

25 TOOLS TO SPY ON YOUR COMPETITORS



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Spying on the competition is something that we all do, from sports teams to small businesses and huge corporations. It's important to keep up to date on your competitor's strategy, the changes they are making to their business model and their products, how they promote themselves and see what kind of website traffic they are getting. In this post, we'll be looking into the **25 best tools for spying on your competitors** so that you're always on top of any new developments and you're always aware of what their strategy is.

WHY SPY?

To put it simply, you need to know your opponent in order to be able to beat them. It's also a way of getting ideas and inspiration for how to improve your business and the way you promote it. Here are some of the ways spying on the competition can help you:

- Find out what the competition is doing best and what they're failing at – how can you do it even better than them? What can you learn from their mistakes?
- What type of content are they writing and sharing? Is it better than yours, or getting more engagement on the blog and social media than you do? What can you learn from the competition about the content you provide?
- How do they promote their business? What marketing strategies are they employing – and are they working for them?
- What is their social media activity like? How much engagement do they get? If they are getting more followers and engagement than you do – why is that, and how can you remedy the situation?

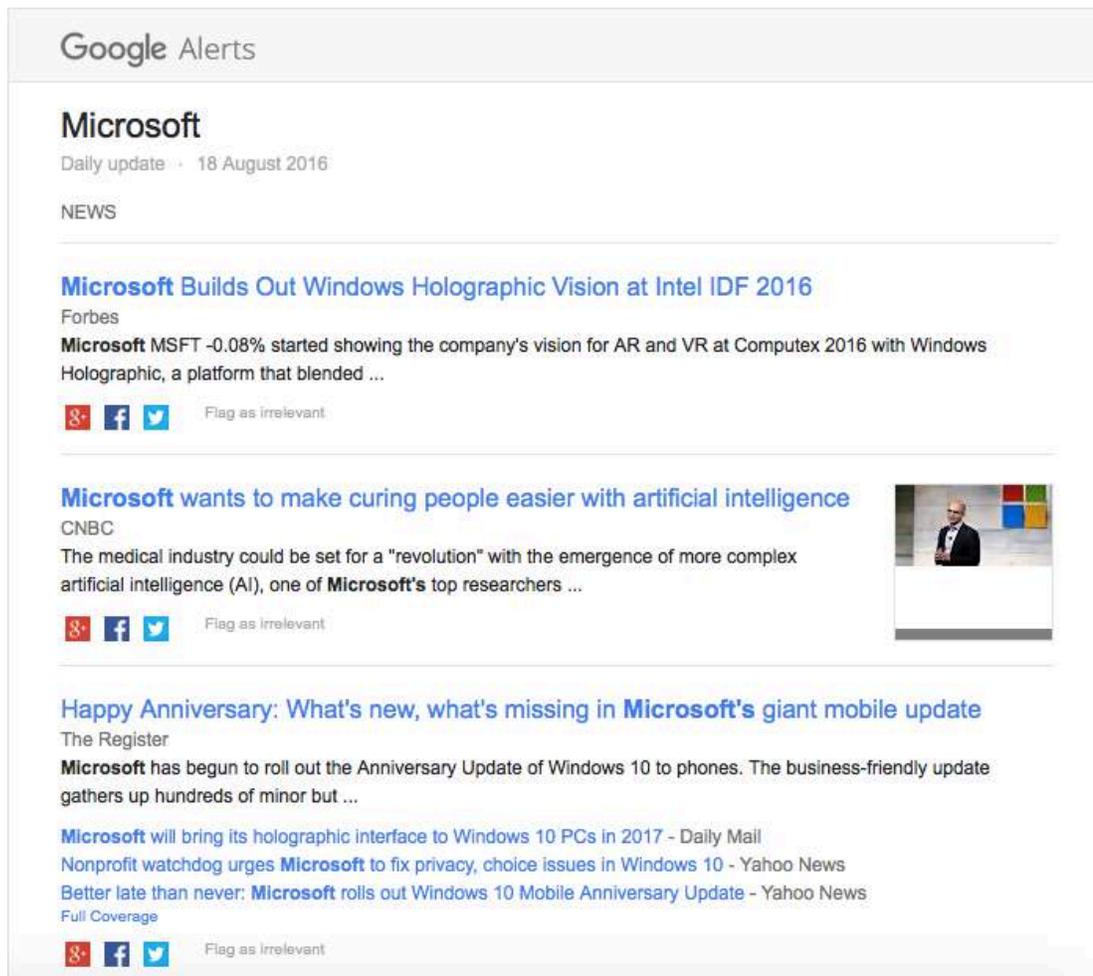


HOW TO SPY

MONITOR ANY MENTIONS OF THE BRAND

1. GOOGLE ALERTS

In order to keep up with every move the competition is making and any mention of their name online, the easiest way is to set up a Google Alert.

