



How Tracksuit used Pulsar to understand how audiences perceive brands

Case Study – Tracksuit

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Challenge

Brand tracking software Tracksuit uses survey responses and data analysis to give clients insights into brand health and growth. Wanting to understand the wider picture of how audiences perceive brands, Tracksuit turned to Dr Sam Martin, a Consultant Senior Social Media Analyst operating in “the world in between academia and marketing,” to create new industry-leading methodologies and insights. These were presented in the second iteration of marketing & PR agency Small World’s 2023 Entertain or Die report. Sam enlisted Pulsar’s capabilities to combine Tracksuit survey responses with millions of posts online. With Pulsar, she could “analyse social media conversations at scale” and receive the widest signals possible.

The report examines entertainment-first brand building, and the brands that are operating in this new realm best. Sam’s research sought to examine what it means for brands to be entertaining with social media. Sam needed to create a new Entertainment Index methodology to help measure the top 100 brands in this space – and the first step was to “figure out what makes a brand entertaining.”

Typically, entertainment metrics focus on creative quality and engagement. But measuring success in the digital world meant Sam realised she needed “a new methodology so that we can really understand the components and the weighting factors behind brand entertainment.” Sam needed to examine real-time feedback, which wasn’t available with their survey data. “Audiences actively participate in content creation,” Sam Martin tells us, meaning that the exploration needed to acknowledge platform dynamics, community engagement and content evolution.

To create the new Entertainment Index and the Entertain or Die 2.0 report, Sam “thought about how dynamic Pulsar is. It’s the only tool, and I’ve used many, that allows you to think creatively about your data. You can zoom in and out on different aspects, and also use different modules together, which I have never seen before.”



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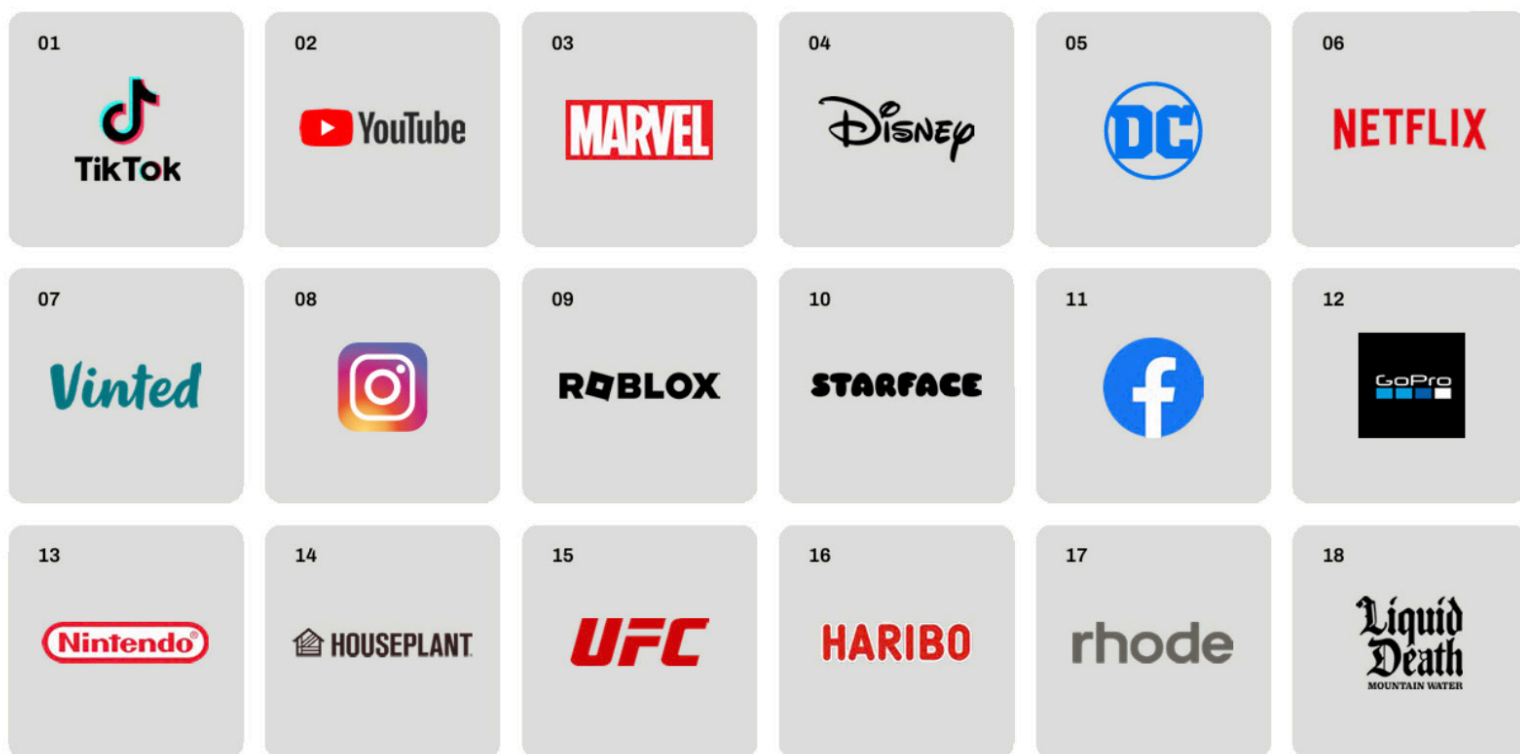


