

## Why Bother Monitoring Social Media?

Even if you or your clients have "decided" not to actively participate in social media, **it's really not a choice.** Nature abhors a vacuum, and so does social media. Either you can fill the vacuum with your perspective, or your customers and competitors will fill it for you. The choice is clear.

Monitoring helps with branding and marketing and can help identify quality control or customer care problems that may have gone unnoticed.

Monitoring is only one piece of the puzzle, however. It's important to find out who is saying what, and where the conversation is happening so you can respond appropriately.

**Terminology:** There are few terms you'll need to be familiar with before we talk about the tools, so let's take a moment to cover them before we jump into the details.

**Influence:** If you find there are customers who have a strong opinion of your brand, it's important to understand the influence of those customers.

- How many followers do they have?
- Do they get retweets?
- How many external links point to their blog?
- How many comments do their blog posts attract?

Several of the free tools listed below include this measurement to assist in your monitoring and response efforts. All of the paid options include it.

**Sentiment:** Are the comments positive or negative? Most current tools attempt to assign sentiment to a post automatically. While this is helpful for brands with tons of mentions, it's only about 70% accurate in most cases<sup>[1]</sup>, so manual verification and spot-checking is encouraged across the board before making any decisions based on influence data.

**Volume:** This is simply the amount of "buzz" that exists. Many monitoring tools give the ability to chart volume for specific keywords over time. This gives you a great way to measure the impact of your marketing efforts and social media campaigns, especially when combined with sentiment. A lot can be learned about your brand and your customers by investigating spikes in social media volumes.

**Workflow:** Workflow is the process of assigning, tracking and responding to social media, typically in a team environment. An effective workflow can prevent double responses and missed opportunities.

Now that we have an understanding of the purpose and the terminology surrounding social media monitoring, let's take a look at some tools that can help you monitor your presence.

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**For more information and a lot of other social media monitoring tools, please visit the source of this article at <http://sixrevisions.com/tools/12-social-media-monitoring-tools-reviewed/>**

# 1. [Google Alerts](#)



Search terms:

Type:

How often:

Email length:

Deliver to:

## Monitor the Web for interesting new content

Google Alerts are email updates of the latest relevant Google results (web, news, etc.) based on your choice of query or topic.

Enter the topic you wish to monitor, then click preview to see the type of results you'll receive. Some handy uses of Google Alerts include:

- monitoring a developing news story
- keeping current on a competitor or industry
- getting the latest on a celebrity or event
- keeping tabs on your favorite sports teams

You can also [click here to manage your alerts](#)

An oldie but a goodie! Google Alerts allows you to set up keyword searches for the name of your company or competitors, for example, and receive updates in your email inbox or through an RSS feed.

When combined with [iGoogle](#), you can create a pretty nice consolidated page that contains the latest findings for your selected keywords. When it comes to monitoring social media, this is the least you should be doing; it's free and an absolute snap to set up.

COMMENTS:

## 2. Twitter Advanced Search

**Advanced Search**

Use this form to automatically construct your query. (Alternatively, you can type [search operators](#) directly into the search box.)

**Find tweets based on...**

**Words**

All of these words

This exact phrase

Any of these words

None of these words

This hashtag

Written in  (persistent)

**People**

From this person

To this person

By using the advanced features in Twitter's search tool, you can use simple [Boolean logic](#) (true or false conditions) to perform some pretty powerful searches.

Once you set up your search, you can save the query as an RSS feed so you can keep up to date on the latest news.

COMMENTS:

### 3. [Icerocket](#)



Used by many, Icerocket helps you keep watch over Twitter, blogs, web, news, images and more. Features include a topic cloud and basic listing of mentions. This social media monitoring tool also offers the ability to bookmark your search results for later reference.

Although helpful, some users might find the interface and the style of the search results pages a little archaic compared to the other options.

COMMENTS:

#### 4. [Addict-o-matic](#)



This tool is a consolidated page with search matches across blogs, Twitter, Digg, Flickr and more. Featuring an appealing interface and one-page dashboard, Addict-o-matic is one of the best free tools available for summarizing all your "buzz" in one place.

COMMENTS:

