

All FTSE 100
companies reviewed

1,002 posts analysed
across four platforms

2.6m engagements
recorded

A Social Divide in the City

Annual FTSE 100 social media
performance index

Ninth edition



Strategic Communications



Executive Summary

Welcome to the ninth edition of our Social Divide in the City report in which we share our analysis of results reporting on social media by FTSE 100 companies throughout 2020. In a turbulent year we found consistent growth and investment into financial results content from some of the world's largest companies. Our rankings have changed to reflect a new set of leaders, though the range of sectors has remained consistently broad. Counting over 1,000 full- and half-year results posts across the primary social media platforms we found that the patterns we identified in previous years have continued to evolve – particularly in relation to quality content and the increasing dominance of LinkedIn as a tool for reaching financial audiences.

Companies sought to tell the story of their results and strategies in ever more compelling ways, while also illustrating the ways in which the global pandemic was impacting on business. This resulted in 2.6m engagements for all results-related activity in 2020, a 33% increase year on year. As we reported on last year, audiences are frequently triggered to respond, with many increasingly focused on environmental, social and governance (ESG) aspects of a company's reporting and story.

The biggest shift in direction this year relates to the role that leaders are playing in communicating results-related messaging directly – and generally news and updates from their businesses overall. Leaders are increasingly at the front and centre of results content – we reference some of the CEOs using their own personal channels to deliver financial results content, alongside their company channels.

Together with the set pieces around leaders and strategy, results content is becoming more tailored and targeted. The increase in the use of semi-private content, unlisted YouTube results videos, geo-targeted posts on LinkedIn and dark social ads, for example, demonstrate that companies recognise that there is no one-size-fits-all approach. While still rare, we identified instances where FTSE 100 constituents didn't share financial results data on social media at all, focusing instead on the surrounding narrative. This 'softening' of results content continues to remind us that behind every financial data point there is a social media-worthy story of strategy, leadership – and a workforce delivering results, sometimes against the odds.

Research overview

FTI evaluated the social media content shared by every FTSE 100 constituent in relation to full- and half-year results in 2020. We reviewed the content that was published by official company channels on the four platforms we consider to be the most relevant to corporate and financial communication – Twitter, LinkedIn, YouTube and Instagram.

Results-related activity was measured using our long-standing metrics of Volume, Quality and Impact. Scores were given for each metric, which in turn generated an aggregate score.

More information on the methodology can be found on page 15.

Index ranking methodology



Volume

Number of results-related content: tweets, LinkedIn and Instagram posts, YouTube videos



Quality

Overall quality of results-related content, including consistency, visual appeal, user experience



Impact

Interactions with results-related content, including: retweets, shares, comments, reactions, video views

FTSE 100 Index Top 20

Changes at the top and a mixed sector picture

1	Glencore		11	Mondi	
= 2	Aviva		12	BP	
= 2	Lloyds Banking Group		13	AstraZeneca	
4	Anglo American		= 14	Barclays	
5	GlaxoSmithKline		= 14	SSE	
6	Legal & General Group		16	HSBC	
7	BHP Billiton		17	SEGRO	
8	Diageo		18	Hikma Pharmaceuticals	
9	British Land Company		19	Smurfit Kappa	
10	Royal Dutch Shell		20	BAE Systems	



Leading the Divide

The last year was marked by a new clear divide, in our view, between companies which have Social CEOs who support their financial results on social media and those who do not.

A recent FTI research study, *Leading from the Front: Successful Strategies for the Social CEO* analysed over 3,000 social media posts to find the best approach for becoming a successful Social CEO. As part of this research we identified that more FTSE 100 CEOs than ever before are supporting their companies' financial reporting through their own personal social media channels.

 **Bernard Looney**  • 3rd+
Chief executive officer, bp
10mo • 

[+ Follow](#) 

"We're not doing it because it's expected of us, we're doing it because we want to" – sharing my thoughts on how we aim to keep helping our people and communities, as we announce our first quarter results.



   1,856 • 73 comments

Leadership impact

Results content from CEOs analysed as part of our recent study had a significant impact on the overall reach and engagement of their companies' financial results, receiving an average of 541 engagements per post. On LinkedIn specifically, this figure was even higher, with results posts receiving an average of 675 engagements per post.

Not only was financial results content from the CEO invaluable for the company's communication, it also formed an important part of the content mix of some of the most successful Social CEOs. Our analysis found that four out of five of the most engaged with Social CEOs in the FTSE 100 (Bernard Looney (BP), Bill Winters (Standard Chartered), Steve Hare (Sage) and Ben van Beurden (Shell) shared content around financials results.