Dr Sam Martin
Consultant Senior
Social Media Analyst,
Tracksuit

Solution

Sam set about developing a new Entertainment Index that combines traditional metrics centred on creative quality with metrics compatible with digital success. The goal was to build a methodology that “addresses these complexities while maintaining compatibility with established measurement systems.”

There were various components of entertainment that Sam looked at: love, connection, social, humour, memorability, attention-attracting and personality. These seven attributes were selected by merging survey content and social media content. They were analysed with weighting towards primary factors (creativity, emotional impact, distinctive quality) as well as secondary



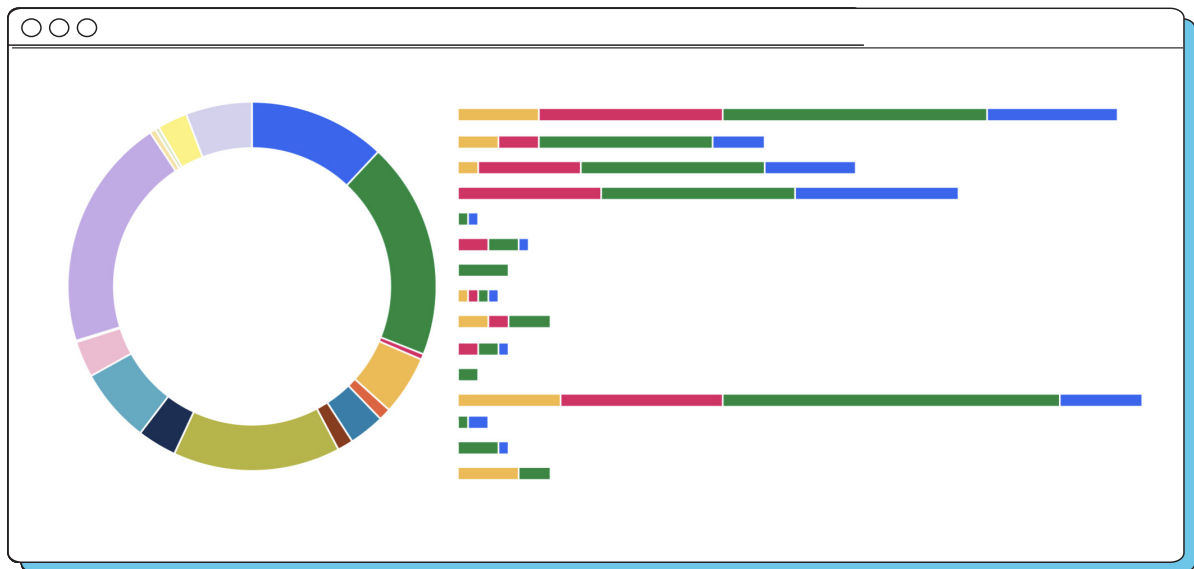
Entertain or Die 2.0 report, Tracksuit & Small World