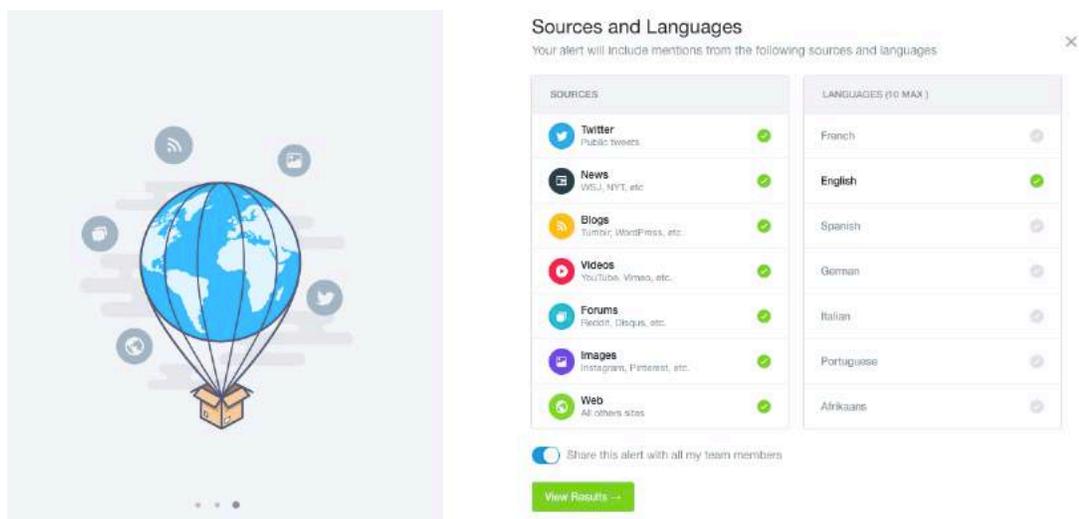


It's probably the easiest, cheapest and fastest way to make sure you're up to date on every mention of your competitor's brand.

2. MENTION

Mention is a really great tool for monitoring any mentions of yourself, but it can also easily be used to monitor the competition, as well as any other topic or keyword you can think of.

Mention monitors in real time, in over 40 different languages and check millions of sources, not just the press or blogs, but also social media, videos, forums and images.

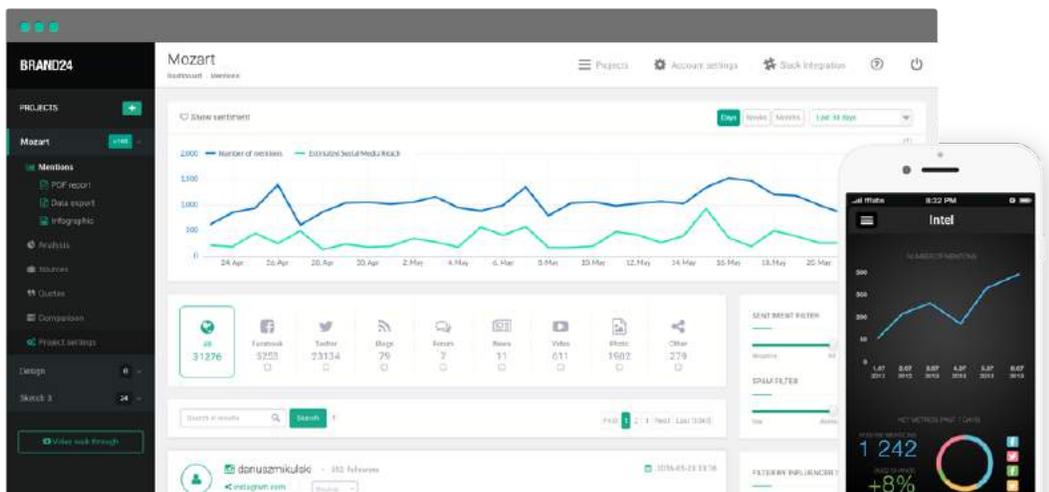


All of the mentions are updated in real time, and you will also be able to see detailed statistics, such as mention locations, the top Twitter, Instagram and web influencers talking about the brand, reach, sentiment, and more.

