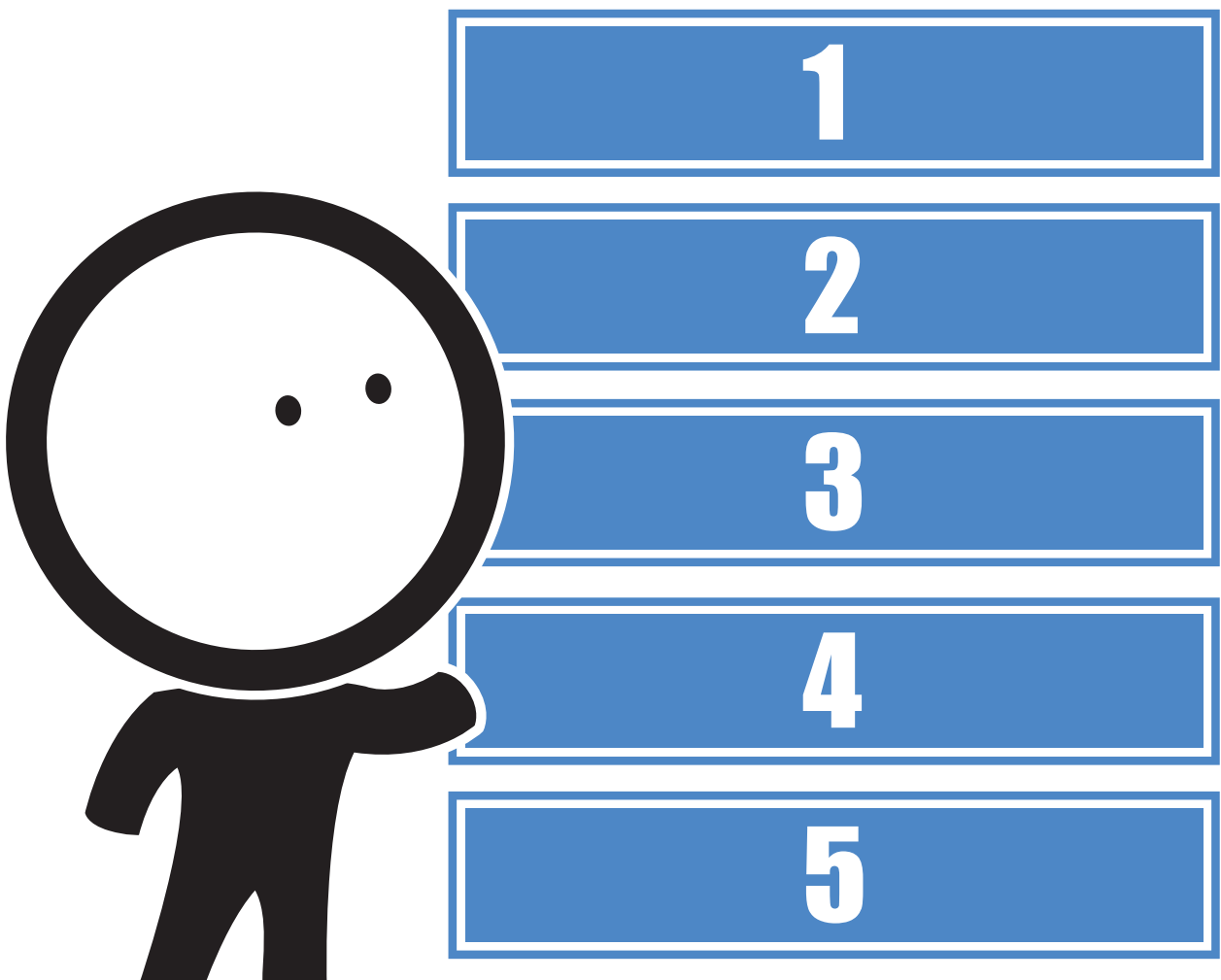


## Best of Social Media 2013

*What we learned (and wish we could forget) about social media in 2013*



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It has been a very busy year for social media. Trending topics have made their way into long-established lexicons (I'm looking at you, *selfie* and *twerk*), Facebook took a backseat to platforms like Pinterest and Instagram, and advertising efforts were kicked up tremendously.

In order to assess marketing trends in the new year, it's important to examine some of the hits and misses of 2013. Let's take a look back, shall we?



