AT INTERNET
Online Intelligence Solutions

THE MATURITY MODEL
SOCIAL MEDIA MARKETING

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INTRODUCTION

Maturity models {...} allow you to assess your current situation, to place your company in the scale of maturity and to work towards an improvement plan

Social networks provide individuals and companies who want to develop their company's vision and improve their brand awareness etc, with many different opportunities.

Nevertheless, social networks reveal obstacles which may not have been anticipated from the outset. These are obstacles which new users do not necessarily consider as they only think of the positive aspects of social networks such as the fact that they are free, easy to access and easy to use.

Perhaps you have also experienced a similar situation like many other people who have decided to climb on board the social network bandwagon. Today you want to know how you can manage the performance of your social media marketing, how to improve it and what methods can be used to do so.

Maturity models show the main stages of company's evolution faced with a given problem. Factual and easy to understand, they provide a reliable and effective response to this type of question. They allow you to assess your current situation, to place your company in the scale of maturity and to work towards an improvement plan.

You may have also noticed that there is currently no reference model available in Social Media Marketing, which is not the case in Web Analytics which benefits from the excellent work of Stéphane Hamel.

To overcome this gap and to help you explore the world of social media, we have drawn up an original maturity model, which is both easy to access and easy to use.

1. MODELLING THE FOUR STAGES OF MATURITY

Our maturity model is based on 4 key stages of development borrowed (very liberally) from the field of social anthropology.

We want our model to be universal because we believe that such a reference can be used for different company-specific themes.

The different stages involved in discovering and settling in a new environment illustrate the notion of universality rather well.

To illustrate the model and to make it easier to read and understand, we have used the example of discovering new territories.
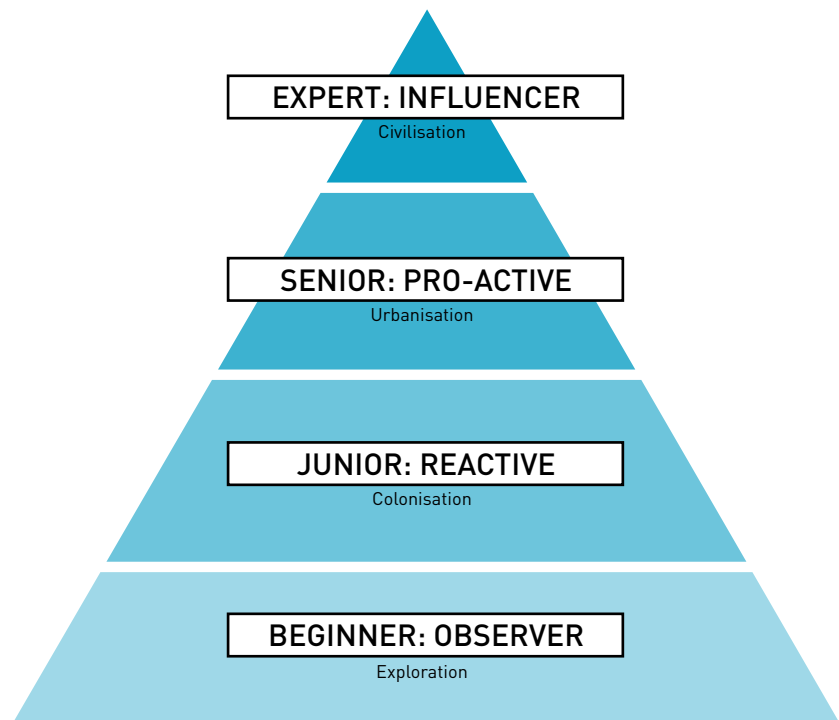
The notion of discovery is divided into four phases…

- **Exploration** (locating natural resources, access paths etc.)
- **Colonisation** (occupying unknown territories)
- **Urbanisation** (grouping settlements together into villages, first structures)
- **Civilisation** (overall management, harmonisation, infrastructures and common goals)

… which when applied to our maturity model corresponds to the following four stages of maturity:

- **Beginner:** observing the environment
- **Junior:** first reactive approaches to improve one's place in the environment
- **Senior:** action, proactive approach to adapt to the environment
- **Expert:** leadership, status as influencer to make the environment evolve and progress.

