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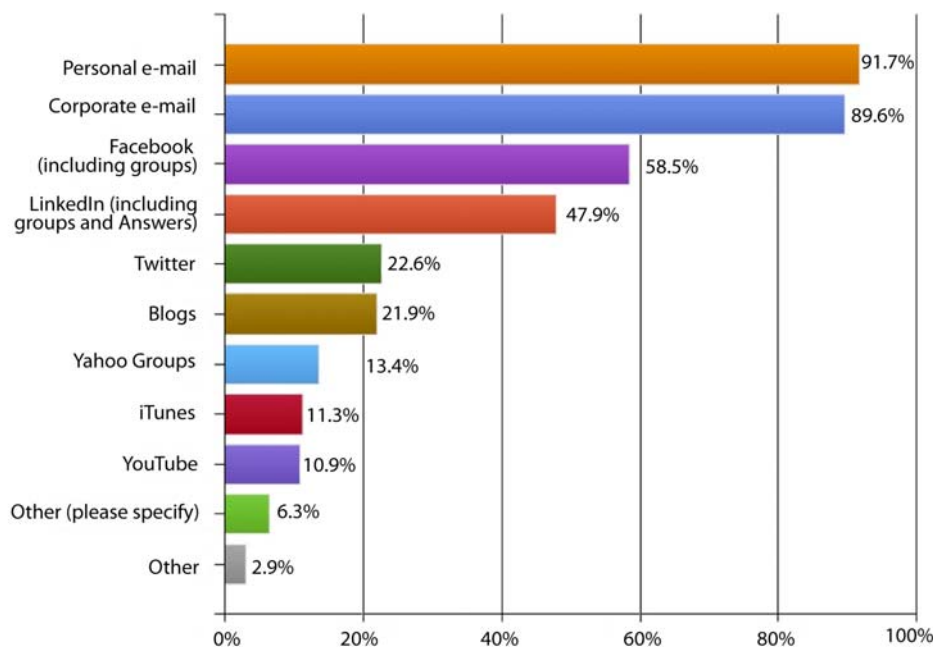
## How Social Media Has Changed the Workplace [Study]

By [Adrian Ott](#)

We all know how social media has impacted our personal lives. How has this impacted the way that people work? Has it made employees more or less productive? How do employees value social media relative to other time alternatives?

I had the opportunity to review an early copy of a two-hundred page study released today by Pierre Khawand, Founder and CEO of People-OnTheGo [1]. In this comprehensive study of more than 1000 business professionals, Pierre found that people manage multiple "inboxes" including social media.

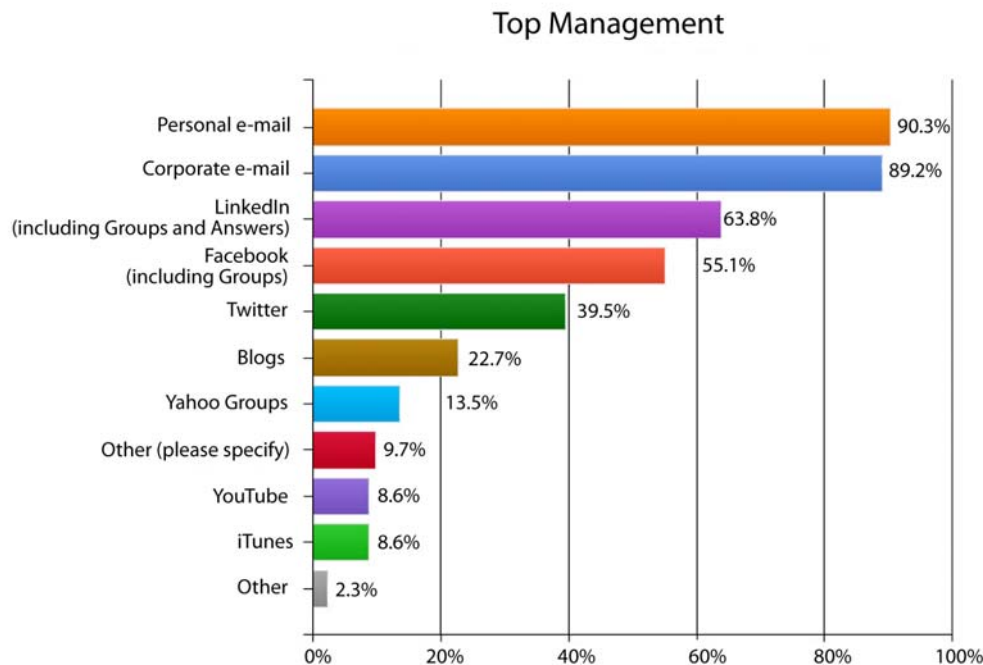
***Which of the following "inboxes" do you check regularly?  
All Responses***



Not surprisingly, the study found that social media is on the rise, especially among Gen Y, but as the chart on Top Management below indicates, social media is also regular part of the work day for

many senior executives. Senior management, marketing, and sales had a slightly different priority for social media than the population, specifically ranking LinkedIn higher in frequency than Facebook and Twitter (in that order). More than two-thirds (63.8%) of top management, and almost three-quarters of marketing (73.9%) and sales (74.2%) respondents check LinkedIn regularly, indicating that social media is an increasingly important and regular part of business networking for these groups.