## **Social media ups the ante by promoting businesses**

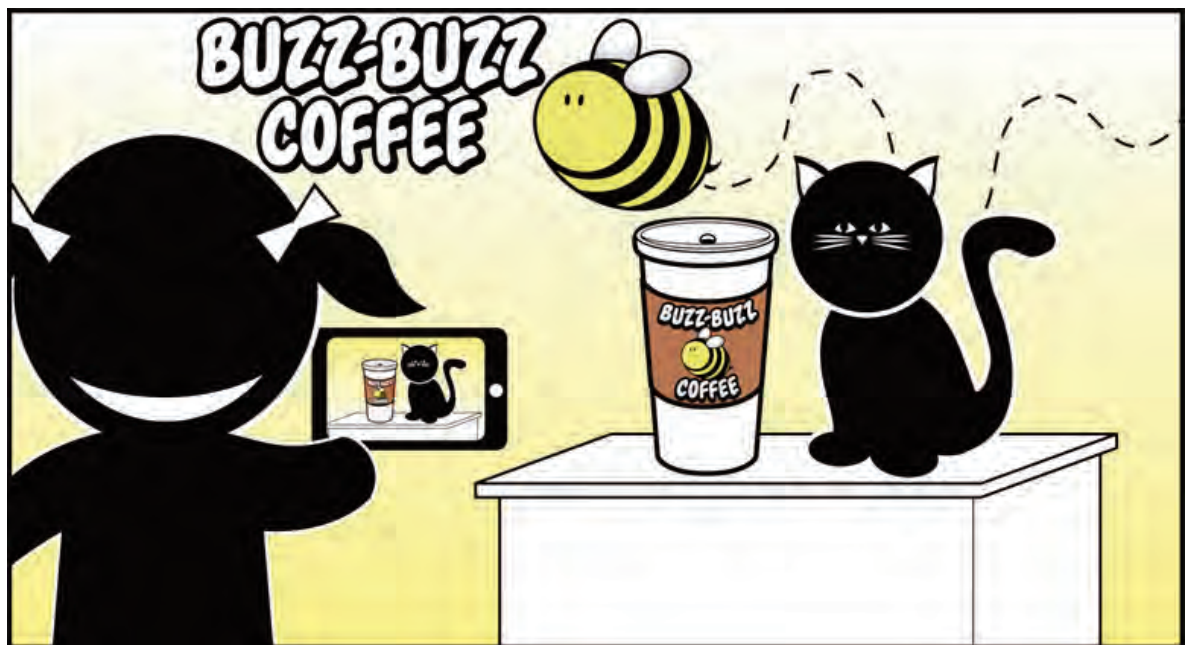
The year 2013 saw a widespread trend in social media platforms developing serious relationships with businesses. Nearly all of the major networks made some tweaks to keep themselves relevant and more attractive to companies with sophisticated advertising models, the introduction of analytics, and improved promotional tools (ie, "promoted pins" on Pinterest, Facebook advertising, etc).



## Think a tweet is too lengthy? Get a load of Vine

Satisfying our need for short, concise, easy-to-digest information, Vine came out of the gate swinging with an app that allows users to upload six-second videos to share with friends. Does this feed into our ADD tendencies and make it harder for us to sit through a five minute YouTube video? Maybe. But it has also allowed companies and advertisers to get VERY creative with their video production skills, and that? Makes us very happy.

In other video news, Facebook-owned Instagram announced that users can record and share 15-second videos using Instagram's many neat filters. This has proven to be extremely popular with both brands and consumers.

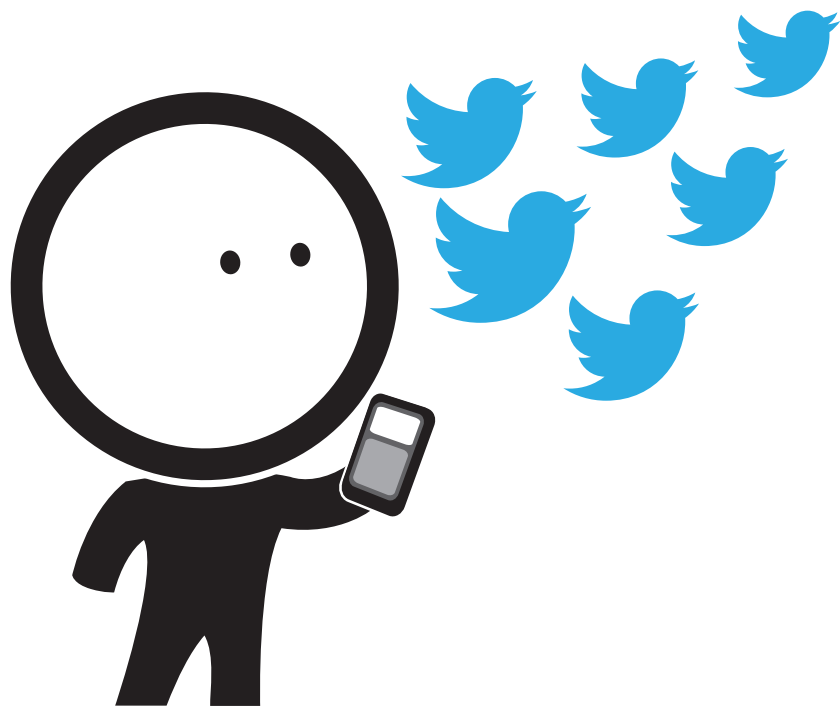


## Twitter awards

This was the year when people turned to Twitter in droves to express their condolences to the people of Boston following the marathon bombings, vent their frustrations about the economy, tweet about the VMAs and Miley's infamous tongue bath, and gush about the royal baby.