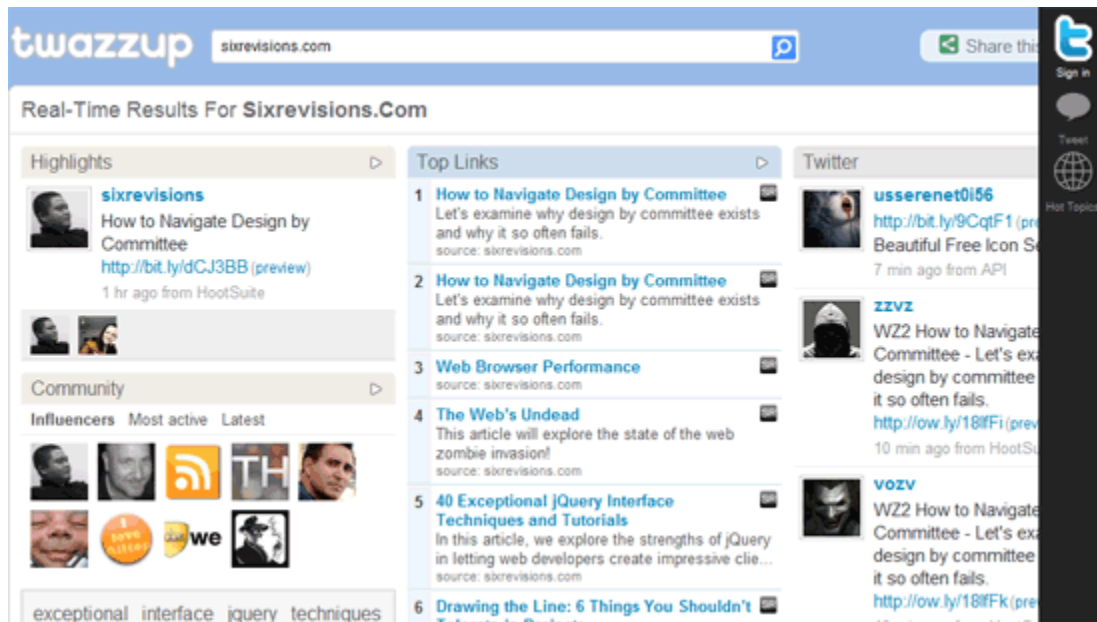
## 5. [Boardtracker](#)

The screenshot shows the BoardTracker V.2010 Discussion Search website. At the top, there is a navigation menu with links for Home, Search, My Alerts, Browse, Setup, About, Login, and Signup. The main heading is "BoardTracker V.2010 Discussion Search" with a blue dog mascot logo. Below the navigation is a search bar containing "sixrevisions.com" and a "Search" button. Under the search bar, it says "Search in 2,200,284,687 live discussion posts" and "Advanced | Safe | Filter by CN". On the left, there is a "Board Buzz" section with a list of topics: 1. [wit](#), 2. [flow](#), 3. [mayweather](#), and 4. [ubuntu](#). On the right, there is a promotional banner for "The new BoardTracker PREMIUM is here to help you..." with a navigation bar showing numbers 1 through 6. Below the banner, the text reads "Identify trends and track competitors to stay ahead of the".

Boardtracker focuses on grabbing "buzz" from message boards and forums. Features include a topic cloud and influencer list. There are ads mixed in with your search results which may turn off some users. A premium version is offered. If your target customers are more active on message boards than other channels, this could be the right tool for you.

COMMENTS:

## 6. [Twazzup](#)



twazzup sixrevisions.com

Real-Time Results For Sixrevisions.Com

Highlights

**sixrevisions**  
How to Navigate Design by Committee  
<http://bit.ly/dCJ3BB> (preview)  
1 hr ago from HootSuite

Community

Influencers Most active Latest

exceptional interface jquery techniques

Top Links

- 1 **How to Navigate Design by Committee**  
Let's examine why design by committee exists and why it so often fails.  
source: sixrevisions.com
- 2 **How to Navigate Design by Committee**  
Let's examine why design by committee exists and why it so often fails.  
source: sixrevisions.com
- 3 **Web Browser Performance**  
source: sixrevisions.com
- 4 **The Web's Undead**  
This article will explore the state of the web zombie invasion!  
source: sixrevisions.com
- 5 **40 Exceptional jQuery Interface Techniques and Tutorials**  
In this article, we explore the strengths of jQuery in letting web developers create impressive clie...  
source: sixrevisions.com
- 6 **Drawing the Line: 6 Things You Shouldn't**

Twitter

**usserenet0i56**  
<http://bit.ly/9CqtF1> (pre...  
Beautiful Free Icon S...  
7 min ago from API

**ZZVZ**  
WZ2 How to Navigate...  
Committee - Let's ex...  
design by committee...  
it so often fails.  
<http://ow.ly/18iFi> (pre...  
10 min ago from HootS...

**VOZV**  
WZ2 How to Navigate...  
Committee - Let's ex...  
design by committee...  
it so often fails.  
<http://ow.ly/18iFk> (pre...

Of the Twitter-focused monitoring tools I've come across, Twazzup does a great job of getting everything on one page. Sentiment, top links, and influencers are available.

The ranking of influencers, however, seems a little mysterious. A quick check of [Klout scores](#) on profiles for a few key topics didn't reflect a high level of influence, so Twazzup must be using a different calculation.