***Which of the following "inboxes" do you check regularly?***



### **Social Media and Email Consume Half the Workday**

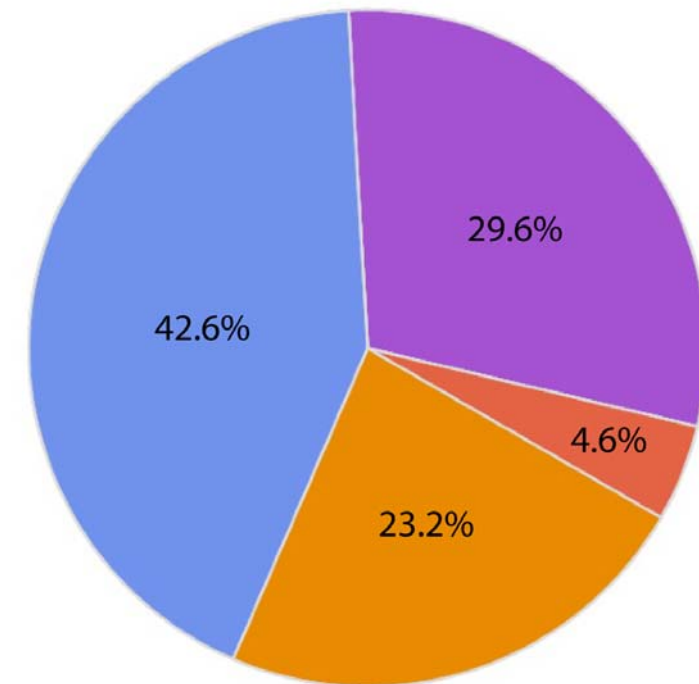
Employees estimate that they spend about 4 hours a day (half a workday) managing multiple "inboxes." More than one hour is spent on social media a day with Gen Y spending the most time (1.8 hours). More than 80% of Gen Y respondents check Facebook regularly making this the most used social media platform for this group. The time spent on social media however is spent more for personal reasons than work reasons, with only 6.8% of the participants indicating that they use social media solely for work purposes. The study suggests that social media on platforms such as Facebook have "shattered the divide between business and personal use" and often encourage such intermingling further exacerbating this issue.

### **Workplace Interruptions Pose a Threat to Productivity**

What is perhaps the most concerning issue raised by this study is that most participants check their "inboxes" too often, constantly interrupting their work. Researchers have consistently found that multitasking reduces productivity; tasks can take more than twice as long to complete and can lead to a dramatic increase in errors. Adding to this, my research has found that there are eight key

triggers [2] ("8Ps") that redirect time and attention and create time magnets. Peers and Power are triggers that can cause addictive behaviors that we see on social media platforms.

### How often do you interrupt your work to check your "inboxes"?



- Constantly as soon as new information shows up
- More often than I would like to
- From time to time but not excessively
- Rarely

### Social media is valuable to the workplace. New tools needed to manage.

Although some companies block social media, I believe that this is overkill. There are many benefits to social media that companies cannot ignore in areas such as customer relationships, collaboration and market research. For business-to-business providers, employees and executives are the customer making social media interaction a necessity.

One tool which I have found effective (and helped me focus to write my book), is [RescueTime.com](http://RescueTime.com) [3]. With RescueTime, I set personal goals such as spending no more than half hour a day on social media and no more than an hour a day on email. When I exceed those limits, it sends a pop-up window to remind me that I am spending too much time and need to refocus my efforts.

Although tools like RescueTime are a great start, this is not enough. The study highlights that

social media in the workplace is fragmented with employees using different tools leaving gaps in the ability to collaborate internally and externally. What's sorely needed are tools that help businesses to better manage social media and email and closely link social media efforts to business goals. I look forward to such tools emerging in the near future.

You can find the complete study by People-OnTheGo here: <http://http://www.people-onthego.com/surveyreport/> [4]



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*Library Journal* says Adrian Ott is, "revolutionizing marketing by adding the concept of time." She is author of the new book [The 24-Hour Customer: New Rules for Winning in a Time-Starved, Always-Connected Economy](#) [6] and CEO of [Exponential Edge® Inc](#) [7]. consulting. Follow Adrian on Twitter at [@ExponentialEdge](#) [8]

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### **Links:**

[1] <http://www.people-onthego.com>

[2] <http://www.marketingprofs.com/articles/2010/3953/the-8ps-of-buying-triggers>

[3] <http://www.rescuetime.com>

[4] <http://http://www.people-onthego.com/surveyreport/>

[5] <http://www.twitter.com/FastCoLeaders>

[6] [http://www.amazon.com/24-Hour-Customer-Winning-Time-Starved-Always-Connected/dp/0061798614/ref=sr\\_1\\_1?ie=UTF8&s=books&qid=1275022041&sr=1-1](http://www.amazon.com/24-Hour-Customer-Winning-Time-Starved-Always-Connected/dp/0061798614/ref=sr_1_1?ie=UTF8&s=books&qid=1275022041&sr=1-1)

[7] <http://www.exponentialedge.com>

[8] <http://twitter.com/exponentialedge>