Glee's Lea Michelle tweeted a photo together with Cory Monteith after his passing, which received the most retweets in the year. Other contenders for golden tweets include Niall of One Direction who tweeted about turning 20 and Paul Walker's reps who tweeted about his untimely death at the end of November.

Here are the top three hashtags that were seen most often on Twitter this year:



#Superbowl  
#Oscars  
#BostonStrong

## Google's epic year

Between the social hangout Google+ that was completely redesigned in May, the high-tech Google Glass that started infiltrating the news and exciting techies everywhere, and the demise of popular RSS feed aggregator Google Reader, Google has had a pretty eventful year.

Let's talk about G+, a platform that received a lot of backlash in the press, but a viable hangout nonetheless and one that cleverly integrates all Google services. Once we realized this platform was not replacing Facebook, we started to see it for what it was: a place where businesses could be leveraged and where bloggers (and users) can connect in a non-invasive environment (in the end we decided that G+ is actually the antithesis of Facebook).

Users have the option to click on "+1" when they like a post, meaning it elevates that post's status in Google search rankings. If you were to upload your blog to Google and all of your friends were to recommend it, think of what that could do to your SEO?! Exactly.

The other nice thing about this platform is that you can share what you want to share, add or remove people from your circle whenever you like, link up with people in their hangouts, and have everything integrated and available in one spot.



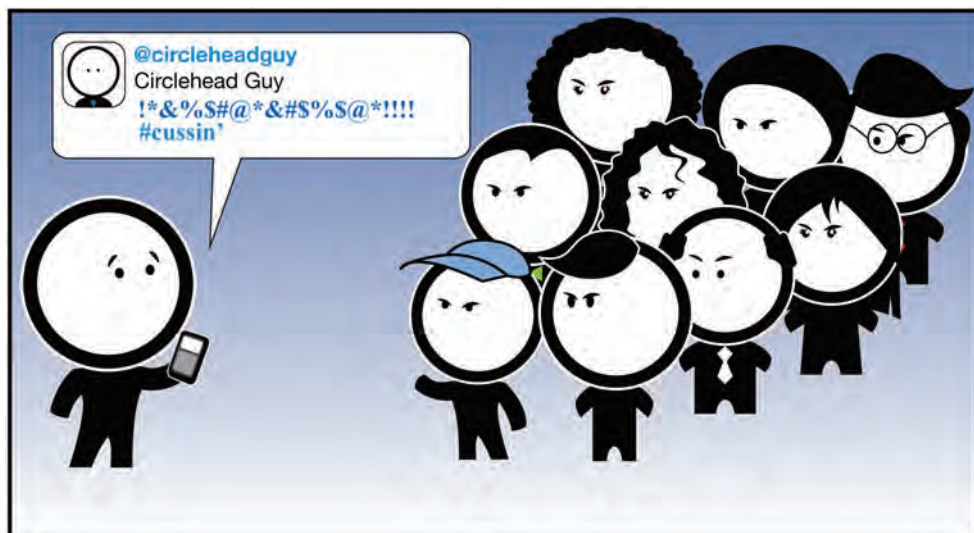


## The top 3 moments that left us shaking our heads

Major companies were involved in some relatively salacious events this year. Let's take a look back at the dirty, scandalous, and downright nasty social media mishaps of the year.

1) It was not a good year to be in charge of social media for Home Depot. The company went under fire for tweeting a racist image of a man disguised as a monkey banging on a drum set in between two African Americans. The company took the tweet down immediately and apologized but the damage had already been done. #Facepalm

2) Remember the passengers on the Carnival boat Triumph who were stranded without fresh food and functioning toilets (uhm, eww) for nearly a week after an engine fire? Carnival decided to update its Facebook account but avoided negative press and the onslaught of bad publicity. Here is a moment when you can actually turn a bad situation around, but the company decided instead to steer clear (pun intended) of the public. No cupcake for you!





3) In November, financial institution JPMorgan thought it might be a good idea to host a Q&A on Twitter by using the hashtag #AskJPM. Boy, were they wrong. The company had to call it off because of the backlash (I guess they thought we would forget that they are largely responsible for dragging us into the recession??).

And there you have it—the big hits and misses of 2013.

We look forward to seeing what the New Year has in store!



# Happy 2014!

## Like to learn more?

If you're interested in learning more about hashtags, or how Sneeze It can help your organization reach new audiences through social media channels, **contact us** today!

Is your business effectively using social media?

