

Twitter Continues to Establish Buzz Dominance

Leading digital index tracks rapid evolution of online brand dominance and audience participation

Hong Kong, 28 May 2010 – Micro-blogging phenomenon, Twitter, has cemented itself as a key source of technology brand advocacy in Hong Kong, with online conversations on the topic more than tripling in the channel over the last three months, according to the third quarterly Digital Brand Index (DBI 10.2).

The DBI is developed jointly by global public relations firm, Edelman, in partnership with social media intelligence firm, Brandtology, and identifies the ‘buzziest’ brands, channels and topics driving online and digital trends and create insights for technology companies and marketers.

According to Andres Vejarano, Director of the Technology and Digital Practice, Edelman in Hong Kong, Twitter rated as the second most popular destination for technology brand discussions for the second quarter running, however posts on the topic have grown more than threefold in the fourth quarter of 2009 (DBI 10.1) to 100,236 in first quarter of 2010 (DBI 10.2).

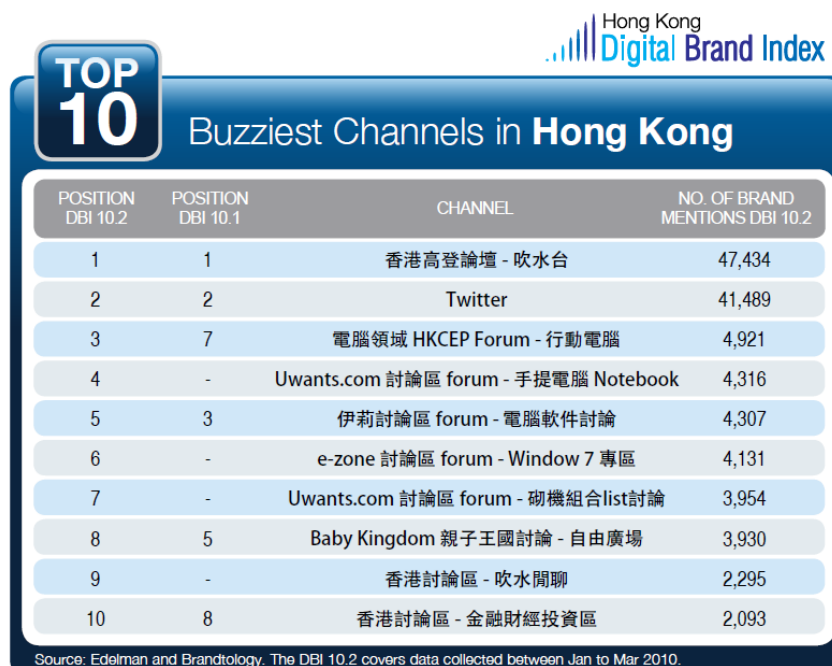
Overall, the consistency in the technology brands and channels that rank amongst Hong Kong’s top 10 list since the launch of the DBI in 2009 supports its use as a predictable measure and benchmark of technology brands’ performance online.

“The top ten ‘buzziest’ channels show that local Hong Kong channels continue to be the most important online destinations for technology-related conversations amongst consumers, however Twitter’s rapid growth establishes its relevance in Hong Kong,” he said.

“In many ways, it settles the debate about the long term future of Twitter as an influential and respected digital channel with applications for marketers. This will only continue to evolve as Twitter continues to implement its monetization strategies.”

The DBI 10.2 also provided insight into the growing influence of social media and digital channels for technology sales, with two of the top ten ‘buzziest’ topics of online conversation related to consumer research and discussion about notebook product releases.

“The latest DBI also coincided with a spate of new technology releases, and the results demonstrate that people are going online to inform their purchasing decisions. The implications of this for marketers are huge and the need for tech companies to build an online presence and reputation, and build and engage with their communities is irrefutable,” Mr Vejarano said.



“The lesson for companies and marketers in this is the importance of long term engagement ahead of major releases or announcements. The first rule of social media engagement is the need to earn your right to engage with online communities, and this means listening, understanding and being relevant to the needs of the audience – this doesn’t happen overnight.”