This first approach leads to the following pyramid structure which shows the different stages of maturity:

EXPERT: INFLUENCER
Civilisation

SENIOR: PRO-ACTIVE
Urbanisation

JUNIOR: REACTIVE
Colonisation

BEGINNER: OBSERVER
Exploration

Progressing from one stage to another

What factors can be used to clearly show that we have progressed from one stage to another, e.g. from beginner to junior?

It would seem clear that progressing from one stage to another involves meeting different eligibility criteria which complement one another.

2. THE DIFFERENT CRITERIA OF THE FOUR STAGES OF MATURITY

Two different points of view need to be considered: operational and company. These two areas must be studied by using different criteria in order to show that significant progress has been made.

At operational level :

- The nature and content of the mission
- Measuring the results and ROI
- The tools used

At Management/Company level:

- Supporting the project (involving the teams)
- Strategy (objectives)
- Budget
- Human resources (organisation)

A company's degree of maturity is linked with the level of each of the criterion mentioned above:
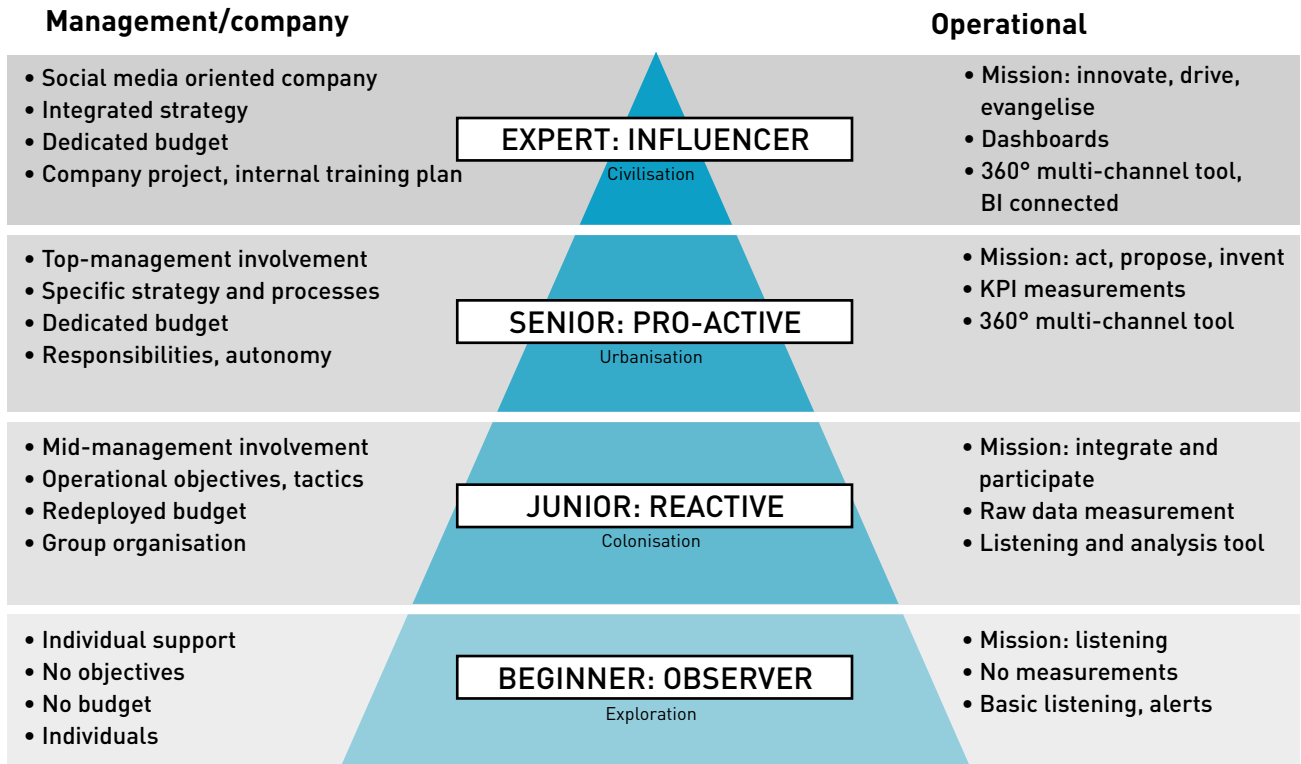
- **Mission:** from passive listening to leadership
- **Measurement:** from the absence of measurements to a strategic dashboard
- **Tools:** from the most simple to the most sophisticated
- **Support:** from one sole pioneer to involving the whole company
- **Strategy:** from no objectives to integrated scheduling
- **Budget:** from the absence of a budget to a dedicated budget
- **HR:** from an individual's initiative to the company project

