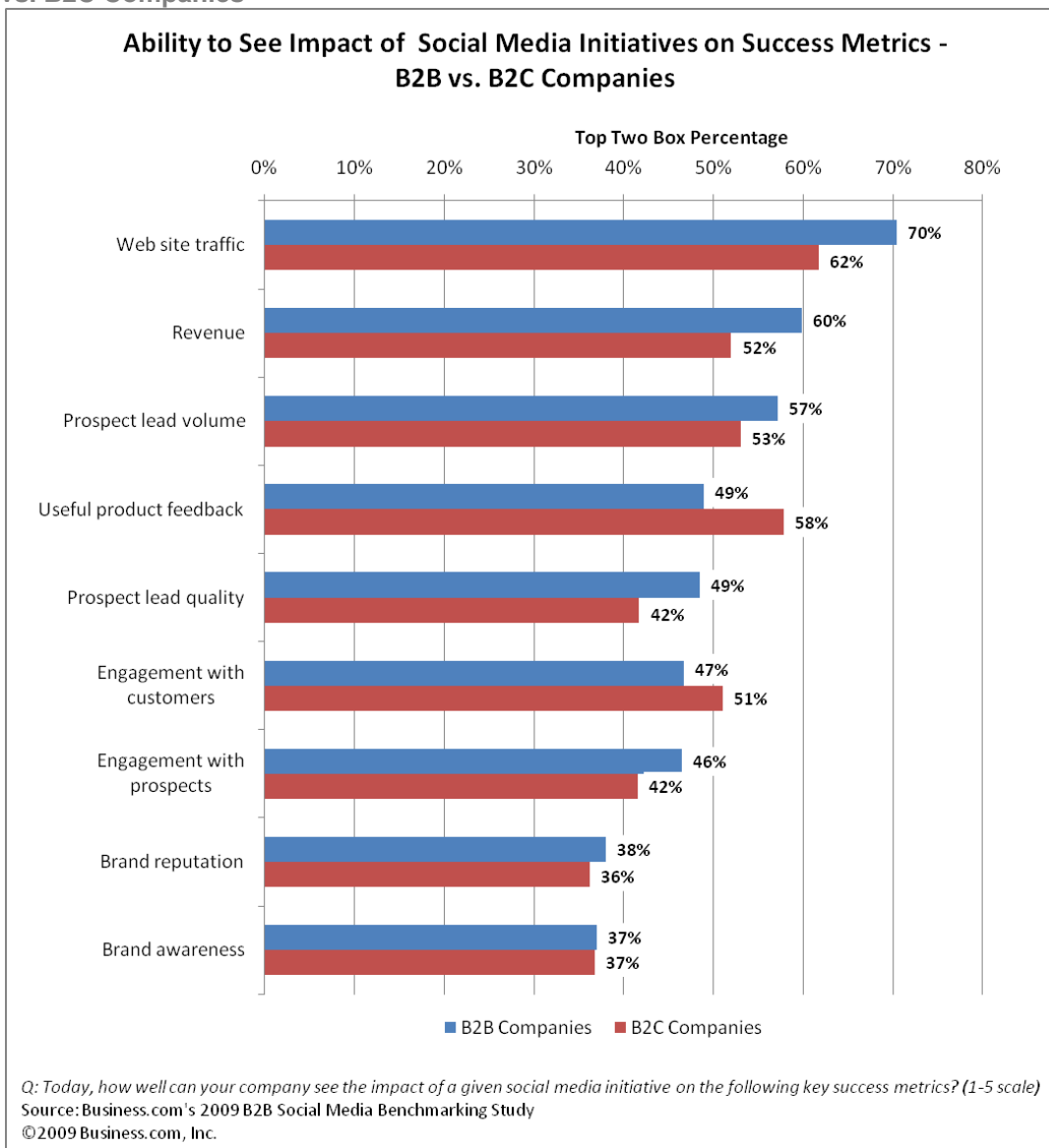
We also asked respondents to tell us how well they can see the impact of company social media initiatives on the success metrics they use today using the following scale:

1. Not at All - Unable to Measure
2. Barely - May or May Not Have the Data

3. Somewhat - Data is There but You Have to Dig
4. Well - Most of the Data is Easily Accessed
5. Very Well - Part of Standard Reports

The figure below shows the top two box (Well, Very Well) percentages for respondents using each of the success metrics.

Figure 32: Ability to See Impact of Social Media Initiatives on Success Metrics – B2B vs. B2C Companies



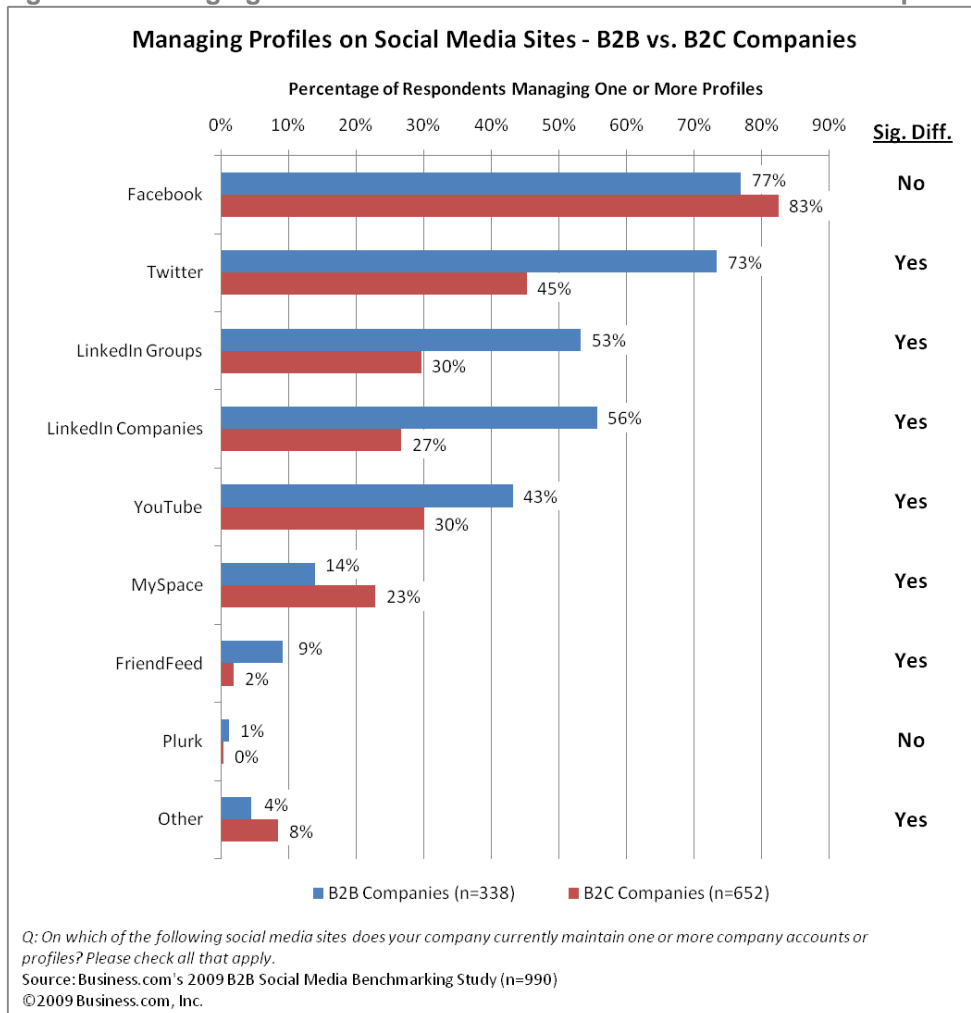
B2B companies appear better able to see the impact of their social media initiatives on web site traffic and revenue than B2C companies. However, B2B companies report a somewhat lower ability to get useful product feedback from their social media initiatives.

In this report, we also explore four specific types of business social media initiatives – managing social media business profiles, participating in business Q&A sites, using social media monitoring tools and sharing business content on social media sites. The following sections provide top-level details about the top sites used, ability to see the impact of these initiatives on key social media metrics and how likely respondents are to recommend using specific sites for business purposes to a friend or colleague (the [Net Promoter Score](#), a loyalty metric originally developed by Satmetrix, Bain & Company, and Fred Reichheld).