It is likely the sales activities of companies impacted the DBI’s top ten ‘buzziest’ brands by online discussion, which displayed a reasonably high degree of volatility on last quarter’s results. Sony moved from number three to the top spot in the Index, with an increase in ‘buzz’ of almost 50 per cent while last quarter’s ‘buzziest’ brand, Playstation, didn’t make the top ten. There were a number of new entrants, notably Apple (#2), HTC (#6), Canon (#8) and Asus (#9).

Audience participation diversifies

According to the DBI, the types of people participating in online conversations, is diversifying rapidly and driving the increased ‘buzziness’ of special interest forums. For instance, Hong Kong forum, *Baby-kingdom*, which targets young mothers and young couples, has risen to the top three spot among online information channels, while the finance section on Discuss.com.hk, a popular forum about finance, ranked as the 7th in buzziest channel.

This insight is supported by Charles Mok, Chairman of the Internet Society of Hong Kong who said: “I think these represents different segment of users. Diversity is the main thing to look at, not just trends of which segment of users is seeing the biggest growth.”

“Our service not only helps businesses identify the most influential channels and voices online, but also the type of content that most appeals to their audiences,” said Eden Lau, Co-founder & Managing Director of North Asia, Brandtology. “Marketers can then engage netizens through compelling social media campaigns instead of just banner ads, websites and traditional one-way online marketing. This is what will ultimately increase their brand ‘buzz’, preference and profitability.”

According to Andres, audience diversity adds an additional layer of complexity to the role of a digital marketer or company looking to engage in forums of interest to their consumer base.

“The rise of special interest forums required tech and other brands to really understand where their customers are engaging online. They know that customers are being informed by online discussions and they know they need to be a relevant and meaningful part of these discussions, the challenge is keeping up,” he said.

“Digital marketing expertise is vital in both keeping up with the evolution of the online environment as it relates to individual brands and products and developing the right integration across all of a company’s online properties to get maximum impact in the long term.”

“Brands that don’t view this as a long term commitment and an integral and permanent part of their marketing mix, do so at their own peril.”

Survey Methodology

The DBI was conducted across eight key markets in the Asia Pacific region, namely, Australia, China, Hong Kong, India, Indonesia, Malaysia, Taiwan and Singapore. Delivering deep online insight on a quarterly basis, the Asia Pacific Digital Brand Index monitors key brands from the following broad categories: Internet, Software, Consumer Electronics, Mobile and Telecommunications, Business and Consulting and IT and Technology, across a list of popular online channels – including influential blogs, forums, and online news outlets. The channels were selected by identifying conversations based on both qualitative as well as quantitative research. For more information, please visit www.edelman.digital.com or www.brandtology.com/newsroom/digital-brand-index-3/

About Edelman

Edelman is the world’s largest independent public relations firm, with 3,200 employees in 52 offices worldwide. Edelman was named Advertising Age’s top-ranked PR firm of the decade; Adweek’s “2009 Agency of the Year”; PRWeek’s “2009 Agency of the Year” and “UK Consultancy of the Year”; and Holmes Report’s “Agency of the Decade,” “2009 Best Large Agency to Work For” and “2009 Asia Pacific

Consultancy of the Year.” Edelman owns specialty firms Blue (advertising), StrategyOne (research), BioScience Communications (medical education and publishing), and MATTER (sports and entertainment). Visit www.edelman.com for more information.

Edelman represents technology brands around the world, many of which are included in the Digital Brand Index.

About Brandtology

Brandtology is one of the largest independent business and brand online intelligence service providers that combines technology, processes and trained professionals to deliver accurate and relevant intelligence to global organizations. Our proprietary opinion mining technologies aid organizations in listening to digital conversations across countries in multiple languages while our trained Social Media Professionals ensures high accuracy and relevancy of the intelligence provided to clients. Astute use of such intelligence has enabled Brandtology’s global clients to make timely and informed strategic decisions for public engagement, crisis management, media planning, campaign measurement, product development and strategic planning, amongst other uses. For more information, please visit www.brandtology.com.

For more information on the research and in-country results, kindly contact:

Andres Vejarano

Edelman Hong Kong

Tel: (852) 2837 4756/4735

Email: andres.vejarano@edelman.com

Ashley Lim

Brandtology

Tel: (86) 1396 802 4646

Email: ashley.lim@brandtology.com