There are four progress levels which be used for each criterion. Each progress level corresponds to the four levels of the pyramid as illustrated in the following table:

Stage	BEGINNER : OBSERVER Exploration	JUNIOR : REACTIVE REACTIVEColonisation	SENIOR : PRO-ACTIVE Urbanisation	EXPERT : INFLUENCER Civilisation
Mission	Listen	Integrate, participate	Act, propose	Innovate, drive, evangelise
Measurement	No measurement	Raw material	KPIs	Dashboard
Tools	Listen, perishable data/alerts	Listen, analysis, reporting	360° multi-channel	360° BI integrated multi-channel
Support	Individual	Mid-management involvement	Top-management involvement	Social media oriented company
Strategy	No objectives	Operational tactics	Specific strategy	Integrated strategy
Budget	No budget	Redeployed budget	Dedicated budget	Dedicated budget
HR	Individual	Group organisation	Responsibilities, autonomy	Company project

3. THE MATURITY MODEL

SOCIAL MEDIA MARKETING – MATURITY MODEL

Management/company

Operational

EXPERT: INFLUENCER
Civilisation

- Social media oriented company
- Integrated strategy
- Dedicated budget
- Company project, internal training plan

- Mission: innovate, drive, evangelise
- Dashboards
- 360° multi-channel tool, BI connected

SENIOR: PRO-ACTIVE
Urbanisation

- Top-management involvement
- Specific strategy and processes
- Dedicated budget
- Responsibilities, autonomy

- Mission: act, propose, invent
- KPI measurements
- 360° multi-channel tool

JUNIOR: REACTIVE
Colonisation

- Mid-management involvement
- Operational objectives, tactics
- Redeployed budget
- Group organisation

- Mission: integrate and participate
- Raw data measurement
- Listening and analysis tool

BEGINNER: OBSERVER
Exploration

- Individual support
- No objectives
- No budget
- Individuals

- Mission: listening
- No measurements
- Basic listening, alerts

# 4. EVALUATING MATURITY USING A RADAR CHART

A company's stage of maturity is neither a total nor an average: **the stage of maturity must be evaluated for each of the criteria.**

There are two necessary steps: first of all, **values are allocated to the criteria** mentioned in the table on the previous page (from 0 for "Beginner" to 3 for "Expert", and then the **chart used to represent the information must be chosen.**

It is also useful to study any discrepancies that may exist between the different evaluation criteria so that corrections can be scheduled. With this in mind, the radar is the most practical and explicit chart representation which can be used.