COMMENTS:

## 7. Social Mention

The screenshot displays the Social Mention interface for a search on 'sixrevisions.com'. The top navigation bar includes links for Blogs, Microblogs, Bookmarks, Comments, Events, Images, News, Video, Audio, Q&A, Networks, and All. A search bar contains the text 'sixrevisions.com' and a 'Search' button. Below the search bar, a summary of metrics is provided: 14% strength, 42:1 sentiment, 27% passion, and 26% reach. Additional statistics include 3 minutes avg. per mention, last mention 8 minutes ago, 207 unique authors, and 31 retweets. A sentiment bar chart shows 84 positive, 253 neutral, and 2 negative mentions. The 'Top Keywords' section is also visible. The main content area, titled 'Mentions about sixrevisions.com', shows three results sorted by date. The first result is a tweet from @usserenet0i56 about '40 Beautiful Free Icon Sets'. The second and third results are tweets from @vozv and @zzvz respectively, both mentioning 'WZ2 How to Navigate Design by Committee - Let's examine why design by committee exists and why it so often fails.' The right sidebar contains links for RSS Feed, Email, CSV, Feedback, Sentimer, Top Key, Top Use, and Top Has, along with an advertisement for Social M ROI.

This social media monitoring tool features an interesting combination of easy-to-read metrics including reach, sentiment, passion, and strength (volume/day). Social Mention tracks blogs, blog comments, Twitter, mainstream news, images, video, and audio. Searches can be saved as an RSS feed so you can easily stay up-to-date.

COMMENTS:

## 8. [HootSuite](#)

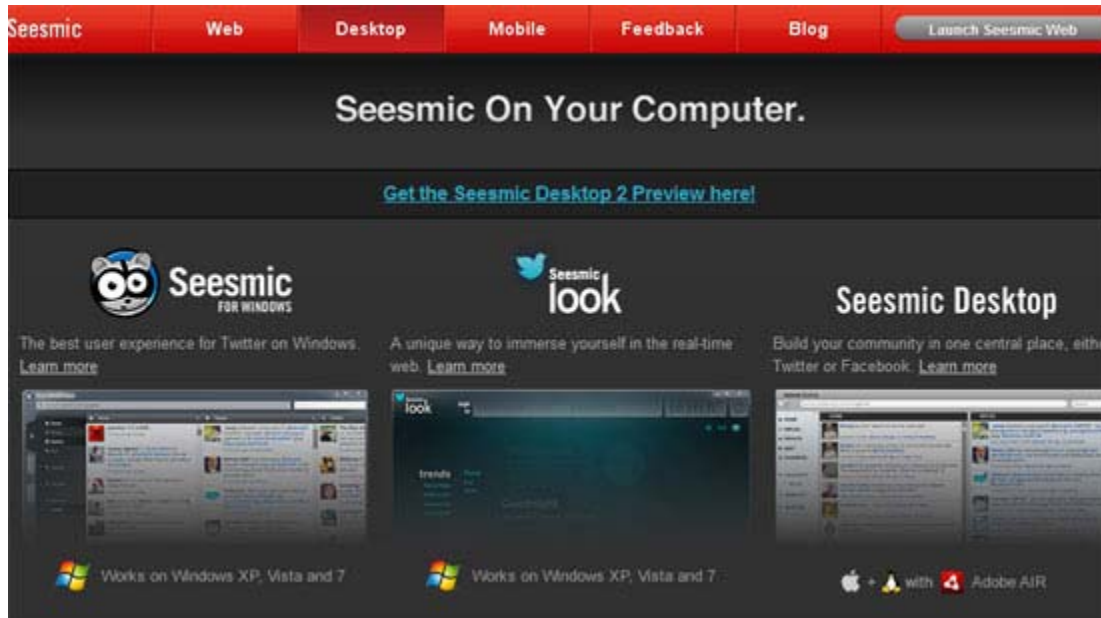


HootSuite is a popular tool that can be used to manage multiple accounts across Twitter, Facebook, MySpace, WordPress, Foursquare and LinkedIn. Although HootSuite could be categorized as an account management tool rather than a monitoring tool, I believe it deserves mention here because of its large user base and powerful functionality.

You can push updates to one or more profiles, track click-through, deploy timed updates, monitor your social media buzz across multiple web services, and assign tasks among team members based on roles. If you use HootSuite, you'll want to use an additional tool to supplement monitoring of forums and blogs. HootSuite apps for both iPhone and Android are available.

COMMENTS:

## 9. [Seesmic](#)



If you try HootSuite, you'll find the interface of Seesmic fairly familiar. The similarity doesn't end there. They also share the capability to manage multiple accounts across all the popular social media outlets. Seesmic gives up some ground to HootSuite, however, on the team collaboration and workflow front.

COMMENTS:

## 10. [TweetDeck](#)



Another account management tool, TweetDeck is available as an application for Mac, Windows, Linux, iPhone and iPad. You can use TweetDeck to manage profiles across Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn, MySpace, Foursquare and Google Buzz. If you've used the other tools on this list, the multi-column format will feel familiar.

TweetDeck is lacking a good workflow, so it is not for those who will be collaborating with a team. In addition, because it needs to be installed on your system instead of being able to run in a Web browser, many people won't be able to use it in a secure corporate environment.

COMMENTS: