



**A conversation with  
Aneta Hall, Manager, Emerging Media, Corporate Marketing,  
Pitney Bowes**

**Tell me a little bit about Pitney Bowes. Who are you? What do you do? What's going on with social media at Pitney Bowes?**

**Aneta:** Obviously, many of your listeners might know Pitney Bowes as a global technology company. We have over 90 years of expertise in mail and document management. What that means is that we are quite good at figuring out and helping you be more productive with managing your mail. That ranges from small businesses all the way to large mail houses. But, the company grew, and grew very rapidly in the past ten years through a series of acquisitions. That extended our capabilities far beyond the mail. We focus now on helping our customers grow the business. We have a host of solutions – predictive analytics, location intelligence, relationship marketing. But, when it comes down to you passing a Home Depot Centre on your way to work, the decision to place that Home Depot was probably influenced by our location intelligence technology. The same with the cell tower that you might be passing in your neighborhood. That was probably analyzed with our traffic pattern analysis to make sure it was an ideal placement for that tower. So, help with solutions that are far-ranging past the mail. And, obviously, social media for Pitney Bowes is an awesome opportunity to not only tell the story to over 2 million of our customers (who we are, where we are heading and how new and different we are), but also to our prospects, to our future employees and our investors. So, very excited about that. Very focused on direct and relevant conversations here at Pitney Bowes in social media.

**Why don't you tell us a little bit about what your role is at Pitney Bowes and how it fits in to the social media strategy there?**

**Aneta:** Absolutely. My primary role at PB is to help understand and analyze the landscape of emerging media and to help us benefit from it, not only for communication and marketing, but also for market research, our brand initiative. I do spend a lot of time engaging in social media on behalf of Pitney Bowes, but also teaching others how to do it in a way that Chris Grogan describes as a trust agent – a person who takes the time to listen, a person who understands the etiquette of participation and a person who provides value to the end user. As mentioned in my bio, I am creating and maintaining the roadmap of Pitney Bowes' engagement in social media and also leading the Social Media Council at Pitney Bowes. These are very engaged practitioners of social media who want to be a part of that strategy. You might find me many times glued to a Radian6 screen. I do spend a lot of time logged in to that solution because I think a lot of companies come to social media channels with great intent to talk, but they gain the most value from listening. That's what we discovered at Pitney Bowes.

**Do you have that integrated to anything like Salesforce.com for lead management? What function are you pulling social media into the organization for?**

**Aneta:** Obviously, this is a new area and in many ways we have several units that are more advanced and some that are less advanced. But the conversations that I'm having with individuals with these units are around the sustainability of our efforts in social media. And that doesn't mean that only marketers and communicators are active. That means a wide array of subject matter experts that need to have tools, they need to be trained, they need to be given the boundaries, if you will, of safe participation in social media on behalf of our brand. They need to have listening help, such as Radian6 that gives them the intelligence, if you will, to build the ecosystem of social media participation on our behalf and then they need to have a bit of loose governance structure. I use that word very loosely because we want to have visibility to what's going on



across social media channels with regards to Pitney Bowes, but we don't want to stifle that creativity, that drive to have relevant and many one-on-one conversations with stakeholders in social media. That's what drives the value of it.

**Talk to me for a moment about Pitney Bowes' current social media strategy. What are the elements that you've slotted in there and how do you see that platform coming together?**

**Aneta:** Obviously, it is not easy for many large corporations to let go of controlling their corporate methods. PR folks will continue to write press releases and investor relations will continue to issue earning reports. But, we need to introduce our company to this new type of communication. The old way, the larger your bull horn, the more creative, the bolder your colors were, this is no longer relevant, especially not relevant in social media. The use of human engagement and dialogue to drive preference and loyalty is definitely the direction we are heading. We are finalizing the social media policy right now. The Council is in good standing and we are, in the beginning of 2010, I think well on our way to the early adoption stage and bringing structure to all of the channels of participation. So, bringing structure is the focal point for 2010. And obviously, you guys are very interested in measuring it all. I think the time where we were sitting back and saying: "Hey, it's okay to experiment and slow down with measurement", there is no free lunch any more. Every single interaction in social media needs to be measured. We are adhering to these principles.

