

WHITEPAPER

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HARNESSING TWITTER FOR ENTERPRISE SALES

Presented by



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Abstract

The number of companies and individuals using social media platforms like Twitter continues to grow. With that growth, more conversations are happening in the social sphere than ever before. Surfacing relevant business information and actionable insight from these conversations is not always easy, particularly for Business-to-Business (B2B) sales and marketing teams. Flextronics, one of the world's largest electronic services manufacturers, found a way to address this challenge. By leveraging solutions from FirstRain that incorporated Twitter data from Gnip, Flextronics increased the productivity and preparedness of its global sales team. FirstTweets, an intelligence capability within FirstRain's products, was a key component of the solution. FirstTweets filters out noise so companies can quickly uncover the most relevant business information.

Moving Beyond Monitoring

Companies have long-used social media to monitor and shape conversations surrounding their brands and products. Although companies still find great value in monitoring, organizations across diverse industries are looking beyond monitoring and beginning to integrate social conversations into larger business intelligence analysis. For these companies, it is no longer a question of determining whether or not there is pertinent information—that has been answered affirmatively. The challenge lies in consistently surfacing relevant information from the high volume of complex conversations happening across social media platforms like Twitter. B2B sales and marketing teams require easily accessible, consumable business intelligence on the companies and industries that matter most to them. The FirstRain solutions are built to meet this need, leveraging social data from Gnip, the world's largest social media data aggregator and provider, to do so. Gnip provides reliable, sustainable, complete access to the full firehose of Twitter data, so FirstRain can focus their energy and resources on creating and maintaining their customer solutions.

A Sea Change for Flextronics

How do you identify relevant data from Twitter and communicate it to your sales team? How do you translate social media analytics into useful and immediate action? These are the big questions companies are asking—and they are big questions, considering the millions of Tweets

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from which companies distill insight. Social data is dynamic, and companies with the right analytics benefit from drilling down and focusing on product lines, the competitive landscape, and industry trends and developments.

FirstRain customer Flextronics, one of the world's largest electronic services manufacturers, looked to solutions from FirstRain to answer these questions and achieve these benefits on a company-wide scale. By incorporating and monitoring realtime social media data in its business intelligence feeds, Flextronics' sales team was able to identify and win new business opportunities.

Greg Mihran, the Senior Director of Global Sales Enablement at Flextronics said, "FirstRain has helped our company evolve and gain awareness of tools and data sources we'd never leveraged before, emphasizing the importance of incorporating and monitoring social media data."

A prime example of what Flextronics achieved was in the case of one of their customers who was considering expanding into an adjacent market. Flextronics' sales team lacked knowledge on the timing or specifics of the market segment under consideration. So the sales team used FirstRain to actively monitor adjacent market segments and trends, observing signals that might provide more insight into potential customer moves. After aggregating and analyzing social data on this market via FirstRain, the sales team was able to better define the potential opportunity and familiarize themselves with key market-specific information. Not only did access to social data save the sales team time with market and trend analysis, they were ultimately more prepared when it was time to meet with the customer.

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-Greg Mihran, Flextronics

Example of FirstRain Intelligence Carousel Component Implemented in Salesforce.com



The customer was impressed with Flextronics' preparedness and thoroughness and rewarded them with the account.

FirstTweets: Leveraging the Twitter Conversation

The Flextronics story highlights how FirstRain is helping companies leverage social data as a core element of broader business intelligence. FirstRain provides companies with an enterprise-level intelligence capability, called FirstTweets. FirstTweets complements FirstRain's existing tools and provides a comprehensive picture of a company or industry of interest—from understanding the competitive landscape to identifying emerging opportunities. FirstTweets applies filters to the full Twitter firehose they access via Gnip, identifying and providing intelligence on over 12,000 lines of business. Through predictive semantic analysis algorithms, FirstRain organizes social data by company, industry, and business topic. Their solution then prioritizes information to ensure customers see important and account-specific information first. Sales and marketing teams are then armed with data to support new market penetration, lead identification and qualification, and marketing campaign decision-making.

An incredibly important but often overlooked question customers adding social analytics must ask is "How do we make integration of this data easy?" The FirstRain answer is to integrate the information into tools that sales and marketing teams are already using. FirstRain deploys content through a single interface that can be added through existing Customer Relationship Management (CRM) dashboards like Salesforce and delivered to dashboards, tablets, or mobile.

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Example of FirstTweets Coverage of the 'Wireless Backhaul' Business Line

The screenshot shows the 'FirstTweets for: Wireless Backhaul' dashboard. At the top, there is a gauge chart labeled 'About average' for 'Wireless Backhaul'. Below the chart are buttons for 'Other Views' and 'Print'. The main content area displays two sections of tweet coverage:

- WEEK OF 12-MAY-2013** (from twitter):
 - Tweet 1: "Good presentations on new backhaul, spectrum sharing and innovation in wireless for industrial usage. Some reporting coming up." by garymitchell (Yesterday).
 - Tweet 2: "Our new wireless backhaul curriculum covers technology, business, standards, implementation, security, case studies: http://t.co/a9AW8BqM7e" by eogogics (Yesterday).
 - Tweet 3: "Seeking Cross Functional Service Delivery PM in DFW. Ethernet, Wavelength, OSP, Backhaul, Wireless Network Services background required." by dikortelecomroc (13-May-2013).
- WEEK OF 05-MAY-2013**:
 - Tweet 4: "Cambium Networks Quality - Wireless Backhaul and Access http://t.co/uJrOBLm4Wl" by ScottFirmstone (10-May-2013).
 - Tweet 5: "Newly published case study from @Ceragon about a MapleNet Wireless utility #backhaul project http://t.co/BxGrc8mPM5" by stevearendr (08-May-2013).
 - Tweet 6: "Wireless backhaul vendor, Ceragon Networks has reported an 18 percent fall in its first-quarter revenues of US... http://t.co/DvSAZjSRzZ" by Butti_son (07-May-2013).

Staying Competitive: Social Data is a Necessity

With the proliferation of social media data in business intelligence feeds, more and more companies like Flextronics will be taking advantage of the power of this data to improve their competitive edge. The inclusion of social data in business intelligence has moved from a nice-to-have to a need-to-have capability. Products like those developed by FirstRain are at the forefront of this progression—capitalizing on the reliable, complete, and sustainable social data Gnip provides to arm employees across the enterprise with strategic, actionable insight.

“It was imperative that Flextronics have access to, and the ability to monitor, social data from a business intelligence perspective—that’s where FirstRain and FirstTweets came in.”-Greg Mihran, Senior Director of Global Sales Enablement at Flextronics

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About Gnip

Gnip is the world's largest and most trusted provider of social media data, serving customers in over 30 countries in a range of industries from social media monitoring and business intelligence to finance and government. Gnip's customers deliver social media analytics to more than 90% of the Fortune 500. Gnip is Twitter's first data reseller and the only company with access to the full archive of historical Twitter data. In addition to Twitter, Gnip provides exclusive access to full firehoses of data from Tumblr, WordPress, Disqus, IntenseDebate, StockTwits, and Estimote as well as managed integrations to the public APIs of Facebook, YouTube, Instagram, Google+ and others.

Companies who are Plugged In to Gnip can certify to their customers that they have complete, reliable and sustainable access to the best social data in the world. The Plugged In to Gnip program recognizes these companies as industry leaders.

About The Author

Amanda Bridenhagen is the Marketing Manager for the Plugged In to Gnip partner program.

