

## **Appendix B**

### **SOCIAL AUDIENCE - PART 2: WHAT TO DO WITH METRICS?**

How does social media engagement become relevant to measuring popularity? There is a lengthy list of metrics that could be monitored, but what is really important?

*Connections are reach metrics.*

Connections are people who are only interested in the content, but may not be “into” it. Tracking subscribers, followers, and fans (or “page likes”) are similar to “reach” in traditional broadcast metrics. This is the number of people who have the program on their social media radar via trackable means (compared to non-trackable means like monitoring hashtag searches).

Mistakenly, many content creators assume collecting as many connections as possible is the key to social media success. While sending your message out to as many people as possible might appear to give leverage, but is there any value? Not really. If users aren’t engaged, do they have much value? StatusPeople, creators of Fake Follower Check (an application that vets the legitimacy of twitter followers) explain on their [website](#):

..(I)t's important for you to be sure when you communicate on Twitter that you are communicating with real and active followers...the more active your follower base the more likely they are to share your content. ...(T)here are (also) a growing number of Fakers out there. People who buy followers in a vain attempt to build legitimacy. "Look at me I have 20,000 followers, I must know my..." They are essentially trying to game the system and it's important for you to be able to spot them, and steer clear of them. Because ultimately if you're willing to lie about how many friends you have you are not a very trustworthy individual.

Simply recruiting as large an audience as possible doesn’t necessarily equal meaningful results or quality of engagement. So what is the other option?

*Meaningful social media measurement is about audience engagement*

Trendrr releases [daily](#) and [weekly](#) reports on social media buzz for US television programming. Aggregating comments, mentions, hashtags, likes, and check-ins across multiple social media networks (Facebook, Twitter, GetGlue and the US-only Viggie) they assess both the broadcast content that received the most buzz, and evaluate the sentiment of the buzz of viewers who cared enough to take action and comment.

Using qualitative assessment of viewer comments, creators have the ability to gauge if users liked or disliked the content. Of course, sometimes negative sentiment isn’t a bad thing, it could simply be an emotional reaction to the content, like when a viewer’s favorite performer is voted off of a talent show, or a favourite sports team is losing a game.

As an example of the granular level of assessing engagement that social media provides, in Bluefin’s [assessment of the 2011-2012 US television season](#), they were able to use both quantitative and qualitative data to map [social media participation during Glee’s season three finale](#). Their chart shows a spike in the volume of Glee activity the minute the broadcast started, and tracks key moments of the episode to the social media chatter. Interestingly, while activity sharply spikes at the start of the episode, it does not immediately drop when

the episode ends. Instead the activity trails off, indicating audiences stayed engaged with the property well after broadcast.

In both Trendrr and Bluefin's reports, reach metrics (followers, fans) are not significant - they focus only on engagement metrics (mentions, comments, likes). While content creators can do their best to encourage such engagement by tweeting the program hashtag often when posting about the program during off times, this participation is otherwise organically driven.

*Challenges for accurate social media engagement measurement*

When measuring social media engagement, it must be remembered it is impossible to collect the complete picture. The only data that can be tracked are activities that are publicly visible (open twitter feeds, curated Facebook pages, etc.). Partnering agencies of GetGlue can find check-in data for their own show(s). But privacy settings block aggregators from users private posts, unless the user has given permission for it to be shared.