



Auto Trader's Meltwater Story

Executive Summary

Auto Trader, owned by Trader Media Group, delivers classified car advertising across three main channels – web, mobile and print. autotrader.co.uk, the UK's leading motoring website, is supported by an award winning iPhone app and by the Auto Trader series of magazines.

Finding an increasing need to track sentiment, comments and news online, Auto Trader chose Meltwater Buzz, the innovative social media monitoring tool that tracks over 200 million blogs, micro-blogs, social networks, forums, video and photo websites, product reviews and other social media sites.

Thanks to Meltwater, Auto Trader Now Benefits From:

- ⊙ Enhanced social media monitoring that provides easy to read but in-depth analysis of Auto Trader's presence online
- ⊙ Improved response time to comments and issues, aided by better reporting to Auto Trader's in-house team of experts
- ⊙ Direct feed-in to Auto Trader's product strategy, taking the insights of the community and applying them to the development process
- ⊙ Performance monitoring, allowing Auto Trader to track the success and sentiment of online PR and social media activity



"Meltwater Buzz is a great toolkit that gives us the power to quickly and easily monitor our overall brand sentiment. We use it to help inform everything from business development and product strategy to brand campaigns and PR. Buzz proves its value on a daily basis."

Clare Carney
Digital Marketing Executive,
Trader Media Group

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Auto Trader Gets Its Online Motor Running with Meltwater Buzz



The Background

Clare Carney, Digital Marketing Executive at Trader Media Group, explains the thought processes that went into the company's decision to choose Meltwater Buzz for its social media monitoring. "We signed up for an initial two-year contract mainly based on the promise that the product would continue to expand and develop as our use of it grew. That's definitely been a promise that has been lived up to."

Trader Media Group focuses on classified advertising of motor vehicles and provides a growing list of products through its websites, mobile platforms and magazines. The main element of the group's business is formed by autotrader.co.uk, the UK's leading motoring website, with up to 10 million unique users and one billion page impressions a month. The site is supported by mobile and print; the iPhone App has attracted over 1 million downloads since its launch in March 2010 and the Auto Trader magazine has an average weekly circulation of around 136,000 copies across the UK and Ireland.

It's been around 10 months since Trader Media Group began using Meltwater Buzz – or mBuzz as it has since become known with Auto Trader. In that time, Clare says that the rate of development has been rapid, to the point at which it provides equal functionality to some competitor products for a fraction of the cost. Better

still, mBuzz has played a role in helping Auto Trader to improve everything from the way in which it reports buzz throughout the company through to informing product development. So just how did the company move so far and so fast with the help of Meltwater?

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Auto Trader has its own dedicated Twitter feed and Facebook fan page, and also receives a lot of attention on a range of various motoring forums. "It was the need to begin tracking that kind of activity that started us off," says Clare. "Auto Trader is the number one automotive site in the UK and according to Experian's Hitwise, it is also Britain's seventh most searched for brand on line.

We have a large online community, which we've very deliberately cultivated. Because of that, it was becoming increasingly important for us to be able to get a broader view of our Brand's perception online."

For Auto Trader, social media also has a very direct end result. "It isn't just about our fans having fun on Facebook, though that is part of it," says Clare. "Social media is a beacon for customer care and crisis comms issues, and it also provides an opportunity to steer brand perception and generate valuable actions on site." Being able to begin tracking and monitoring the impact of that activity was a clear imperative for Auto Trader.

"At the time, we mainly wanted to know what was being said about the Auto Trader brand online, and we had a particular focus on tracking any negative sentiment or issues. We've since moved a long way away from that, in to deliberately seeking actionable insights to inform business development, but I suppose that was our baseline and the reason that we started using Meltwater Buzz," continues Clare.

Gaining Speed

That baseline need soon allowed Auto Trader to identify a number of recurring themes amongst the buzz. "With mBuzz, it's really easy to track developing trends, and you can quickly distinguish between isolated complaints and those that have more of the community's weight behind them. That's really powerful."

At Auto Trader, social media has traditionally been a Marketing and PR effort. Clare, who maintains both the Auto Trader Twitter feed and Facebook page, soon found that Meltwater Buzz also helped



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US TODAY
AND WE'LL
KEEP YOU
UPDATED
ON ALL THE LATEST
CAR NEWS,
REVIEWS
& BANTER
PLUS EXCLUSIVE
COMPETITIONS
& GIVEAWAYS



her to engage the wider business in getting social. "It's important for us that we respond to customers in the right way, and for me that means pulling in the expertise of the people in the know. From our journalists to our product managers, mBuzz gives us the tools to quickly and easily let them know what's on the mind of the community."

That communication is driven mainly by Meltwater's "Current Buzz" overview page, which clearly displays current post volumes alongside sentiment. Providing Auto Trader with a summary of the major themes and reach of the postings, it also offers links directly to the source material ensuring Auto Trader are able to respond directly to the original poster if needed. "That helps us to respond better overall," she says.

That comes across clearly in a specific example cited by Clare. Auto Trader, which has moved at full speed into the new digital landscape, also runs a mobile app.

"Buzz has helped with the ongoing development of that product," explains Clare. "Our in-house mobile development team is constantly working on improvements to our mobile offering, so we're able to directly incorporate valuable community feedback into the latest iteration. We move quickly from listening to direct action, and it's also a great way of ironing out any bugs in new launches that might have been missed during the QA process."

Wider Benefits

Valuable as this direct link into the community is however, it's by no means the limit of the benefits that mBuzz is bringing to Auto Trader. "One of the other things that we've been able to do thanks to the product is to get a better grip on the market and some of our competitors. It's helpful for looking at the kind of issues that they're commenting on or basing campaigns around, as it allows us to hone our own message, particularly in areas that we think they might not be doing so well or have received negative sentiment."

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Clare Carney
Digital Marketing Executive,
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If that sounds closer to public relations than social media, then it's perhaps because Meltwater Buzz is helping Auto Trader monitor performance in both areas. "The lines are obviously blurring, so we do factor things like brand awareness and online reputation into our PR evaluation and campaign planning as well. mBuzz gives us a good platform to set benchmarks and look at how we can improve comms activity across the board."

Auto Trader is also looking forward to future developments within the Meltwater product set. "The focus right now is getting more departments involved in social media and tailoring our response, but now being able to respond directly from mBuzz itself is really exciting. It reflects just the kind of 'ongoing development' of the platform that we were sold on in the first place."



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