Bringing the energy

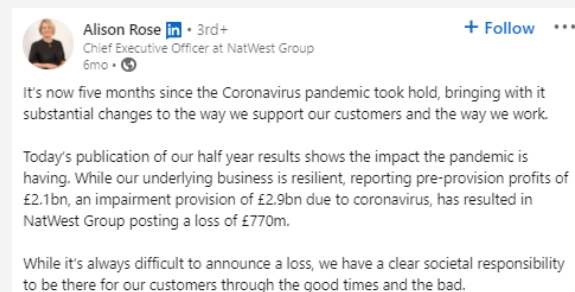
Bernard Looney and Ben van Beurden stole the show, in our analysis, with the highest levels of engagement for their financial results posts. Both of them shared authentic piece-to-camera videos talking through the results as well as their broader commitments to employees and communities. As video continues to play a key role in corporates' financial reporting, its impact is extended when leveraged by CEOs for their own social channels.

However this approach was a rarity with most CEOs simply sharing a link to their results landing page – a finding we expect to change in the future.



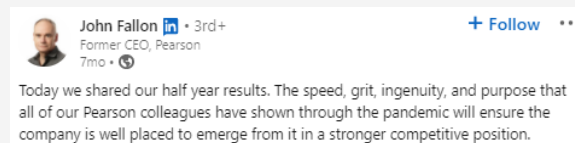
A personal note

Highlighting the hard work and dedication of employees that enabled the financial performance was a further common theme. By extending a personal thank you these CEOs demonstrated a key benefit of an active social media presence, in being able to reach and connect with, stakeholders directly.



COVID context

The top performing CEO results posts all highlighted the difficulties of Covid-19 both in terms of its impact on society, employees and the business. Utilising their personal channel enabled these CEOs to give more personable and authentic context to these challenges, which was well received by the audience.



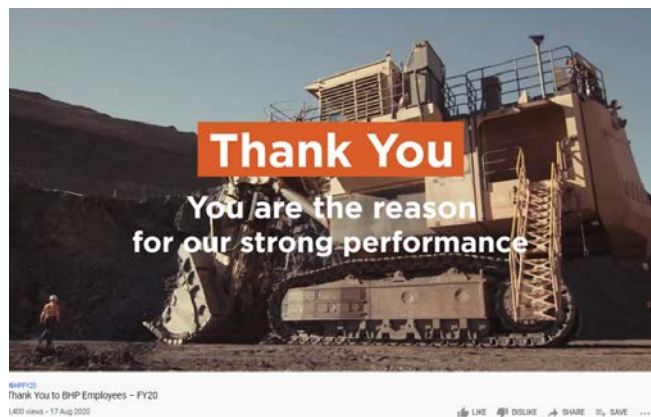
Highlights

The Covid-factor ►

As with leaders' content, results posts shared from corporate accounts prominently featured Covid-19. The pandemic was used to explain financial performance and to highlight the initiatives that companies undertook in 2020 to help the global battle against the pandemic. This contributed to broader 'softening' and diversification of results content.

'Softening' of results

Results content is no longer restricted to financial statements and data. In fact, a small number of FTSE 100 companies, including BP, didn't share any financial information on social media on results day, focusing on overarching business messages instead. Even though the approach above is still rare, most of the best performing companies 'softened' their results content, mixing financial information with broader messages around purpose, resilience, and long-term vision. In addition, some companies used this moment in their financial calendar to thank employees.



Native video sharing

In 2020, 27% of companies that utilised social media for financial results uploaded at least one results video directly to LinkedIn. For Twitter this figure was even higher, at 30%, a 21% increase in comparison to 2019. It's no surprise that companies are increasingly opting for native video sharing. Social media platforms prioritise native videos and make them more engaging and easier to view than linked YouTube content. In our view, YouTube still has a role to play in corporate digital communications – it's better placed to host longer-form content and has benefits for SEO – therefore this platform should still form part of the overall strategy.

Trend-watch

As we look forward to the tenth edition of our Social Divide report in 2021 there are a number of trends we are expecting to impact results reporting on social media over the next year.



Audience-led activity

In 2020, a growing number of FTSE 100 constituents waved goodbye to ‘one-size-fits-all’ social media content and adopted a more tailored and audience-centric approach to results online. During our research we identified, unlisted YouTube videos, geo-targeted posts, ephemeral, or temporary, content, as well as a growing number of targeted paid campaigns.

