

CUTTING THROUGH SOCIAL MEDIA NOISE TO UNDERSTAND CUSTOMER SENTIMENT AND BRAND REPUTATION

The GfK Social Media Intelligence solution helps an Indian car manufacturer understand customer sentiment about a new car model, so that they can sharpen their marketing approach.

The client

A major car manufacturer with a strong presence in India.

Situation

The Internet – including social media – plays a major role in influencing car purchase decisions among India’s 120 million-plus Internet users. Many urban car buyers in India do their research online before they step into a showroom. A significant number of them change their minds about their choice of brand after finding new information on the web.

A major automotive manufacturer asked us to help them monitor and measure perceptions of their newly launched compact car among social media users in India. They wanted to:

- understand general consumer perceptions of the model
- identify people who intend to buy the vehicle, and find out what questions and concerns they have about the vehicle
- identify the influencers and monitor what they say

Approach

We used the GfK Social Media Intelligence (SMI) solution over five months to monitor and analyze social media conversations about the new car across Facebook, Twitter, forums, YouTube comments and news sites, among other platforms. Our approach combined automated tools with human insight to ensure accurate interpretation of social media content.



“Human coding” – using skilled people to clean and categorize social data – enabled us to drive real insight out of the data and posts we collected. Our human coders are sensitive to nuances that a software tool cannot pick up on its own, such as irony, sarcasm, slang and context-dependent communication. They are also able to provide feedback in a way that makes sense for a client’s business rather than only in the terms consumers use.

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Our human coders categorized relevant social media posts into predefined categories (the “comfort of the car”, for example) and assigned sentiments to each of these categories. This helped the client to understand which characteristics and features of the vehicle social media users were discussing most actively. We also gave our client insight into customers’ perceptions of the vehicle’s performance in each category.

We cut through the noise of the social web to provide our client with actionable insights.

Outcome

The data we gathered and the analysis we conducted allowed us to map trends and sentiments about the new car into a clear understanding of the model’s online reputation. We cut through the noise of the social web to provide our client with actionable insights:

- Facebook was the place where the highest numbers of users talked about the model.
- Forums and blogs were the online spaces where influencers such as auto bloggers and enthusiasts gathered.
- Consumers were battling to understand how the new car model was differentiated from an earlier model in our client’s product range.
- Consumers talked a great deal about the design of the car and were mostly positive about this attribute of the model.
- There were many negative conversations about the durability of the car.



From these insights, we recommended that our client:

- infused their communications with a tone that reflected the vibrant personality of the car
- acted quickly to acknowledge positive social feedback from customers and also take fast action to address complaints and grievances
- carry out design tests before launching a new car, especially for the youth segment
- focused on using the right channels to communicate to different audiences (users and influencers, for example) with appropriate messaging

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About GfK

GfK is the trusted source of relevant market and consumer information that enables its clients to make smarter decisions. More than 13,000 market research experts combine their passion with GfK’s long-standing data science experience. This allows GfK to deliver vital global insights matched with local market intelligence from more than 100 countries. By using innovative technologies and data sciences, GfK turns big data into smart data, enabling its clients to improve their competitive edge and enrich consumers’ experiences and choices.