Initiative Detail: Managing Business Profiles on Social Media Sites

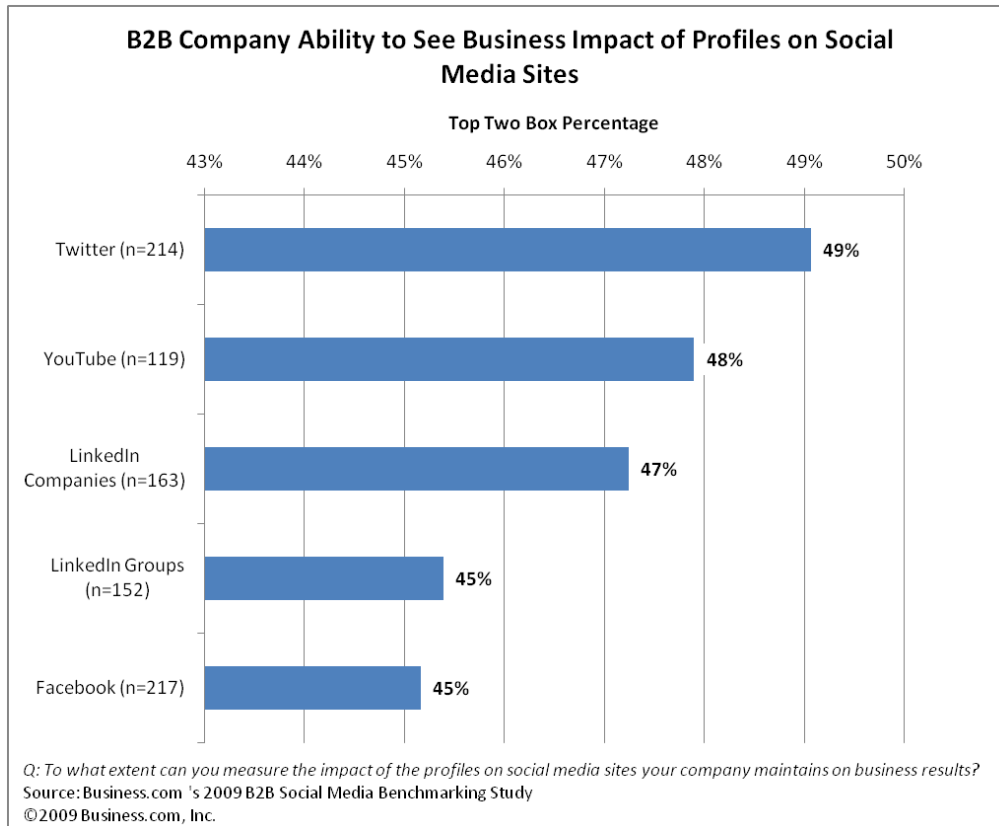
Among both B2B and B2C companies managing a company or branded profile on at least one social media site, Facebook is the most popular site. B2B companies, however, manage profiles across a greater number of social media sites than do B2C companies and are much more likely to manage one or more Twitter accounts or LinkedIn Groups, manage their company listing on LinkedIn and have a presence on YouTube.

Figure 33: Managing Profiles on Social Media Sites – B2B vs. B2C Companies



Respondents report minor difference in the ability to see the impact on business results of maintaining a company profile on these social media sites. As shown in the figure below, B2B companies can see the greatest impact from their Twitter account(s) and the least impact from their LinkedIn Groups accounts and Facebook.

Figure 34: B2B Company Ability to See Business Impact of Profiles on Social Media Sites



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The Net Promoter Score, or NPS, is a simple and popular metric used to benchmark customer loyalty. Developed by Fred Reichheld of Bain & Company, NPS is described on the www.netpromoter.com web site as follows:

“NPS is based on the fundamental perspective that every company’s customers can be divided into three categories: Promoters, Passives, and Detractors. By asking one simple question — How likely is it that you would you recommend [Company X] to a friend or colleague? — you can track these groups and get a clear measure of your company’s performance through its customers’ eyes. Customers respond on a 0-to-10 point rating scale and are categorized as follows:

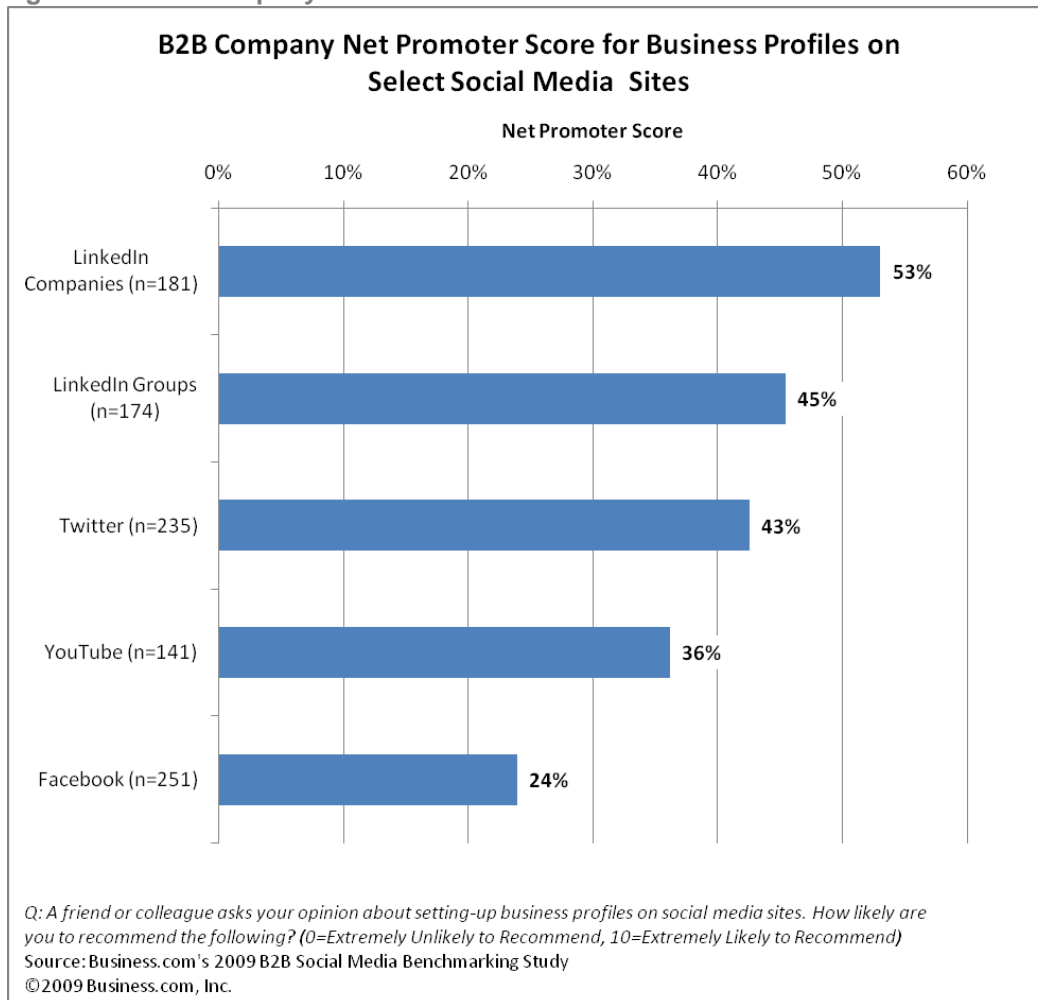
- **Promoters** (score 9-10) are loyal enthusiasts who will keep buying and refer others, fueling growth.
- **Passives** (score 7-8) are satisfied but unenthusiastic customers who are vulnerable to competitive offerings.

- **Detractors** (score 0-6) are unhappy customers who can damage your brand and impede growth through negative word-of-mouth.”

The NPS is calculated as the percentage of respondents who are Promoters and subtracting the percentage which are Detractors.

In this study, we asked respondents how likely they were to recommend each site their company used to a friend or colleague considering setting-up business profiles on social media sites. The site with the top NPS, LinkedIn Companies, was the same for both B2B and B2C companies. Overall, B2B company respondents were likely to recommend establishing and managing a profile on all five social media sites below.