Top Twitter Influencers	Show more	Top Web Influencers	Show more
 Berci Meskó, MD, PhD @Berci	68/100	 cnet.com http://cnet.com	84/100
 FOX19 @FOX19	66/100	 engadget.com https://engadget.com	83/100
 Knighty @LeonKnight_	66/100	 reuters.com http://reuters.com	83/100
 Zwë @ZwebackHD	64/100	 independent.co.uk http://independent.co.uk	78/100
 Bill McCann @Bill_McCann	62/100	 msn.com http://msn.com	74/100
 HealthBeautyListings @youcanbhealthy	62/100	 thenextweb.com http://thenextweb.com	70/100

Another cool feature is that you can create multiple alerts that you can then compare them – very useful tool to highlight exactly what the differences are between you and your competitors, or perhaps even between competitors.

3. BRAND24



Brand24 is a tool designed to help you track any mentions of your brand online, in real time. That said, you can also use it to track mentions of your competitor brands so that you can find out who is mentioning them online, what they're saying, what social influencers are talking about them and what the sentiment behind these mentions is.

You can also use it to compare any social mentions you receive against your competitors and search for any keywords, topics or trends on the social web.

KEEP AN EYE ON THE COMPETITION'S SEARCH RANKING

Are your competitors ranking higher in search engines than you do? What are they doing differently than you? What can you learn from them in order to improve your own search engine ranking? There are lots of different tools that you can use in order to find out what your competitor's SEO strategy is, what kinds of links they are getting, what keywords they're ranking for on Google and much more.

MONITOR THEIR BACKLINKS

4. LINK ALERTS

Link Alerts from Link Research Tools are, as they put it, "like Google Alerts – but for links". You can use it to monitor your own links and backlink history, but for the purpose of this article, the focus is on their competitive backlink analysis feature.

Once you've set up the alert, you're going to get a full list of what backlinks they're getting as they receive them. Their LRT Power Trust features will let you know how valuable each link is, so you can easily decide if it's worth pursuing as well or not – which you can do directly from within the app.

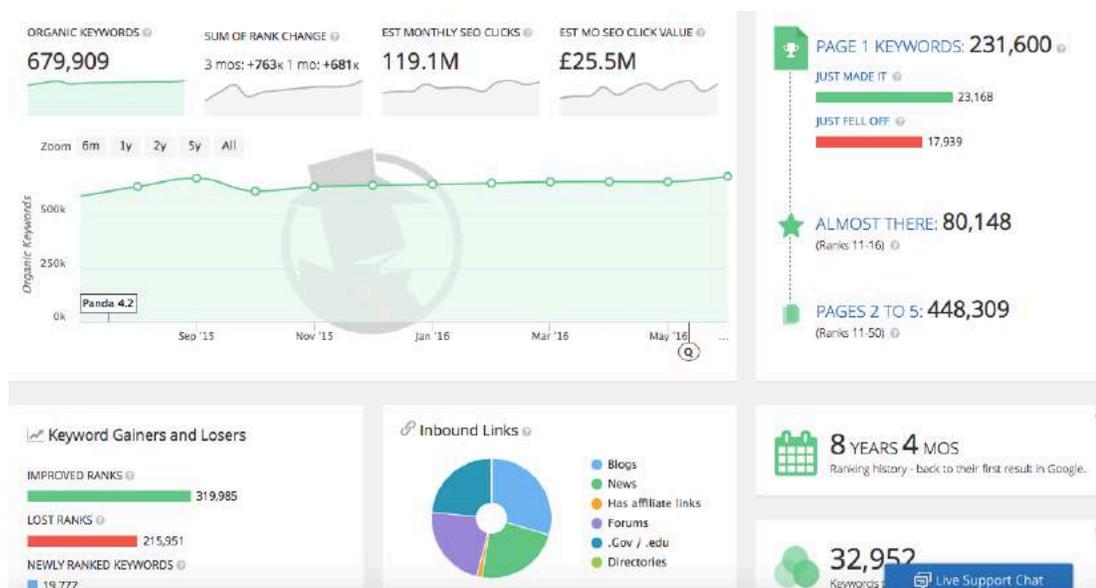
5. MONITOR BACKLINKS

Monitor Backlinks is a great tool for monitoring your own backlinks, as well as your competitions.

