



**Category:** Best Use of Social Media Measurement (on-going activity)  
**Entering Company Name:** Ebiquity plc  
**Name of person entering:** Gemma White, Head of Sonar  
**Email:** [gemma.white@ebiquity.com](mailto:gemma.white@ebiquity.com)  
**Telephone:** +44-20-7877-9932  
**Client:** Sony Mobile Global  
**Campaign title:** Answering Key Business Questions through Insightful Buzz Monitoring

## Objective/Brief

*'Provide the global (and local) Sony Mobile marketing community with actionable intelligence on social media engagement and performance.'*

Sony Mobile competes in the global marketplace for three of the most hotly-contested and talked-about consumer technology categories: mobile phones, tablets, and wearables. Each category is dominated by two global power players (Apple and Samsung) and up to five other competitors, depending on the category.

Our client is Sandeep Raithatha, Director of Strategy, Planning and Governance at Sony Mobile. His brief to Ebiquity was to provide the worldwide Sony Mobile marcomms community with a truly global and consistent picture of how the company, its competitors, and the overall market are talked about and rated in the social and digital media space. Sandeep wanted to understand performance across both owned (Sony's own digital channels) and earned (spontaneous conversation in the wider social sphere) media channels in order to empower colleagues across the business to be able to ask questions about performance at every level. To do this he needed data-driven insights extracted from in-depth social media analysis which would consequently allow Sony to build more impactful campaigns. Integrating the intelligence gained from analysing owned and earned conversation would allow Sony Mobile to differentiate and carve a niche in what is a fast paced, crowded marketplace.

By taking a standardised, consistent, and genuinely meaningful approach across 12 key global markets he wanted to be able to:

- Compare consumer engagement across different Sony product categories and devices (*and ask "Which of our products are succeeding via word of mouth and which features set us aside from the rest?"*)
- Compare performance against competitors (*and ask "How are we doing against Apple or LG?"*)
- Compare profile between platforms (*and ask "What can we learn from our earned media performance about what might work better in our owned media channels?"*)
- Compare the social landscape and performance between countries (*and ask "What is working really well in Russia or China that our Brazilian or Japanese teams could learn from?"*)
- Use intelligence from each of these different variables to build more impactful content and engagement strategies for products against particular competitors for specific media types in particular markets (*and ask "What's a winning approach for wearables against Samsung in the USA in review blogs?" and "How far are we from that ideal state today?"*)
- Evaluate the influence of proactive activity executed on owned social media platforms and its impact on earned conversations in the global social media sphere (*and ask "what drove high consumer engagement?" and "what conversation or product features gained traction in wider spontaneous chatter and why?"*)

Sony Mobile commissioned Ebiquity to provide monthly reporting across the three business units and multiple product lines in 12 key markets, providing evidence-based intelligence for both the global marcomms team and country-level clients. Ebiquity's findings, however, also needed to mirror, support and feed into the reporting that Sony has developed over the course of several years in paid media and consumer research.



Sandeep is keen to build a truly integrated measurement and evaluation practice at Sony Mobile, and feels Ebiquity is ideally and uniquely placed to source, report on, and integrate data sources across all media types with independence and truly interdisciplinary insight.

## Strategy

*'To pioneer a programme that recognises digital convergence and measures the true impact of Sony's proactive engagement in owned social media channels against consumer sentiment in the earned sphere.'*

Ebiquity already had a rich established relationship with Sony Mobile, providing data, reporting and insight to the global media team on paid media performance. Our Advertising Intelligence and Advertising Insight teams provide global creative and media spend data to Sony's Mobile division, enabling the client's media team to understand the paid media strategies of key competitors in its three flagship categories across its most important markets.

Based on this successful partnership, the approach taken by Ebiquity's Reputation practice was to provide similar levels of consistent intelligence and insight on its and its competitors earned and owned social media performance in these same markets.

To meet the wide-ranging and integrated nature of the brief, we determined to build a hybrid solution for Sony Mobile, based on a combination of our own, proprietary Sonar earned media platform which brings together content from more than five million online global sources, and data harvested data from Sony's Facebook, Twitter and You Tube profiles in each of the 12 markets.

In summary, our approach - aligned with paid channel intelligence - cuts through the vast noise present in space and identifies genuine signals – threads, themes and differentiators – for Sony by market and by business sector. Our programme integrates and compares content from both earned and owned media channels simultaneously, identifying how both channels can amplify, interact with, and cannibalise each other. And by creating a standardised methodology, we also set up the framework for ad-hoc reporting for Sony Mobile, providing insight on the strategic questions they need to understand, such as *"How did we perform at Mobile World Congress in Barcelona?", "How can we challenge Samsung and attack Apple with their impending S6 & Watch launches?", and "Has the launch of Sony's M4 set us aside with mid-range handset consumers?"*

To comprehensively meet the needs of a vast and varied audience at Sony, reporting needed to be designed in a way that could be easily dissected and distributed to central and local teams. Commentary needed to be simple and easy to interpret by the global audience with visuals clear to digest.

## Execution/Implementation

*'Seamlessly integrates learnings from consumer buzz across the network, geographically and around competitors to differentiate and carve a niche.'*

To build a consistent global buzz monitoring framework for Sony Mobile – one that could work at the enterprise level as well as the country-level specificity (say, wearables in India) – we built, tested, and refined complex multi-language search strings. Starting in September 2014, we applied these to Ebiquity Sonar to collect earned media content - being sensitive to local variation. Data is continuously reviewed to quality control relevancy and identify leading conversations as they happen. This qualitative review allows the dedicated account team to keep abreast of emerging trends in the space and report any emerging issues to Sony Mobile.