Figure 35: B2B Company Net Promoter Scores for Business Profiles on Select Sites



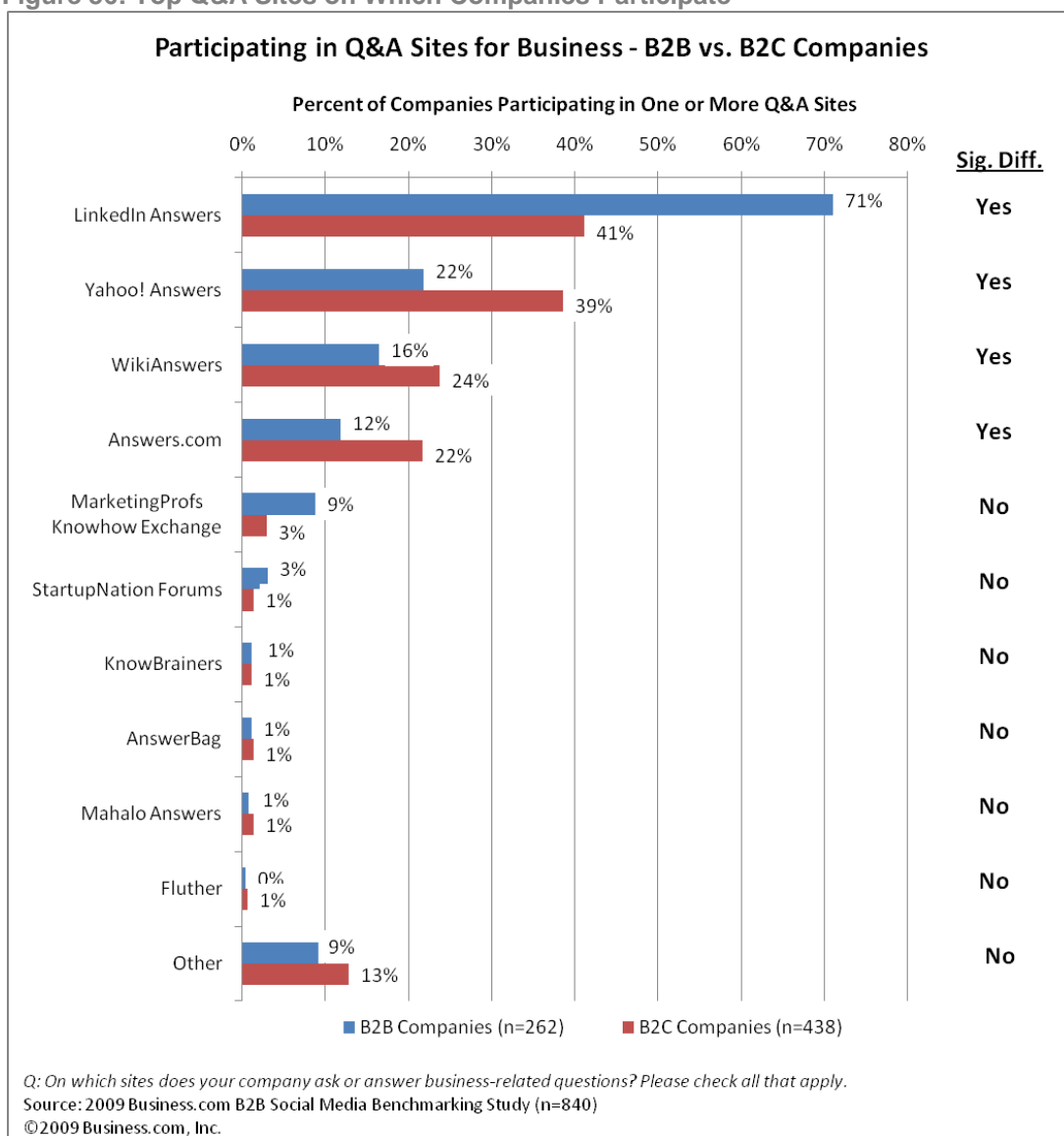
The Net Promoter Scores in the figure above are provided as an indicator of the relative value respondents see in maintaining business profiles on these sites and may or may not match NPS values from other studies or the companies themselves.

Initiative Detail: Participating in Q&A Sites

Question & Answer (Q&A) sites provide a forum for people to ask and answer questions with sites like Yahoo! Answers offering Q&A across a very broad range of consumer and business topics while sites like LinkedIn Answers, MarketingProfs Knowhow Exchange and our newly-launched [Business.com Answers](#) offer business-focused Q&A.

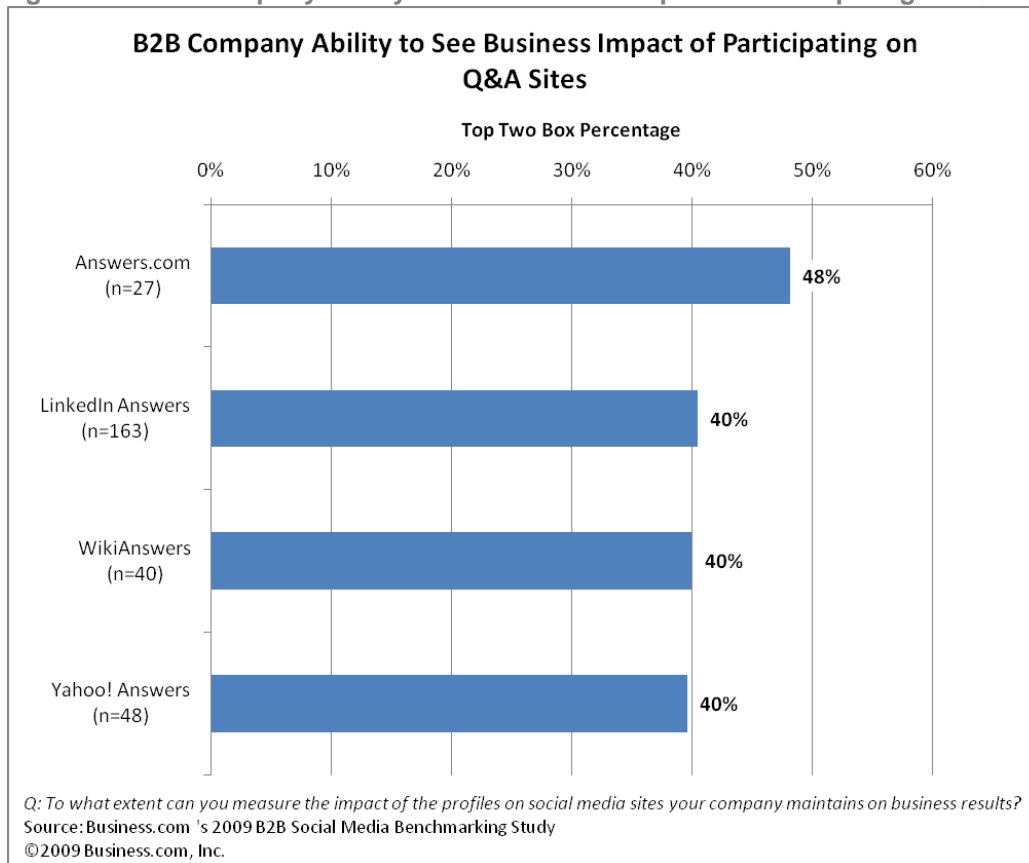
Among respondents indicating their company participates in one or more Q&A sites for business purposes, LinkedIn Answers is the top Q&A site for both B2B and B2C companies. For B2B companies specifically, LinkedIn Answers is the overwhelming choice, and B2B companies are significantly less likely than B2C companies to participate in Q&A on Yahoo! Answers, WikiAnswers or Answers.com.

Figure 36: Top Q&A Sites on Which Companies Participate



Respondents working for B2B companies participating in business Q&A on Answers.com report the greatest ability to see the impact of that activity on business results. The top two box score for LinkedIn Answers, WikiAnswers and Yahoo! Answers are virtually the same.

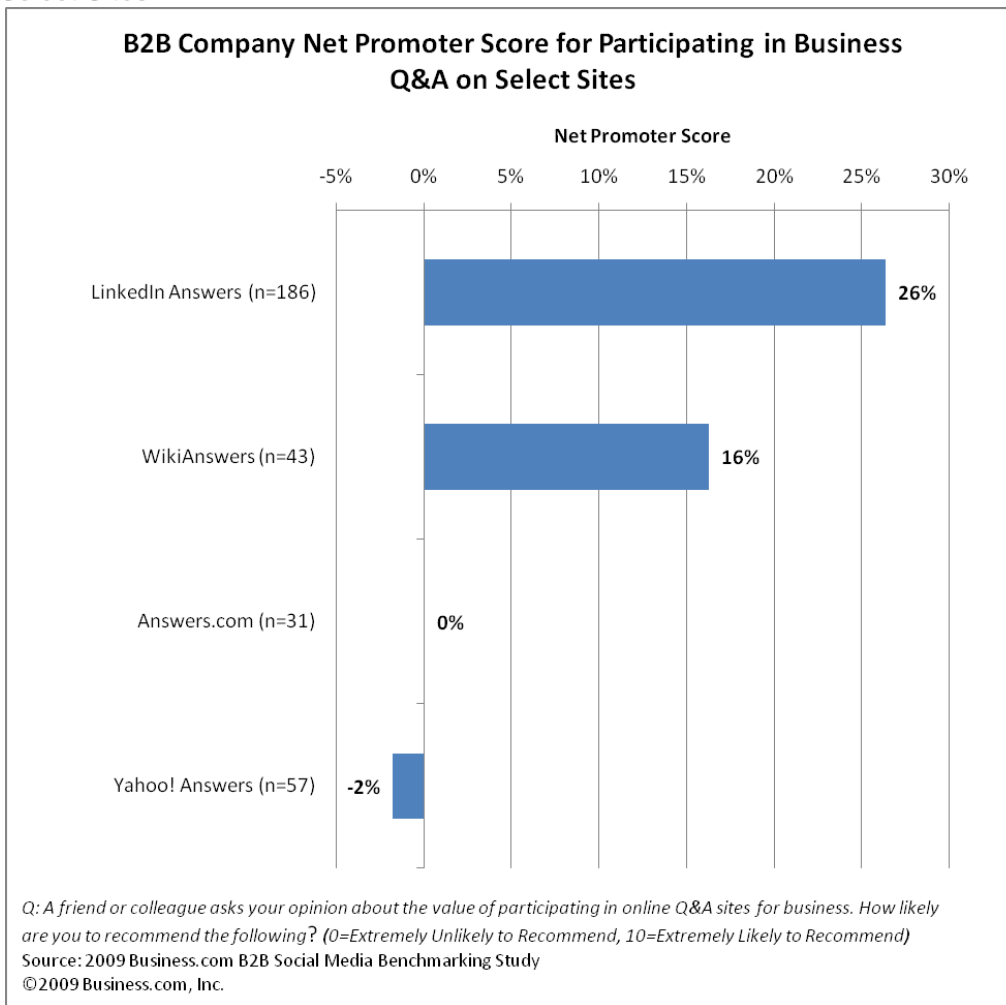
Figure 37: B2B Company Ability to See Business Impact of Participating on Q&A Sites



As with profiles on social media sites, we also asked respondents how likely they were to recommend each Q&A site their company uses to a friend or colleague considering participating on Q&A sites for business. Among B2B company respondents, the Q&A site for business with the highest NPS was LinkedIn Answers and the lowest was Yahoo! Answers.

The Net Promoter Scores in the figure below are provided as an indicator of the relative value respondents see in participating in select Q&A sites for business and may or may not match NPS values from other studies or the companies themselves.

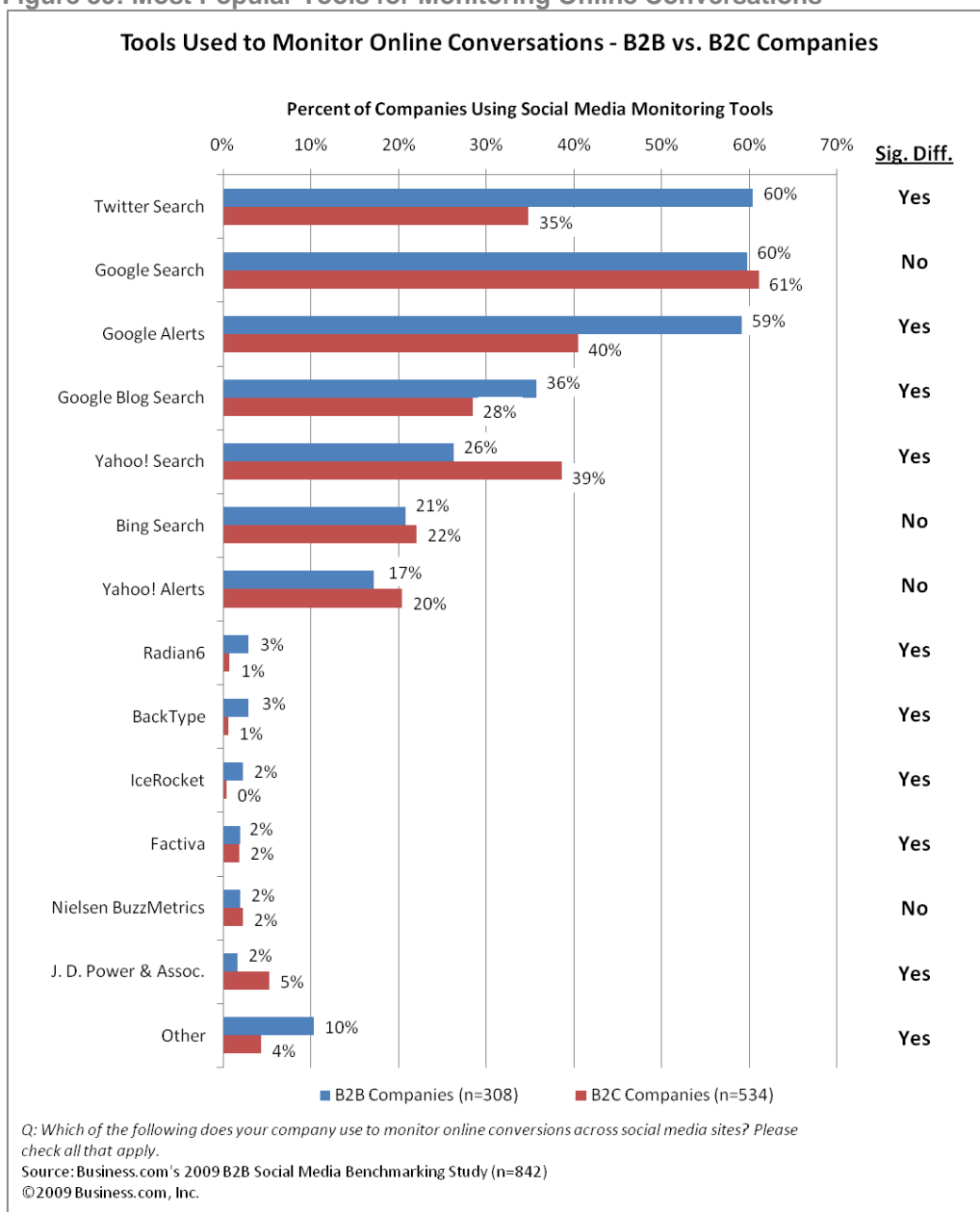
Figure 38: B2B Company Net Promoter Score for Participating in Business Q&A on Select Sites



Initiative Detail: Using Social Media Monitoring Tools

Companies can use a wide variety of tools to monitor company, brand and/or competitor mentions across blogs and other social media sites. Among B2B companies, Twitter Search, Google Search and Google Alerts are the most popular choices, and B2B companies are significantly more likely than B2C companies to use Twitter Search and Google Alerts for monitoring online mentions of their company or brands. B2B companies are significantly less likely to use Yahoo! Search than B2C companies.