This useful tool will monitor your competitors' backlinks and alert you whenever they get a new link that has good SEO value. It also has a keyword rank checker that allows you to monitor your keywords and then compare your rankings with your competitors.

With this information, you can create a better strategy for your website and get better backlinks to help you boost your search engine ranking – and hopefully help you beat the competition.

Go to SEO Research and enter your competitor's website URL and you'll get a sneak peak into their SEO strategy, which is very useful as you will be able to learn from their mistakes, as well as from what they do well.



8. MOZBAR

MozBar is a really cool all-in-one SEO toolbar that you can add to your Chrome browser and get instant SEO metrics for any page you might be viewing. You will be able to see and compare things like link metrics by type of link, see social shares for each page, discover any keywords used and much more – when you're finished, you can easily export your findings to a CSV file for further analysis.

9. SEMRUSH

With SEMRush, you can easily search for any domain, keyword or URL and perform detailed competitive research. You will be able to see what your competitors are up to, what their strategies in display advertising and organic and paid search are, what kinds of links they are getting and more. You can also use the data provided to compare domains between them. Overall, SEMRush is a really useful tool that will help you get better insights into the competition.

10. ISPIONAGE

ISpionage allows you to perform competitive research so that you can improve your own strategy. You can use it to find out what organic and paid keywords your competitors are using and how much they are spending every month on AdWords. You can even find out which ads bring in the most traffic and who your top PPC competitors are, and you can perform comparisons to see whose strategy is working best.

MONITOR YOUR COMPETITORS' CONTENT

Monitoring your competitors' content can help you create better content yourself. There are several things that you should take into account when researching and analysing your competitors' content:

- What types of content do they publish: written blog posts, podcasts, videos, infographics, etc., and which one performs best?
- How often are they posting new content on their website
- How long/detailed are their pieces of content
- What type of engagement is their content getting: comments per post, shares on social media, likes, etc.

11. BUZZSUMO

The screenshot displays the Buzzsumo Pro interface. At the top, there are navigation tabs for 'Content Research', 'Influencers', and 'Content Alerts'. Below this, a search bar contains the text 'big data'. To the right of the search bar are buttons for 'Search!', 'Export', and '+ Create Alert'. Below the search bar, there are filters for 'Filter by Date' (24 Hours, Past Week, Past Month, Past 6 Months, Past Year), 'Language' (E.g. French, Español), 'Country (TLD)' (E.g. Germany, .de), and 'Filter domains' (show). On the left, there are checkboxes for 'Content Type' (Article, Infographics, Guest Posts, Giveaways, Interviews, Videos). The main content area shows search results for 'big data'. The first result is 'Data Is the Next Big Thing in Content Marketing' by Alexandra Samuel, dated Sep 14, 2015. It has 1.5k Facebook shares, 2.3k LinkedIn shares, 2.8k Twitter shares, 8 Pinterest shares, 113 Google+ shares, and a total of 6.6k shares. The second result is 'Mobile voice and data global traffic chart' by Dan Frommer, dated Sep 24, 2015. It has 933 Facebook shares, 396 LinkedIn shares, 2.5k Twitter shares, 0 Pinterest shares, 26 Google+ shares, and a total of 3.9k shares. The interface also shows 'View Backlinks' and 'Share' buttons for each result.

