

Asia Pacific Digital Brand Index - Methodology

1. Q: What is the Asia Pacific Digital Brand Index?

A: The Digital Brand Index (DBI) is the first research project in Asia Pacific to unveil the most discussed technology brands online, the most active channels and the most interesting subject areas. In partnership with Brandtology, we monitored over 8 million online mentions of 350 large technology brands, across eight Asia-Pacific markets between July and September 2009. The goal is to re-run the research quarterly to track the developments and trends in conversations about technology brands.

2. Q: Which markets are included?

A: The eight markets launching the DBI include: Australia, China, Hong Kong, India, Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore and Taiwan.

3. Q: Why did Edelman only focus on technology brands?

A: Previous Edelman research shows that technology (especially consumer gadgets) is heavily discussed online. We believe the DBI research will be of interest to technology firms – many of whom know online word-of-mouth is important, but do not currently undertake any monitoring. We aim to release the results for technology brands quarterly, but might also extend the study to other industries in time.

4. Q: What makes this study a credible reference point?

A: Brandtology proprietary technology provides access to data that is not freely available via other search engines or free social media research tools. This means the data should be more comprehensive than what most people can source themselves. For many brands, this might be the most comprehensive (or first) online intelligence they have related to their brand. Many brands are hungry to know how they have performed relative to the previous DBI. This will be especially meaningful if they have just started – or are planning to start - engaging online.

5. Q: Is it statistically valid?

A: Data from the DBI is comprehensive (given the large online channels that have been researched) and provides deep insight that allows brands to define online strategies and tactics. The nature of conversations makes them hard to analyze in terms of statistical probability. For example, we have selected a sample of brand names and channels that we feel is representative of the technology industry. For the next DBI, we may add or delete brands based upon feedback, and we welcome any feedback.

The DBI provides the most comprehensive (or first) online intelligence that many companies have seen about their brand. We hope that every quarter brands are keen to know how they have performed relative to the previous report – this is especially meaningful if they have started engaging online.

6. Q: Shouldn't Google be the most discussed brand, because it is a verb?

A: We worked with Brandtology to try and remove some of the instance where Google was used as a throw-away verb, and focused more on conversations in key areas of the business (e.g., Android, Chrome etc). Google still was the most mentioned brand in two markets, and the overall most discussed technology brand in the region.

7. Q: The data wasn't qualified by human sentiment. Can we still rely on the data?

A: Absolutely. The results of the DBI provide quantitative online intelligence about how much buzz the brands surveyed are creating online, and which channels conversations are taking place in. As a follow-up to the launch we can dive deeper into areas like; *who is the most talked about? Who did a good job engaging online?* The data has also been analyzed and assigned a machine sentiment rating. Machine-generated sentiment analysis is qualitative for all online research tools – that is why we have chosen not to focus on sentiment for this round of the DBI. Brandtology also offers sentiment checking by its social media analysts, but given we collected close posts with up to 8 million mentions of technology brands

surveyed, we didn't want to delay the results. Human sentiment analysis can be completed if there is a specific need, please talk to your local Edelman office to discuss this.

8. Q: Why do some of the different country numbers look similar to each other but their Internet population/size of the country differs?

A: Each country had a different set of brand names that were tracked (some local that were only specific to that country) and so the numbers would differ as such.

9. Q: How did you choose the brands and channels in the survey?

A: The brands and channels to be researched were selected by local Edelman technology industry experts in each of the eight markets. Edelman offices in each market provided English and translated brand names which were the basis of the research.

10. Q: I did a Google/Yahoo/Bing/Baidu/etc search on some of the brand names you reported but that number I get is way more than the numbers you reported. Why?

A: Because we sampled from a set of popular channels by identifying conversations based on both qualitative as well as quantitative research and so it would be less than a search engine that basically indexes many more sites. Our goal is to look for quality conversations and track those instead of just counting raw numbers of one-off mentions in many sites.

11. Q: I'm sure if I looked at big products like the iPhone I'd find more online conversations?

A: That is true. The overall size of technology conversations online is much bigger than the 800,000 mentions of brands we found across the region – as it includes product/service brands and issues relevant to that industry, where the brand name may not be used. Our primary goal with the DBI is to whet marketer's appetites about the opportunities with social media and have a conversation about how to engage and measure relevantly and effectively.

12. Q: From the charts and tables, I can see many brands and companies that operate across various industries. Am I able to get results based on specific industries only?

A: Yes, the key markets were tasked to identify brands operating in their immediate environments and these included companies that have direct impact on clients' businesses. Further, these brands were classified into the following broad categories: *Internet, Software, Consumer Electronics, Mobile and Telecommunications, Business and Consulting and IT and Technology*. So, it is definitely possible to retrieve industry-specific data.

13. Q: Does it cover walled platforms like Facebook or Twitter?

A: Yes, the DBI covers Twitter, or local micro-blogging variants, *if* the local Edelman office chose this as a channel to research. Brandtology also monitored local Facebook Groups that were specific to the brands surveyed.

14. Q: Why doesn't the study also include major products, or online campaigns?

A: In this first instance, we wanted to focus on conversations around brands. Most companies start by being keen to know how their organization fares before they broaden out the topics. Also, while we want the DBI to be useful, we also want technology brands to see the value in investing in more targeted research.

15. Q: How do you tackle non-English speaking platforms for comparative analysis?

A: The Brandtology crawlers are passive technology. Much like a search engine, they work based upon what they are sent to find (i.e., the keywords) and where they are sent (i.e., the channels). In both instances these two important elements (including English and local language variants) have been defined by local Edelman experts on the ground.

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