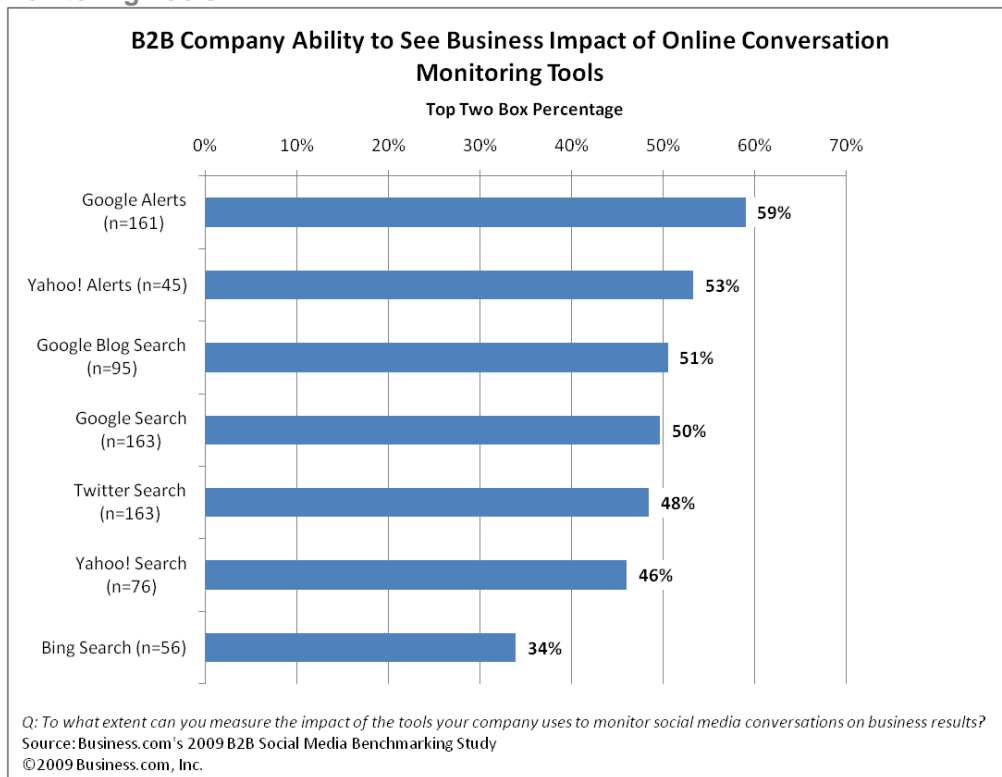
Figure 39: Most Popular Tools for Monitoring Online Conversations



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B2B company users of the online conversation monitoring tools below report the greatest ability to see the impact of Google Alerts on business results. Two of the most popular tools for monitoring online conversations among B2B companies, Twitter Search and Google Search, are rated similarly in the ability to see the business impact of using those tools.

Figure 40: B2B Company Ability to See Business Impact of Online Conversation Monitoring Tools

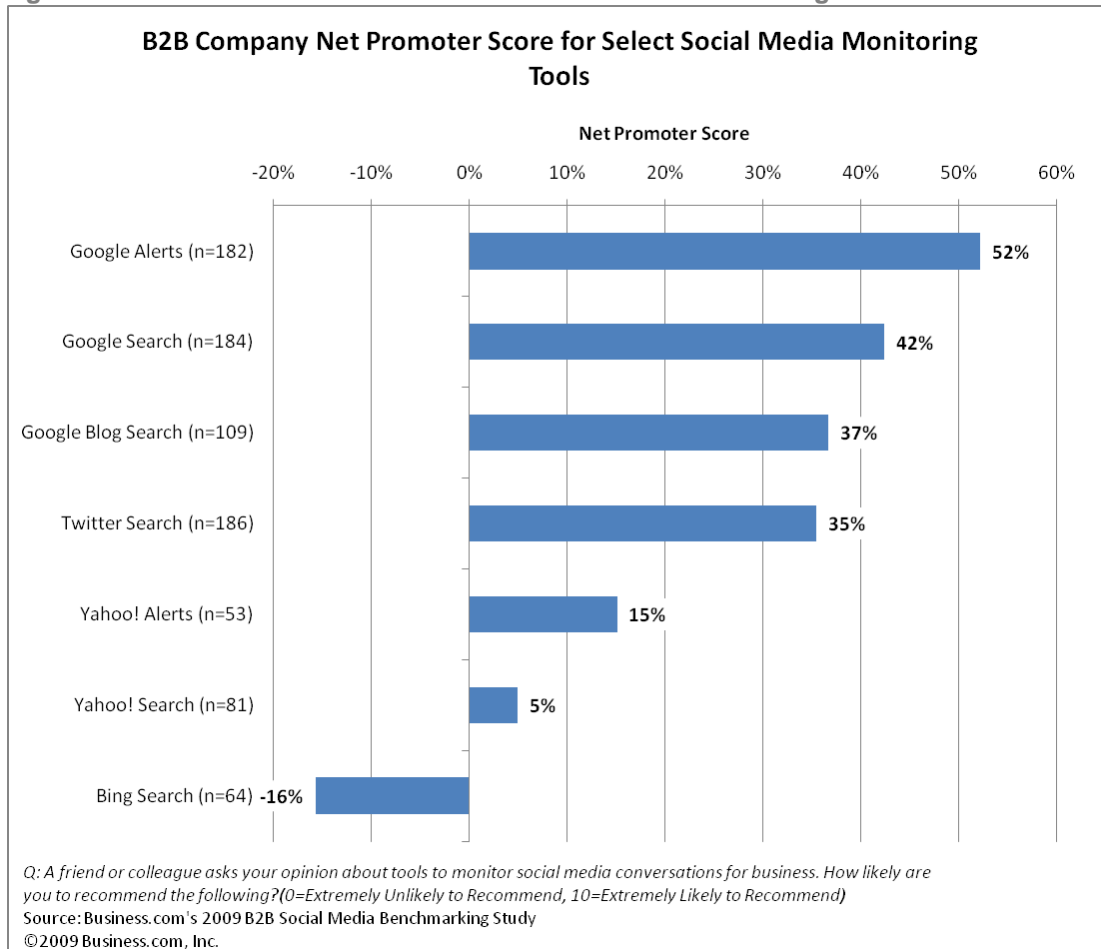


B2B companies gave Google Alerts the highest NPS, followed by Google Search, Google blog Search and Twitter Search. The lowest NPS was for Bing Search which had more detractors than promoters as a tool for monitoring online conversations.

The Net Promoter Scores in the figure below are provided as an indicator of the relative value respondents see in select free tools for monitoring online conversations and may or may not match NPS values from other studies or the companies themselves.

