

Is Organic Social Media Marketing Still Relevant?

It's changed dramatically in the past few years

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eMarketer Editors

Once upon a time, social media marketing was very different than it is today. Marketers could open a page on Facebook, write a bunch of fun posts and watch the fan count go up. But that all changed when Facebook began drastically reducing the reach of organic (nonpaid) posts.

“While organic serves a key purpose within our broader strategy, we are very mindful that the creative must be top-notch to resonate, and that it strategically incorporates the proper hashtags to ensure relevance within the marketplace,” said Tad Ehrbar, senior vice president of global consumer social media and content at [Citi](#).

Others believe organic social is a waste of time and dollars—and they don’t mince words.

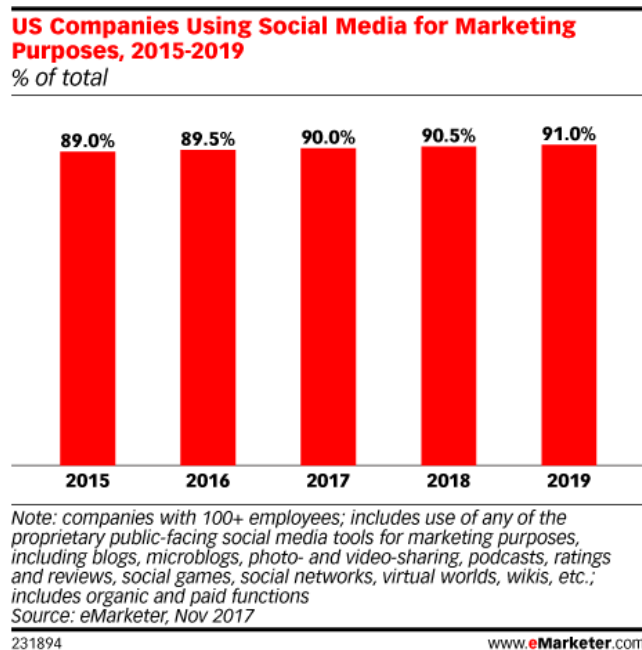
“You might as well take your budget to the bank, cash it out in greenback \$20s, pile it up in the parking lot and light the money on fire,” said [Ogilvy's](#) Marshall Manson.

However, some marketers believe organic is not only still important, but perhaps more important than ever. They feel there are things organic can accomplish that paid cannot.

In fact, according to **WeWork's** director of social media Lia Zneimer: "Social media started because it was a conversation, and it was a way to react and respond directly—not only to your friends, but also to brands and to influencers and celebrities. I do think at the heart of it, there's something about community and connection that paid [advertising] can't replace."

These are just some of the responses from marketers interviewed for eMarketer's latest report, "Organic Social Marketing: Why Brands Still Make It a Priority." eMarketer PRO subscribers can read the [full report here](#). Nonsubscribers can purchase the [full report here](#).

eMarketer has spent the past few years documenting the rapid growth of paid social advertising. This year, US social network ad spending will surpass \$21 billion, accounting for 25.5% of all digital ad spending. By 2019, social ad spending will top \$31 billion, making up 29.4% of digital ad spending.



And more than 90% of US companies with 100 or more employees will use social media marketing next year, eMarketer projects. This includes ads on social platforms as well as organic posts.

For more on how social marketing has changed dramatically in the past few years, listen in as eMarketer principal analyst Debra Aho Williamson discusses key findings in the latest episode of "Behind the Numbers."