factors (relatable content, positive sentiment).

Sam and her Pulsar Customer Success Representative worked together to create a Boolean search term that would allow them to capture the conversation of the target brands with this methodology. “We looked at not just the keywords but the emojis that co-related with these key components in the methodology.” They then worked together to create a dashboard on TRAC, Pulsar’s audience intelligence platform, that pulled together all the components by industry and key measurement factors for the Entertainment Index. From here, Sam could ask “what are the key words that will pull in the posts that talk about things being relatable, distinctive, creative, or emotional?” Sam also had a simultaneous search on CORE, Pulsar’s complete

channel analytics tool, pulling data that “looked at engagement efficiency, brand and audience growth and best-performing posts,” which she was able to blend with TRAC analysis to “understand the drivers behind what makes a brand entertaining.” When combined with first-party input data, Sam could determine the initial order of the top 100 brands using the metrics and methodology.

For the final puzzle piece to add context to the data, Sam also created a Legacy Weighting Factor methodology that penalized bigger brands such as TikTok, Disney and McDonald’s who hold huge levels of established brand power. “If you’re a brand that’s 75 years old, or you’ve got billions behind you, we’re going to kind of take your rating down proportionally so



that we can really level things out and see what's going on behind everything." Sam created the top brands as a straightforward calculation – Entertainment Index divided by Legacy Weight Factor.

Sam then turned their attention to up and coming brands that may not have the advertising muscle of household names, but are pushing boundaries in how they connect with audiences and build community. Using Pulsar CORE, Sam identified ten standout brands from the broader Entertainment Index. She analysed their audience growth rates, engagement efficiency, and overall performance through the lens of the Legacy Weighting Factor. This allowed for a fairer comparison by accounting for brand maturity. The resulting engagement efficiency scores offered a ranked view of how effectively each brand captured attention relative to their size, spotlighting the innovators driving disproportionate cultural impact.

At each stage of research, Sam had to continue open communications with Tracksuit and Small World. She tells us that this step was simple – "I just pulled the data out of CORE summary and give complete transparency, which was really good to have." Sam tells us it's easy to show stakeholders "this is where I'm getting the data from, this is what we're looking at, these are the keywords and hashtags, this is how we can break it down." The ease of showing real-time data that can be shared with stakeholders and clients is "really useful – you can use both CORE and TRAC creatively to get stakeholders the figures that they need."

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Results

Sam had 2.4 million data points in their Pulsar search, which they combined with 20,000 survey responses to create the Entertainment Index and the Entertain or Die 2.0 report.

Following their Pulsar research, the Tracksuit and Small World team were able to present the insights from this report at SXSW in March 2025. “It went really well – they had lots and lots of questions.” The team were able to effectively provide thought leadership at the famous Austin-based conference, and position themselves as an authority on this aspect of brand positioning.

The success of the research both internally and externally has since seen Sam expand her analysis to look at even more brands, and to create an always-on dataset that the team utilizes for a range of different activations and campaigns.

Sam’s methodology and the precision of the data that creates the Entertainment Index means that the research can easily be expanded using the same structure of TRAC and CORE searches and booleans Sam was using before, allowing for intuitive ways to develop further the findings from their report.



McCANN



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Pulsar is a leading audience and narrative intelligence platform helping organisations understand their audiences and create messages that matter to them

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