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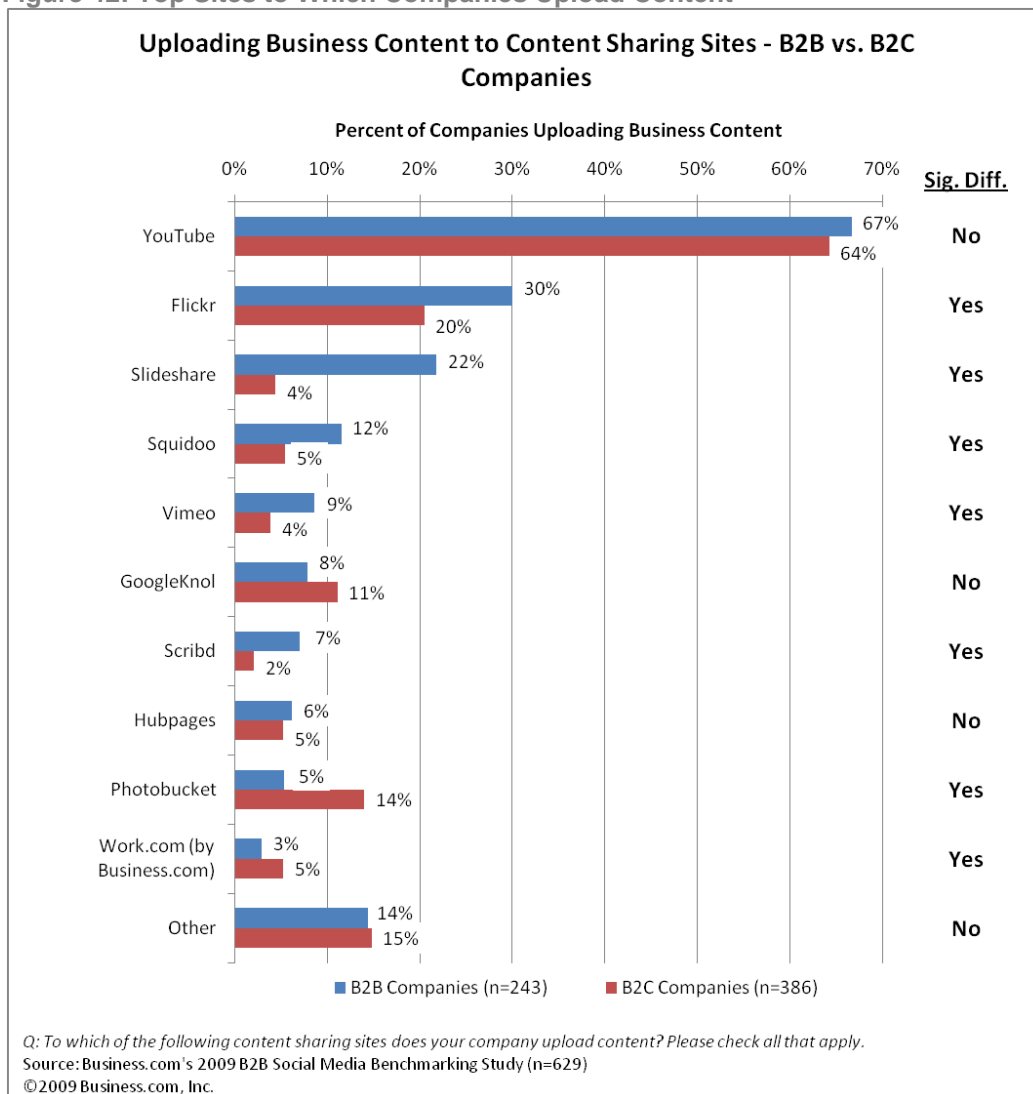
Figure 41: Net Promoter Score for Select Social Media Monitoring Tools



Initiative Detail: Sharing Business Content on Social Media Sites

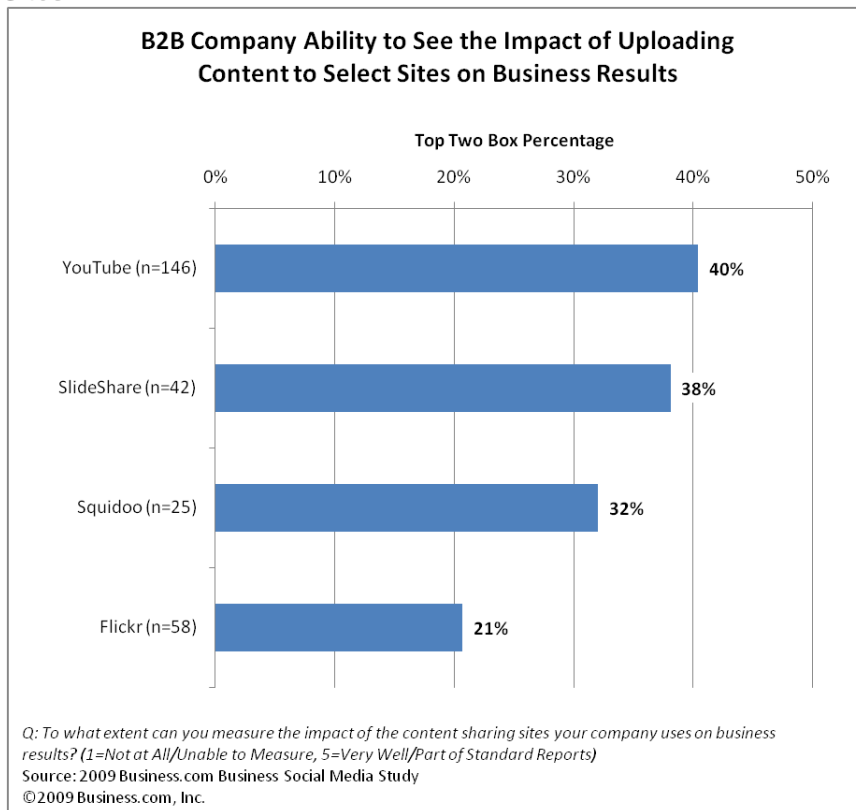
YouTube is the top content sharing site for companies involved in uploading business content to 3rd party sites, followed by Flickr, Slideshare, Squidoo and Vimeo, all of which are used significantly more frequently by B2B companies than B2C companies.

Figure 42: Top Sites to Which Companies Upload Content



Among B2B companies uploading content to various social media sites, those using YouTube and SlideShare report the greatest ability to see the impact of business content sharing on these sites on business results.

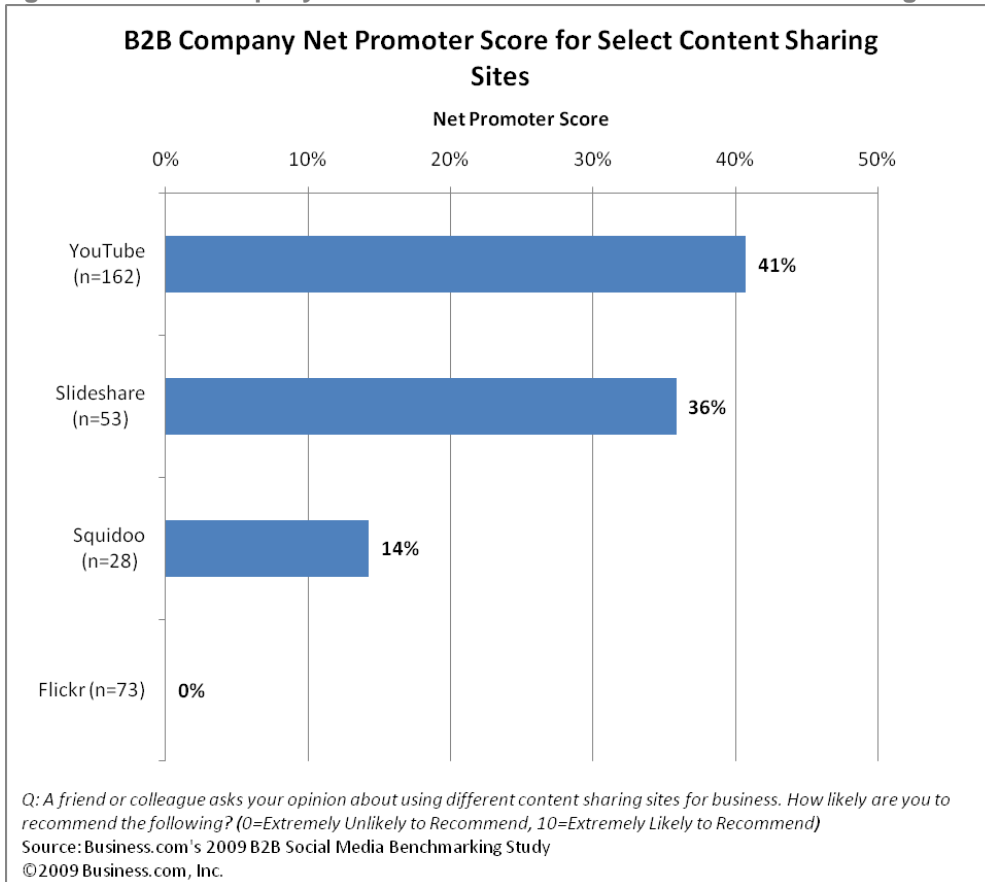
Figure 43: B2B Company Ability to See Business Impact of Content Sharing on Select Sites



YouTube (+41%) had the highest Net Promoter Score among B2B companies using content sharing sites for business, closely followed by Slideshare (+36%). Flickr (0%) had the lowest NPS among content sharing sites for B2B companies.

The Net Promoter Scores in the figure below are provided as an indicator of the relative value respondents see in sharing business content on select sites and may or may not match NPS values from other studies or the companies themselves.