**I'm sure you've got some interesting comments on the philosophy of measurement and how it differs or is similar to business-to-business social media measurement as opposed to business-to-consumer social media measurement.**

**Aneta:** Honestly, I don't think it is that much different in terms of the type of engagement. For business-to-business, our sales cycle is obviously much longer. That gives us a true opportunity for social media engagement. But, every time that I speak to business units about their social media strategy (they are holding these strategy sessions right now at the beginning of 2010), I really focus on giving them a three-tier model of measuring social media. That starts with

attention metrics. We are very used to the traditional counting of eyeballs in the raw social media channel traffic and where it is mentioned. It is okay to measure that. This is the first level. But we pushed them and encouraged them to go beyond that because social media is way more than counting eyeballs. Let's figure out how we can measure the attention-grabbing factor. How can we measure the response level? That's where the second level comes in, the participation and the engagement metrics. Making people pay attention to your message. Making lasting connections. We concentrate, actually, on "time on site" as one of our key engagement metrics throughout all of our blogs because time is the true indicator of engagement. The more time you spend, the more engaged you are. But we also rely on the traditional metrics of engagement, the comment count, the message rating, the word-of-mouth spread, all of the re-tweets that we were able to gather. But really focusing on how can we prove that yes, people pay attention and they want to engage with us. So, that's the second level. And, obviously, there is the true Holy Grail - level three, the influence. What we are trying to do is influence. That is tied completely with our business goals. So for sales, we need to realize the measurement of lead and sales generation of social media. Obviously, increasing brand awareness. We need to realize that and measure that. We used to rely on automation in marketing and if social media metrics are delivered to us, we will automate dashboards, etc. But, quite often, we have to get creative. Radian6 might not be enough. We might have to work a little harder. But, absolutely, we need to bring value and now social media is highly measured.

**Are you measuring the engagement at some level at the top of the funnel and figuring out marketing activities that you can use to move them from the top of the funnel deeper and deeper into the funnel?**

**Aneta:** The reason we created a three-tier model is they are afraid. They are intimidated and they gravitate to level one. But if you explain it to them in a very logical way that they should try to get to level three, they might stop at level one. That's fine, as long that engagement is being monitored.



In terms of the marketing funnel, surprisingly, we've invested a lot of time throughout social media to establish ourselves throughout all these channels with our campaign. These types of campaigns are perfect breeding grounds to experiment and take the temperature check where your customers are in social media and how they respond to very positive messages. So, we started with a couple of our social media campaigns that were focused on philanthropy. One of the ones that we are very proud of, we are in the third year now, we've been teaming up with The American Red Cross to send holiday greetings to wounded soldiers and veterans around the holiday season. Obviously, Red Cross is a very social brand and with their help, we've been able to move the needle of engagement for our customers throughout all Pitney Bowes channels. So, they respond very well. Again, the attention metric we measure and concentrate on is engagement. We were able to pull double digit increases from 2008 to 2009, especially in our Facebook platform and the fastest growing Twitter platform. We invested a lot in community-driven customer support because at the end of the day, if don't "clean up your back yard" in social media, you really just give your permission to talk about your marketing initiatives. We need to listen and we need to be responsive to all our customers who are crying for help in social media. We need to listen and we need to respond to them. So, that's the essence of our community-driven customer support. The center of it is Pitney Bowes' User Forum. We have a great ROI example there. The Forum is a customer-driven and customer-focused area on PB.com We do have Pitney Bowes' reps moderating these forums, but they have a rule of 24 hours not to engage and letting our customers respond to other customers. Obviously, we measure attention and we measure participation, but the influence, the tie to business goals for us, was call deflection. So, for Pitney Bowes, we experience this once or twice a year - really high volumes of calls coming in through the call center because of the rate change. So, the value for business would be to lower that number and drive people to the service channels online. That's how the User Forum started. We were able to use the estimate developed by Charlene Li and Josh Bernoff in their "Groundswell" book. They estimate that for every five visits to a specific answer posting on our User Forum or 25 visits to a general posting, we avert a customer from calling our call