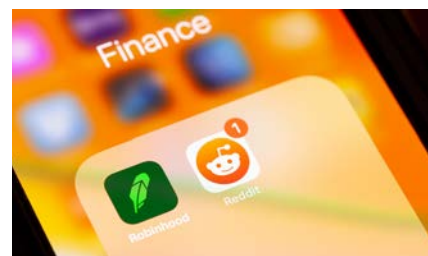
Enabled by improving platform functionality, new techniques and strategies are allowing companies to reach specific audience groups with tailored messages. We expect this trend to continue in 2021, particularly as we see more audience and social media fragmentation.



Robo-surveillance

We are increasingly interested in the role of AI, natural language processing and robo-surveillance in relation to how earnings calls and other financial calendar events are being monitored and assessed for nuance. Technology, already in use, will impact how corporates view and plan for earnings calls and broader capital markets activity, where every word of spoken or written language can be trigger a response.

In many ways anticipating these robo-elements means investing in good content, and rehearsing leaders – essentially nothing new – and in our view attempting to outsmart AI is futile. Of course, it will be critical to watch for developments and to understand more about who – or what – is listening.



Retail investors

The power of social media to amplify price movements has been in the spotlight with Reddit’s r/WallStreetBets forum and users of other social media platforms encouraging a new generation of retail investors to come forward.

With available cash, spare lockdown time and simplified access to trading platforms, this new tribe of private investor will create challenges for corporates who are considering the role that social media should play in new forms of investor relations. In particular, as bulletin boards and gossip exchanges ramp up interest, companies will need to remain abreast of these emerging trends and new threats to reputation.

Sector leaders

Financial Services

= 2	Lloyds Banking Group
= 14	Barclays
16	HSBC
29	London Stock Exchange Group
35	NatWest Group
= 38	Standard Life
46	3i Group
48	Schroders
58	Standard Chartered
62	M&G
65	Intermediate Capital Group
73	Hargreaves Lansdown
78	St James's Place

FMCG

8	Diageo
= 40	Unilever
44	British American Tobacco
55	Imperial Brands
70	RB

Insurance

= 2	Aviva
6	Legal & General Group
22	Prudential
23	RSA Insurance Group
34	Admiral Group
60	Phoenix Group Holdings

Mining

1	Glencore
4	Anglo American
7	BHP Billiton
33	Rio Tinto
56	Antofagasta

Pharmaceuticals and medical devices

5	GlaxoSmithKline
13	AstraZeneca
18	Hikma Pharmaceuticals
= 30	Smith & Nephew

Real Estate & Construction

9	British Land Company
17	SEGRO
25	Taylor Wimpey
53	Land Securities Group
74	Barratt Developments
76	Berkeley Group Holdings

Retail

26	Kingfisher
45	Sainsbury's
51	Next
59	Ocado
69	Morrisons (Wm) Supermarkets
= 71	Burberry Group
77	Tesco

TMT

24	Vodafone Group
42	Sage Group
43	WPP
49	BT Group
50	Aveva Group
57	Experian
75	Just Eat

Travel & Leisure

21	Flutter Entertainment
= 36	InterContinental Hotels Group
79	Entain

Utilities

= 14	SSE
27	National Grid
52	Penon Group
= 71	Severn Trent

Top performers by platform

Twitter

- 1 Glencore
- 2 Aviva
- 3 Lloyds Banking Group
- 4 Anglo American
- 5 BHP Billiton
- 6 GlaxoSmithKline
- 7 Diageo
- 8 British Land Company
- 9 Royal Dutch Shell
- 10 BAE Systems



YouTube

- 1 AstraZeneca
- 2 BHP Billiton
- 3 Aviva
- 4 Anglo American
- 5 Coca Cola HBC AG
- 6 SEGRO
- 7 Diageo
- 8 Admiral Group
- 9 RSA Insurance Group
- 10 GlaxoSmithKline



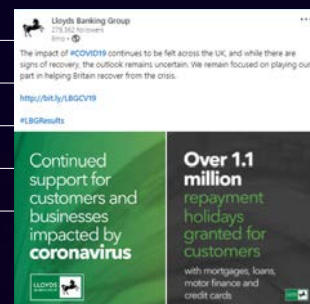
Instagram

- 1 Glencore
- 2 Diageo
- 3 Aviva
- 4 Anglo American
- 5 AstraZeneca
- 6 Admiral Group
- 7 BP
- 8 Land Securities Group
- = 9 RELX
- = 9 WPP