Figure 44: B2B Company Net Promoter Score for Select Content Sharing Sites



Additional Reports Based on this Research

The data set from Business.com's *Business Social Media Benchmarking Survey* is a very rich source of insights about a wide range of topics around the business use of social media. The following reports based on this data set are available as of November 16, 2009:

2009 Business Social Media Benchmarking Study

Summarizes high-level findings from nearly 3,000 North American study participants, providing a very useful benchmark for where businesses, and business people, find value today in social media across different activities and sites. This report can be downloaded from <http://www.business.com/info/business-social-media-benchmark-study>.

2009 B2B Social Media Benchmarking Study

Unique insights from this research for business-to-business (B2B) companies, including how business people use social media today, most popular types of social media initiatives among B2B companies and the value B2B companies are finding in a variety of social media initiatives, from maintaining company accounts/profiles on social media sites to participating in business Q&A, social media monitoring, content sharing and social bookmarking. This report can be downloaded from <http://www.business.com/info/b2b-social-media-benchmark-study>.

Upcoming Reports

We plan to release additional reports every few weeks throughout the fourth quarter of 2009 and early 2010 on topics including the following:

- Small businesses (<100 employees)
- Business-to-consumer (B2C) companies
- Business social media newbies vs. pros
- Industry-specific insights
- Social media measurement
- Business profiles on social media sites
- Participating in question-and-answer (Q&A) sites for business
- Social media monitoring
- Business content sharing on social media sites
- Business social bookmarking

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About the B2B Social Media Benchmarking Study

This research report is based on results from Business.com's **Business Social Media Benchmarking Study**, an online survey conducted between August 11th and September 4th, 2009. As an incentive to complete this rather lengthy survey, Business.com held a drawing for a \$2,000 American Express® gift card among eligible respondents – see <http://offers.business.com/content/SocialMediaRules> for official contest rules.

Overall, 2,948 respondents from the United States or Canada qualified to participate in the study, providing a total of 2,282 complete surveys (54%) and 1,943 partial responses. The complete results for all respondents are available in the **2009 Business Social Media Benchmarking Study** general report, available as a free download from the Business.com web site at <http://www.business.com/info/business-social-media-benchmark-study>.

The business-to-business (B2B) company results reported here are based on responses from 564 participants currently working for companies where sales to other businesses account for 67% or more of company revenue.

NOTE: This study focuses on benchmarking the activities and perspectives of people already involved with social media for business (e.g., of companies using social media, what percentage maintain profiles on social media sites?). **It is not intended as a benchmark of the adoption of different social media practices across the general business population (e.g., of all North American companies, what percentage maintain profiles on social media sites?).**

Participant Profile for B2B Respondents

Participants in the 2009 B2B Social Media Benchmarking Study reflect a wide range of company sizes, industries and job roles.

Figure 45: B2B Study Participants by Company Size

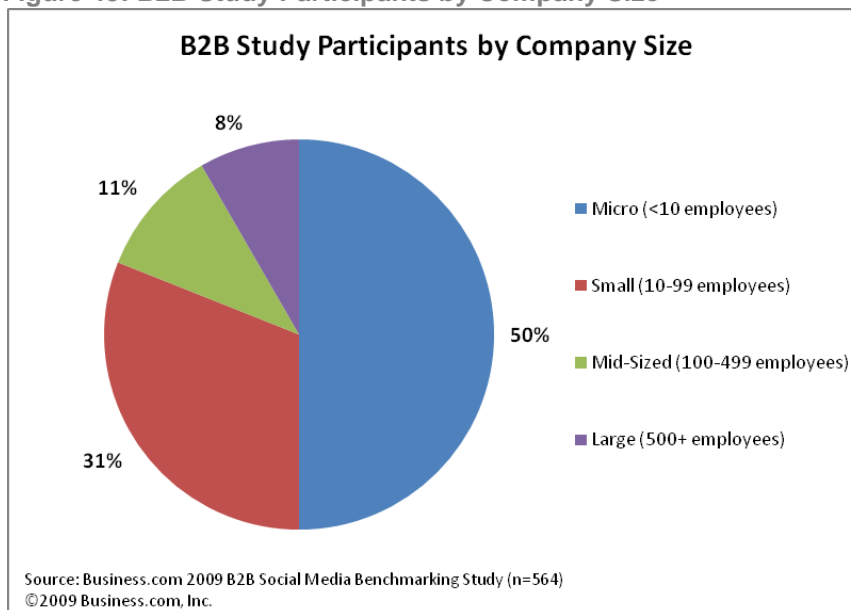
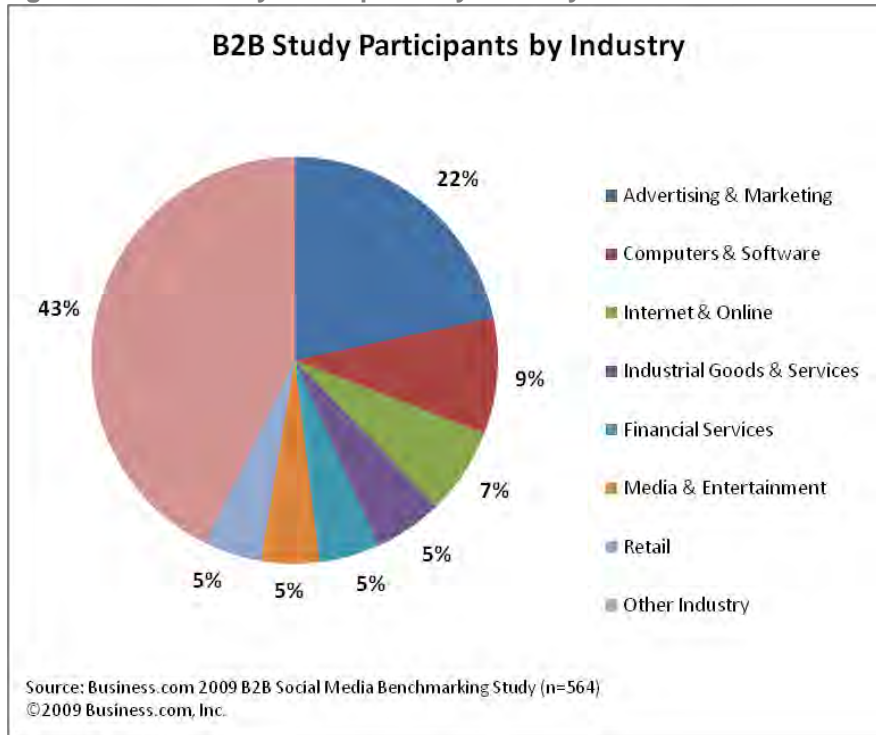
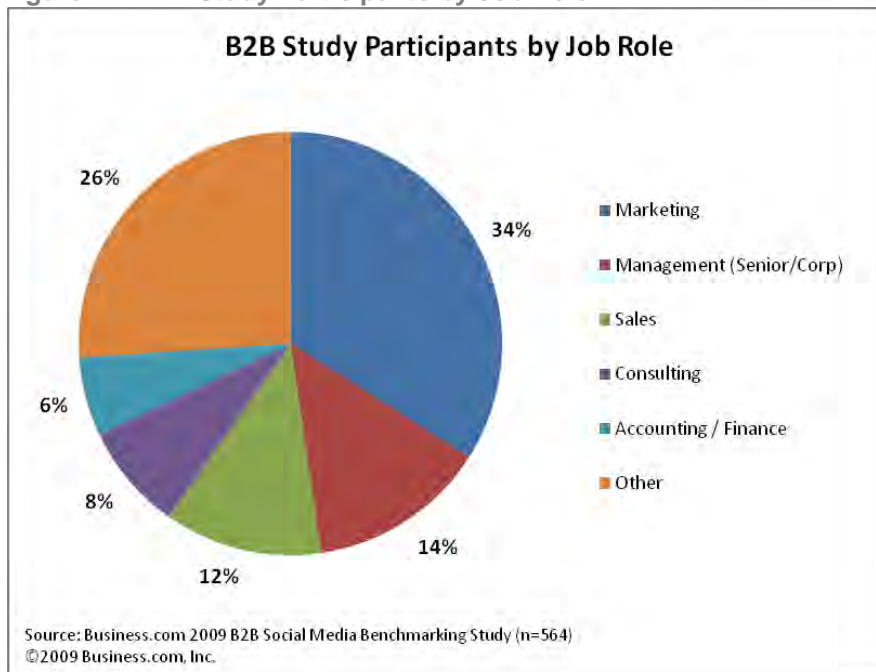