center. So, we analyze the number of views to a particular post and we are able to realize that in a period of three months, we averted over 30,000 calls to our customer service center. When you think about it, every single time we have a call landing in our call center, it's about ten bucks. That's \$300,000 in call deflection. These are the types of conversations we need to have with our business leaders to realize the value. So, that was a great success story.

**Can you outline the social media activities that you find yourself investing in the most and how they fall into your measurement philosophy?**

**Aneta:** Again, social media for us as a company is not about corporate social channels, even though we maintain corporate presence to outposts, if you will, on Twitter and Facebook. But, at the end of the day, it needs to be a sustainable level of one-on-one social media interaction with all of our employees. And that, obviously, is why I have a job. I need to prepare this company, and I don't do it single-handedly, obviously. But, to prepare them to think differently. To come up with rules in the form of a social media policy. To come up with sustainable training programs. To come up with the governance structure. Then, I don't really want to tell individual participants what channels they need to use. I think they need to see where the ecosystem of their influence is and that is really going to tell them the channel that they need to present in. So, we do have a large presence on Twitter. We have over 25 active Twitter handles. Some of them are branded – that starts with PBNews (the general one) and PBConnect with our thought leadership presence. But, we invest in individual employee's indirect Twitter handles to let them have conversations that matter to the people that they are trying to reach.

**What do you see as the future of social media measurement and how do you see that applying to your company? What would you like to see? What do you see as upcoming trends?**

**Aneta:** Similarly to the early 1990's when we were struggling to come up with the measurement strategy to measure our presence in web and having a web presence at all, we are going through the same cycle right now. So, obviously, it is time to learn. It is time to



establish best practices. But, it's also time to be patient. Let's be patient. It's not okay not to have measurements in social media, but it's okay to adjust them to continue exploring. At the end of the day, I don't have a crystal ball here to figure out the future, but I'm an optimist. I think we are going to get there and the companies who try to explore and try to adjust their business models to accommodate social media will be the winners.

**If somebody wanted to get a hold of Pitney Bowes or if somebody wanted to get a hold of Aneta Hall, what would they do?**

**Aneta:** We monitor Twitter on an ongoing basis. Every time you mention Pitney Bowes, you definitely are going to show up on our radar screen. PBNews, PBConnect and my own handle, AnetaH are the three handles that definitely reach out to us. I do blog at AnetaHall.com It would be great to say: "Hi" on my blog, as well.

**What would you like to achieve at the Measure Up event? What are you looking forward to by attending that event?**

**Aneta:** I can't wait, actually. I interact with social media practitioners and influencers online every day. When I wake up, I check Twitter. It's is pathetic, but it is what it is. But at the end of the day, these really are connections online. I cherish every time I get to meet somebody face-to-face and that is a great opportunity at the Measure Up Conference. So, I'm looking forward to all these networking opportunities. I hope the breaks in between sessions are long because I want to get in touch with many friends. Many of the speakers you've invited I've interacted with online on several occasions. So, I'm looking forward to that.

**It might make sense to mention again your session that you will be speaking on.**

**Aneta:** I think that it is the afternoon session on the very first day where the focus is on social media measurement.

**Anything else? Any burning thoughts that you'd like to share with the audience?**



**Aneta:** Again, thank you for giving me the opportunity. This has been a wonderful two years here for me at Pitney Bowes. The fact that we are re-shaping this 90-year old company and making it edgy and making it sexy, this is fantastic. Thank you for the opportunity.