For example :

Mission	2
Measurement	1
Tools	2
Support	2
Strategy	1
Budget	0
HR	0
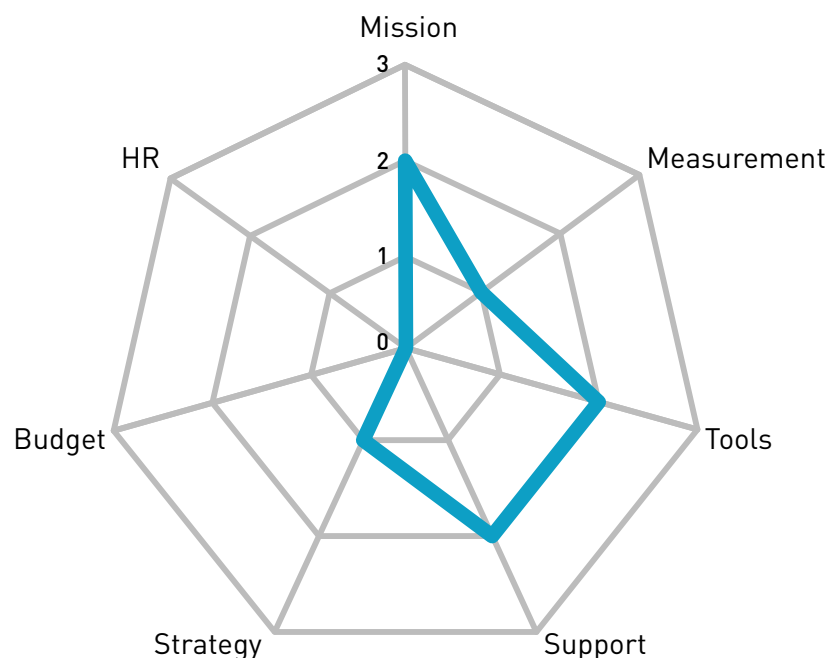
There is frequently a lack of logic, or an imbalance between the different criteria used: for example a company may have a large budget but not a trained team, senior management may be willing to undertake many projects but may not have the required budget to do so, or a company may have a well-structured team without any strategy or tools in place, which in turn will not lead to good results.

With this in mind, **using the principle of the weakest link** (which determines the resistance of the overall chain) **the phase of maturity will be determined by the lowest level**, and the **objective** will therefore be **to obtain a homogeneous score** for all of the criteria.

CONCLUSION

The maturity model is unquestionably a precious tool to evaluate a strategy, but not in the way we might think. It is used rather to gauge coherence

During the Gartner Customer Strategies & Technologies Summit 2012 , Adam Sarner - Research Director at Gartner – highlighted **shortcomings in measuring social CRMs for half of the Fortune 1000 companies**. He even predicts that these shortcomings will lead to the failure of these companies' social projects.

The absence of reference points and adapted tools are undoubtedly one of the causes of this problem. In addition to simple measurement tools, it becomes necessary to establish and structure a real company strategy, and then to control how it is used.

Launching oneself into Social Media Marketing can be dangerous, especially by removing important methods that otherwise should be used, for example, attributing budgets, which is only one of the elements behind the success of any company's strategy. **A strategy must be clear and must contain well co-ordinated actions that are coherent with one another.** Too much imbalance will jeopardise the strategy.

The maturity model is unquestionably a precious tool to evaluate a strategy, but not in the way we might think. It is used rather to gauge coherence.
With its 360°vision, the maturity model allows companies to **position themselves on a scale of values**, to meet eligibility criteria allowing them to progress to a superior stage, and finally to be able **to target and co-ordinate their objectives and any actions** that are to be led.

AT INTERNET - AGILE BUSINESS DECISIONS

AT Internet, European leader in the field of Web Analytics since 1995, helps companies drive their online performance and optimise their presence on all online marketing channels such as web and mobile sites, applications, e-CRM, social media etc. The company's Online Intelligence solutions provide reliable, valid, complete decision-making data.

AT Internet has placed agility at the heart of its innovation process to provide its clients with an evolutionary and 100% modular solution that responds to the challenges faced by companies today. The strength of AT Internet's technology and the quality of its customer relations are recognised worldwide. AT Internet has more than 3,500 clients all over the world from all sectors.

The company, which has more than 150 employees, is present in 10 different countries through its subsidiaries and partners, including France, England, Germany, Spain, Canada, China, the Philippines, Japan, Estonia and Brazil.

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