With the data sources in place, our robust search methodology was applied across both earned and owned media. We then applied our unique, in-depth approach to social media content analysis, using our network of more than 200 native-language analysts to provide context, meaning and understanding rather than a wholly-automated solution. The application of human analysis to machine sourced and harvested data is truly differentiating. This was an integral aspect of our approach to helping Sony answer its marcomms questions from briefing onwards. Working globally across more than 35 languages and with specific knowledge of the mobile sector our team are briefed to respond immediately to ad-hoc requests, which form a consultative element of the programme.

While automation cuts through the volume and identifies peaks and emerging issues in the global social conversation collected, the qualitative human review adds tone and context and is the only way to accurately analyse language variation, sarcasm and tone. This solution is therefore able to build insights into the report contextualising data findings to support with those burning communications challenges.

Data is extracted for six competitors for handsets and wearables, and seven for tablets. Country and language filters were applied to dissect findings by specific market. The content extracted included nine of the ten leading languages of the internet, which between them account for more than 80 per cent of all content online. It was important for Sony Mobile to assess engagement with owned channels in relation to proactive outreach and how this sentiment was or was not amplified on earned channels.

For **owned** social media performance, Ebiquity reported what uploads were attracting attention and shares, what was driving conversation and what losing momentum across YouTube, Facebook and Twitter. Critically, each channel was rated for relative impact for and changes in engagement.

- For YouTube, key metrics include: new videos posted, views, comments, likes and dislikes, and net new subscribers
- For Facebook, key metrics include: new fans, fan growth rate, admin posts, likes, comments and shares
- For Twitter: new followers, mentions, tweets from owned pages, retweets generated

For **earned** media, the metrics measured and reported globally and for each market include:

- Share of voice by category (handset, tablet, wearable) and by device – volume of content generated and shared
- Buzz sentiment – the extent to which each comment or post would change a reader's attitude towards the product or company positively, negatively, or not at all (neutrally)
- Buzz highlights – leading issues and topics dominating conversation and defining brand identity
- Media mix – the variation of consumer engagement split of different types of media and/or specific channel (blog, microblogs, wiki, video etc.)
- Review analysis – a summary of key reviews highlighting average device star ratings and product pros and cons
- Qualitative analysis of conversation where one of Sony's key network partners are referenced
- Executive summary including conclusion & recommendation

The research programme focuses on pulling together metrics, trends and strands of conversation qualitatively to illuminate areas of challenge or reward. The on-going monthly deliverable is supplemented by regular ad-hoc reports on specific client questions.

## Effectiveness of Assignment

*'Integral research which educates a global team, supports strategic planning and contributes to change across the Sony Mobile marketing community.'*

In a highly-competitive, crowded global market, we have looked to measure across earned and owned media the extent to which both Sony Mobile's and its competitors' activity is actively moving consumers and



commentators across the spectrum of engagement, from Awareness and Knowledge via Interest and Support and on to direct and tangible action. In measuring the outputs, outtakes and, critically, the outcomes

of social media activity, Sony feel they are better placed to implement new and innovative approaches to reach their consumers.

In earned and particularly owned media analysis, our reporting looks to assess genuine brand engagement, and our pioneering use of earned and owned media metrics alongside paid or proactive promotion offers promising clues to the relative and absolute contribution that social media engagement has as part of 360 degree brand communication.

Working for a global team with an overview of key market activity, it was crucial first to level the playing field and to source and report accurate, relevant, and comparable data sets for each market. By producing consistency and comparability at the core, we have enabled both the global and in-market teams to [ask relevant questions](#) of their own and their peers' performance in an objective and business-first way.

In the first six months of its existence, Ebiquity's Buzz Monitoring Report for Sony Mobile has had far-reaching impact inside the company; the overall report goes to the global team, dashboard-level summaries go to marketing directors and local analysis goes to country teams and agencies. These are supplemented by monthly conference call debriefs from Ebiquity consultants during regular planning sessions. In addition, engagement scores are used by the in-house analytics team to assess performance, and the reporting has been aligned and integrated with consumer research. Our reporting is also crucial for strategic brand consultants and other agencies across Sony's PESO (paid, earned, shared & owned) space. The positive engagement from Sony mobile stakeholders has led to Ebiquity being the 'go to' experts for research questions and validation of new approaches. For example, Ebiquity provides counsel to Sony during 'War Room' sessions, where Sony reacts to competitor activities as they happen. In addition it is frequently used in near real-time, to prepare responses to issues (iCloud hacking), competitor launches (Galaxy S6, Apple Watch), and industry events (CES, MWC etc).

What we have achieved to date has transformed the way that both global and country teams can assess their own performance against their key competitors in three critical categories. They also now have relative understanding of performance between countries, sharing best (and avoiding worst) practice.

Because we have such an involved and supportive client, we wanted to leave the last words to Sandeep Raithatha. Here he has summarised the value that our Buzz Monitoring reporting brings to Sony Mobile.

*"For me it was it was important not only to track and evaluate our own profile within the social space (owned and earned) but also that of the competition as well as taking an active interest in our key partners (the key operators and retailers). We did this not only for the respective overall brands but also for specific key events, campaign launches and products across multiple categories (smartphone, tablet and smartwear).*

*The results were delivered in professional, easy to enjoy format through monthly presentations to the Central and local teams with clear actionable insights to help drive marketing activity at a global and local level.*

*The Buzz report formed a key part of a multi-market, multi-channel Sales and Marketing Insights and Performance Management approach we took incorporating BRAND TRACKING, RETAIL PERFORMANCE, DIGITAL AND SOCIAL CHANNELS PERFORMANCE AND PRODUCT PERFORMANCE. Ebiquity played a key part in delivering this approach through provision of Competitor and Market intelligence including Ad spend, ATL Campaign analysis, Retail store activity review, Experiential deep dives as well as deep Social and Digital channel analysis."*