

From the blog

Digital strategy – no need to burn your boats

In 1519 Hernán Cortés landed in Mexico with 600 men, 16 horses and 11 ships, looking to conquer the Aztecs and seize their riches for Spain.

According to legend Cortes knew that he had a number of disadvantages. He was in a foreign land, massively outnumbered and his well organised enemy the Aztecs had survived & flourished for almost six centuries. The night prior to the initial battles Cortes allegedly sent a few men to burn all their boats.



His men awoke with their ships on fire and Cortes explained to his men ***"If we are going home, we are going home in their ships."*** With their no means of escape, or fall back position, Cortes and his men had a simple choice ***"Succeed or die"***. They went on to conquer the Aztecs! and are attributed with the phrases ***"To burn ones boats or bridges"***!

After seeing Jimmy Wales founder of Wikipedia speak this week in London and it made me review two specific conflicting things that business leaders need to focus upon

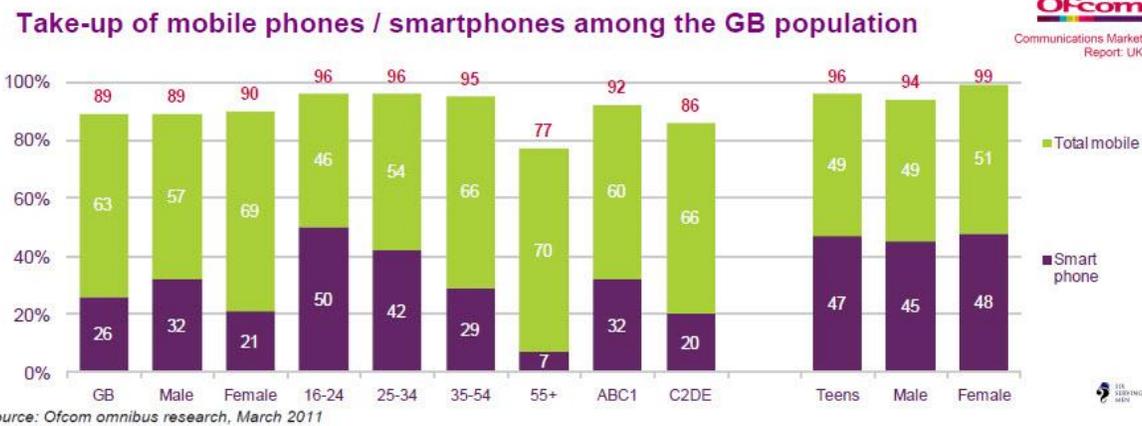
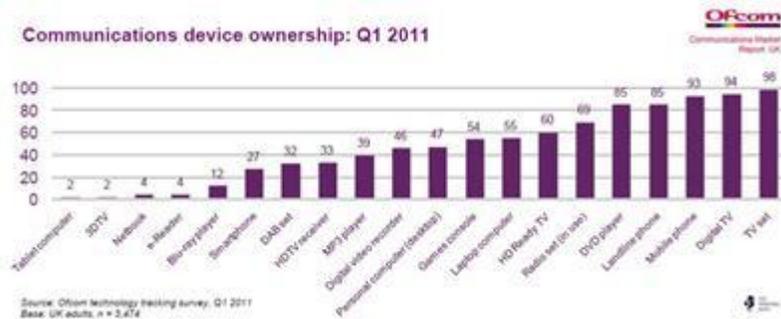
Decision making can be regarded as the mental processes ([cognitive process](#)) resulting in the selection of a course of action among several alternative scenarios.

Procrastination refers to the act of replacing high-priority actions with tasks of low-priority, and thus putting off important tasks to a later time

Any decision is based upon the quality of the information available and what is considered but sometimes too much focus is spent upon collating information before making a decision! Apparently 72% of all statistics are made up (that one is!) and any figures quoted need to be sense checked against who is providing them – and why. If you are involved in business today then you will be trying to understand & evaluate how you can benefit from Digital media channels e.g. LinkedIn, Facebook, Twitter, etc.

Before burning your boats and jumping into a Digital Strategy based upon "gut feeling" or that is easy to start, its worth ensuring that you focus your time & resource upon the areas that your customers use rather than the tools "evangelists" promote. We've extracted some data from three recent information sources that we hope help you in your decision making.

So what are UK consumers using for communications?

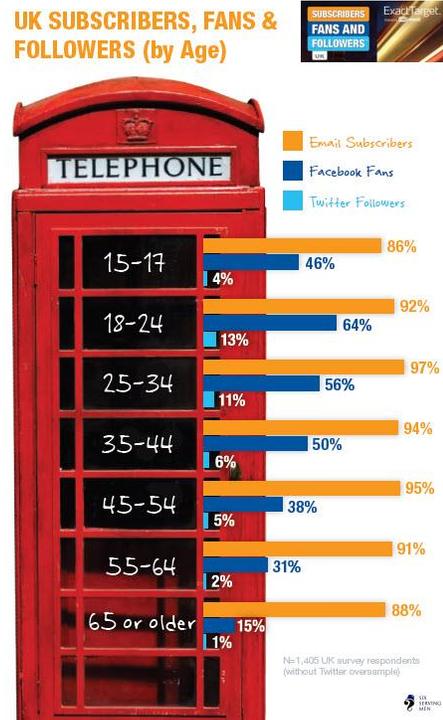


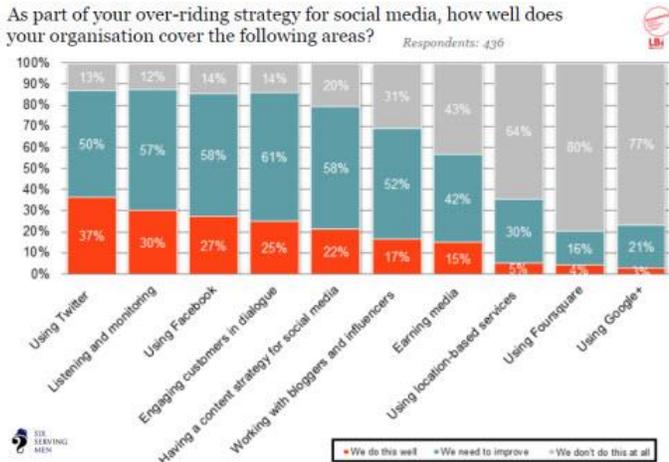
So how are UK consumers doing on social media?

Whilst the blogosphere may suggest everyone is using social media for everything recent research conducted by Exact Target suggests that consumers are not necessarily engaging with brands in the same way as US consumers.

How are UK businesses using social media and how well?

Econsultancy & LoudMouth Media's report the State of social highlights how UK companies are embracing social and how well they believe they are doing it.





So what does this mean for you?

Feel like Cortes? In a foreign land, with a vast array of options and against an increasing number of competitors at a time when consumers are becoming more familiar with the range of communication channels and with rising expectations.

Strategy is ensuring you do the right things - Operations are doing things right! However the correct strategy for your business depend upon a number of factors unique to you. To guide you digital strategy we recommend focussing upon the Who and What questions

1. Who you are wanting to communicate with
2. Why and What you want them to do

This can then drive the How, Where and When of how you implement your strategy.

You could choose to burn your boats and dive into social media or you can choose to do nothing although bear in mind that when you have to make a choice and don't make it - that is in itself a choice! Tell us what you think?

If you need help with this topic or any other aspect of digital marketing for your business you can call us on **(0115) 837 2663** or email us at **help@6sm.co.uk**, we're just around the corner.