Figure 46: B2B Study Participants by Industry



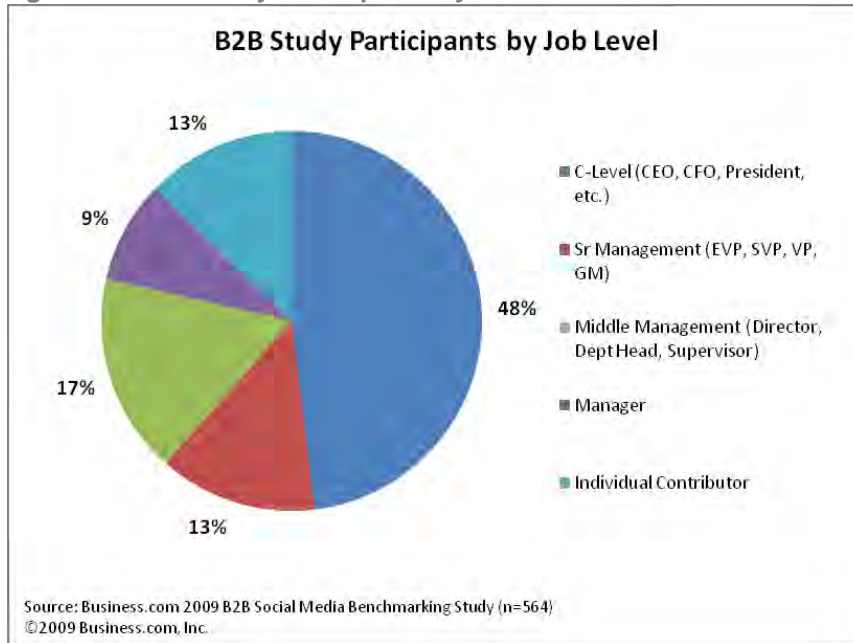
Marketing personnel provided 34% of responses in the B2B study, followed by 14% of responses from senior company management and 12% from Sales personnel.

Figure 47: B2B Study Participants by Job Role



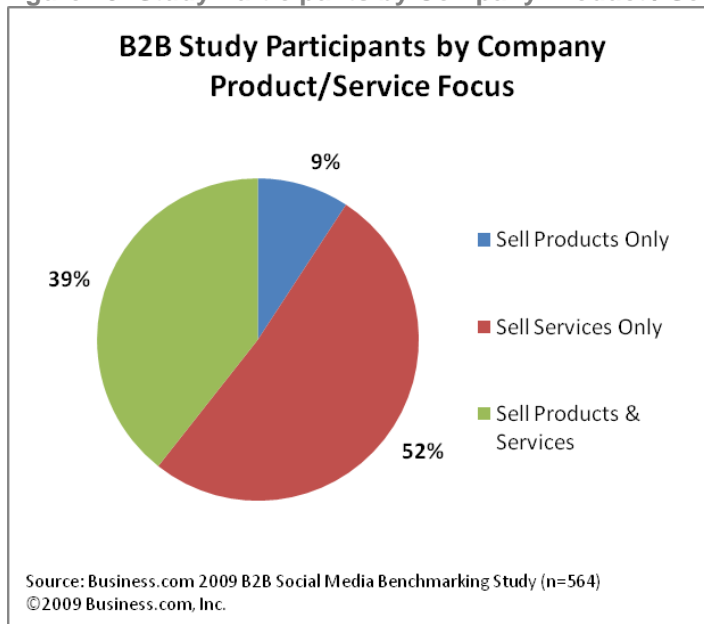
Nearly (48%) of respondents are C-level – CEO, CFO, CMO, President or other. This largely reflects the number of small businesses participating in the study.

Figure 48: B2B Study Participants by Job Level



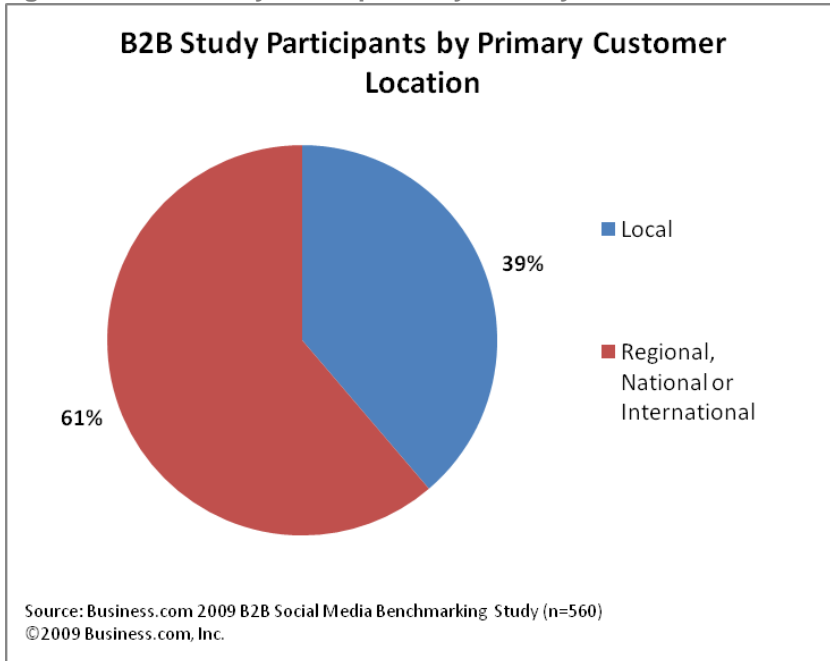
The majority of B2B study participants work for company selling both products and services.

Figure 49: Study Participants by Company Product / Service Focus



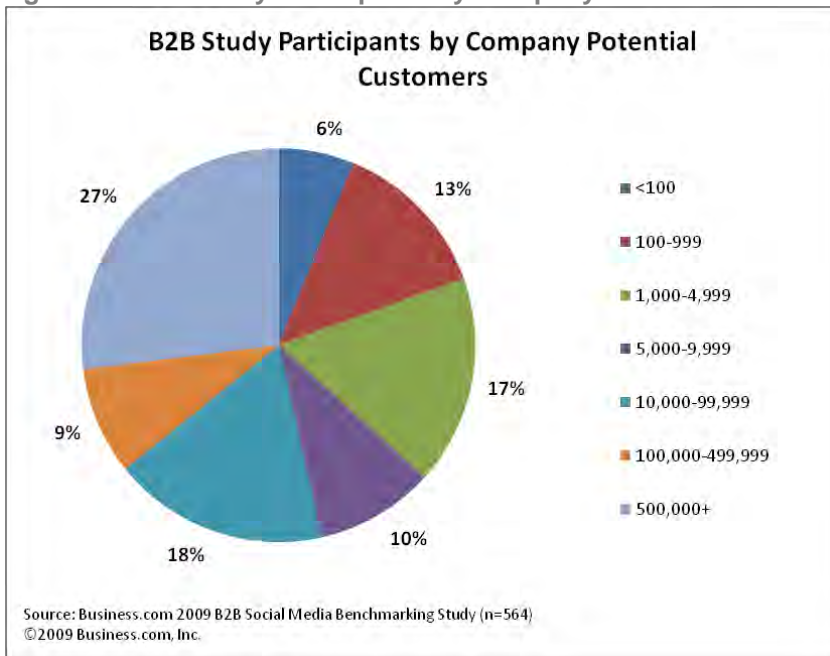
Nearly 2/3rds of B2B participants work for companies where 67% or more of company revenue comes from sales to customers outside their local/metro area.

Figure 50: B2B Study Participants by Primary Customer Location



Participating B2B companies represent a wide range of potential customer counts.

Figure 51: B2B Study Participants by Company Potential Customer Count



Respondent are also relatively diverse in the length of the average sales cycle for the company's products and/or services. Approximately 35% of B2B participants work for companies where the average sales cycle is less than one month, while 18% work for companies with an average sales cycle of seven months or more.

Figure 52: B2B Study Participants by Company Average Sales Cycle



Contact

For media inquiries, questions, comments or suggestions related to this research, please contact:

Dianne Molina
Sr Manager, Corporate Communications
310-586-4150
dmolina@business.com



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