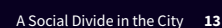


LinkedIn

- 1 Lloyds Banking Group
- 2 Anglo American
- 3 Legal & General Group
- 4 Aviva
- 5 Glencore
- = 6 BHP Billiton
- = 6 GlaxoSmithKline
- 8 Mondi
- 9 British Land Company
- 10 Royal Dutch Shell



LinkedIn ▶





Complete rankings

1	Glencore
= 2	Aviva
= 2	Lloyds Banking Group
4	Anglo American
5	GlaxoSmithKline
6	Legal & General Group
7	BHP Billiton
8	Diageo
9	British Land Company
10	Royal Dutch Shell
11	Mondi
12	BP
13	AstraZeneca
= 14	Barclays
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18	Hikma Pharmaceuticals
19	Smurfit Kappa
20	BAE Systems
21	Flutter Entertainment
22	Prudential
23	RSA Insurance Group
24	Vodafone Group
25	Taylor Wimpey
26	Kingfisher
27	National Grid
28	Johnson Matthey
29	London Stock Exchange Group

= 30	Smith & Nephew
= 30	Smiths Group
32	Coca Cola HBC AG
33	Rio Tinto
34	Admiral Group
35	NatWest Group
= 36	Halma
= 36	InterContinental Hotels Group
= 38	Informa
= 38	Standard Life
= 40	Pearson
= 40	Unilever
42	Sage Group
43	WPP
44	British American Tobacco
45	Sainsbury's
46	3i Group
47	Homeserve
48	Schroders
49	BT Group
50	Aveva Group
51	Next
52	Pennon Group
53	Land Securities Group
54	RELX
55	Imperial Brands
56	Antofagasta
57	Experian
58	Standard Chartered

59	Ocado
60	Phoenix Group Holdings
61	Compass Group
62	M&G
63	Bunzl
64	Ferguson
65	Intermediate Capital Group
66	Spirax-Sarco Engineering
67	Rolls-Royce Holdings
68	CRODA INTL
69	Morrisons (Wm) Supermarkets
70	RB
= 71	Burberry Group
= 71	Severn Trent
73	Hargreaves Lansdown
74	Barratt Developments
75	Just Eat
76	Berkeley Group Holdings
77	Tesco
78	St James's Place
79	Entain

Methodology

FTI Consulting completed the research between June 2020 and January 2021. The team analysed the channels and feeds of all companies that were in the FTSE 100 in June 2020, on four social media platforms most relevant to corporate communications and financial results reporting:



1. Twitter



2. LinkedIn



3. YouTube



4. Instagram

We recognise that FTSE 100 companies' digital performance is influenced by spikes in corporate activity as well as broader global agenda, and that no month is equally significant for all 100 companies. Therefore we analysed corporate feeds at a universally critical time – during the full and half year results announcements. FTI's analysis focused on three components of results-related social media content published by FTSE 100 companies seven days before, on the day, and seven days after their results announcements:



Volume The number of tweets, LinkedIn posts, YouTube videos and Instagram posts



Quality Overall quality of all results-related content



Impact The number of retweets, likes, shares, comments and other interactions with the recorded tweets and posts.

Every company was attributed three scores, one for each of the components above. Each of the three scores were then ranked, to provide a score between 100-1 for each organisation. These scores were then indexed which in

turn generated an aggregate score. The feeds of official corporate Twitter, LinkedIn, YouTube and Instagram accounts were analysed for this research. If a company did not have a corporate account, general company accounts were identified and analysed.

The research is based solely on publicly available online information; no interviews were conducted for this report. As outlined in the report, in 2020, we saw an increasing number of results posts published from business leaders' accounts, as well as results content that was targeted (e.g. not available to users outside of certain geographies), semi-private (e.g. dark paid ads), or ephemeral (e.g. Stories). These types of content were noted in our research and analysis, however this type of content was not included in our ranking methodology.



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FTI's London-based Digital and insights practice partners with FTSE 100 and other large corporate brands to design effective online reputation management strategies, driven by data and analytics and covering issues and crisis communications, influencer identification and outreach, content and channel strategy, paid and creative campaigning. We work with clients at all stages of digital maturity, from early-stage setup, requiring governance, social media architecture and content planning, to expert in-house digital teams requiring contingency or specialist support.



Strategic Communications



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