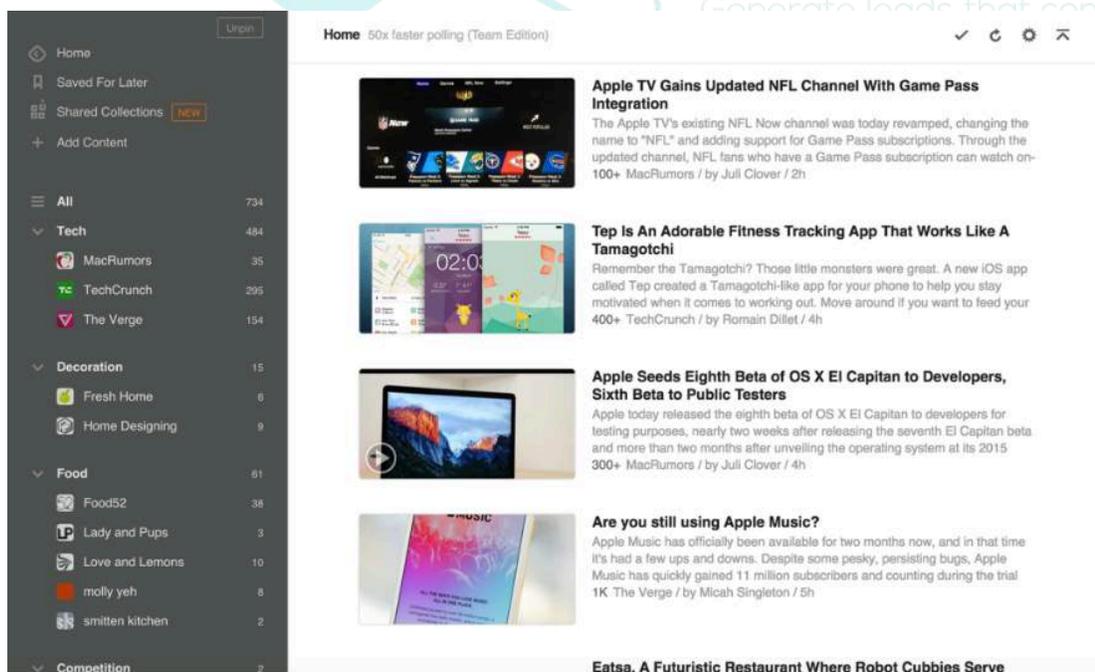
Monitoring the content that your competitors are creating can help you build a better content marketing strategy and provide better, more relevant content for your website visitors.

With Buzzsumo, you can research the best content being shared in any niche. You can find out what the best performing content is, what gets the most shares on social media, find out what backlinks they have and much more. You can also filter your searches to research the best content by time frame, by content type (regular blog post, video, infographics, guest blog posts, etc.) and by language and country.

Although this tool is primarily used for discovering the best content published in any given niche as well as the influencers and authors behind this content, it can also help you monitor your competitors' content so that you have all the necessary information to create better, more relevant content for your audience.

12. FEEDLY

Feedly is primarily an RSS reader and content curator, but you can just as easily use it for monitoring your competitors' content.



Set up a folder for all of your competitors and then add their blogs and YouTube channels to get their feed directly in the app. This way, you can see what new content they're publishing, all in

the same place. You can also plug in any Google Alerts that you've set up so that you can monitor any mentions of your competitor's brands within the same app.

MONITOR YOUR COMPETITOR'S SOCIAL MEDIA ACTIVITY

By monitoring your competition's social media activity, you will get to know what competitions, ads and other campaigns they are holding, as well as how they conduct themselves, how much they engage and how they do it.

You can do some social media monitoring directly from most social media management dashboards, by setting up monitoring for mentions of your competitor's username. You can also actively check their accounts to see what types of updates they post and the engagement that results – are they getting more engagement than you do? If so, why is that happening, and what can you learn from your competitor in order to post better, more compelling and engaging updates on your social accounts?

There are several things that you should be tracking when it comes to your competitors' social media activity, such as:

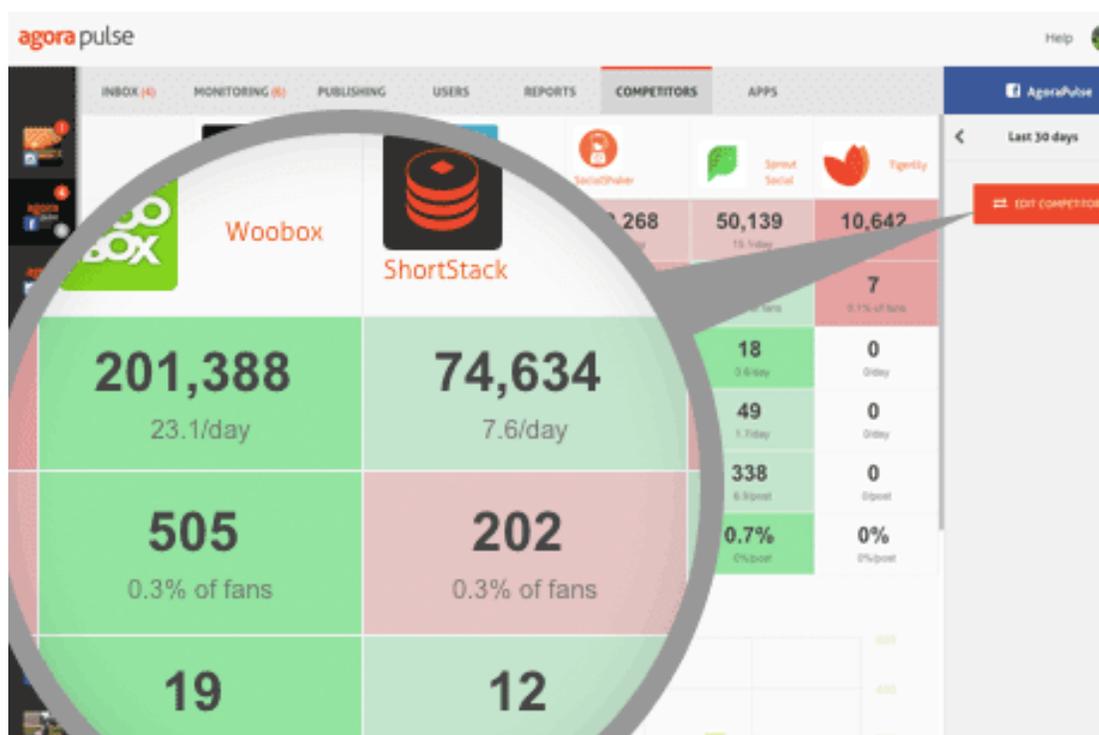
- Which platforms they are on
- How much engagement they're getting from their followers
- What types of updates they're posting
- How often they are posting new updates
- How long it takes to respond to mentions, questions, etc.
- What types of campaigns they're setting up on social media and the response they're getting
- Which hashtags they are using

To get more detailed analytics of your competitors, though, it's best to use a specialised tool. Here are some of the best on the market:

13. AGORAPULSE

Agorapulse may be primarily a social media management tool, but they also provide awesome analytics that allows you to compare your brand to the competition so that you can always be one step ahead of them.

Once you've set up your accounts with Agorapulse, go to the "Competitors" tab on your dashboard to see how you're faring against your competitors:



14. SIMPLY MEASURED

Simply Measured is a social media analytics tool that has some pretty cool competitor reports.

For Facebook Pages, try their free Facebook Competitive Analysis Report to get an in-depth look at their Facebook Page activity and engagement. You can also compare up to 10 different Fan Pages, which is pretty great if you want to see what how your competitors stack against each other, as well as how you stack against the competition.

Competitive Leaderboard	All Account Avg.	Lowest Account	Leading Account	How does the leader compare?
Engagement	117k <small>818k total engagement</small>	5,532 <small>Costa Cruises</small>	348k <small>Princess Cruises</small>	Leader posts more often than average. Content is mostly photos.
Page Fans	551k <small>3.9M total fans</small>	25k <small>Costa Cruises</small>	1.1M <small>Princess Cruises</small>	Leader has 173k (19%) more fans than the next best brand Disney Cruise Line.
People Talking About This (PTAT)	18k <small>3.1% PTAT as % of fans</small>	890 <small>Costa Cruises</small>	49k <small>Princess Cruises</small>	Leader has a 39% share of PTAT compared to a 19% share for the second best brand Norwegian Cruise Line.
Brand Posts	42 <small>294 total posts</small>	8 <small>Seabourn</small>	87 <small>Norwegian Cruise Line</small>	Leader sends about 6 posts per day and gets an average of 2,163 interactions per post.

For Twitter, try the Twitter Customer Service Analysis for detailed information on how they interact with their customers, how long it takes to respond, the level of conversation and more:

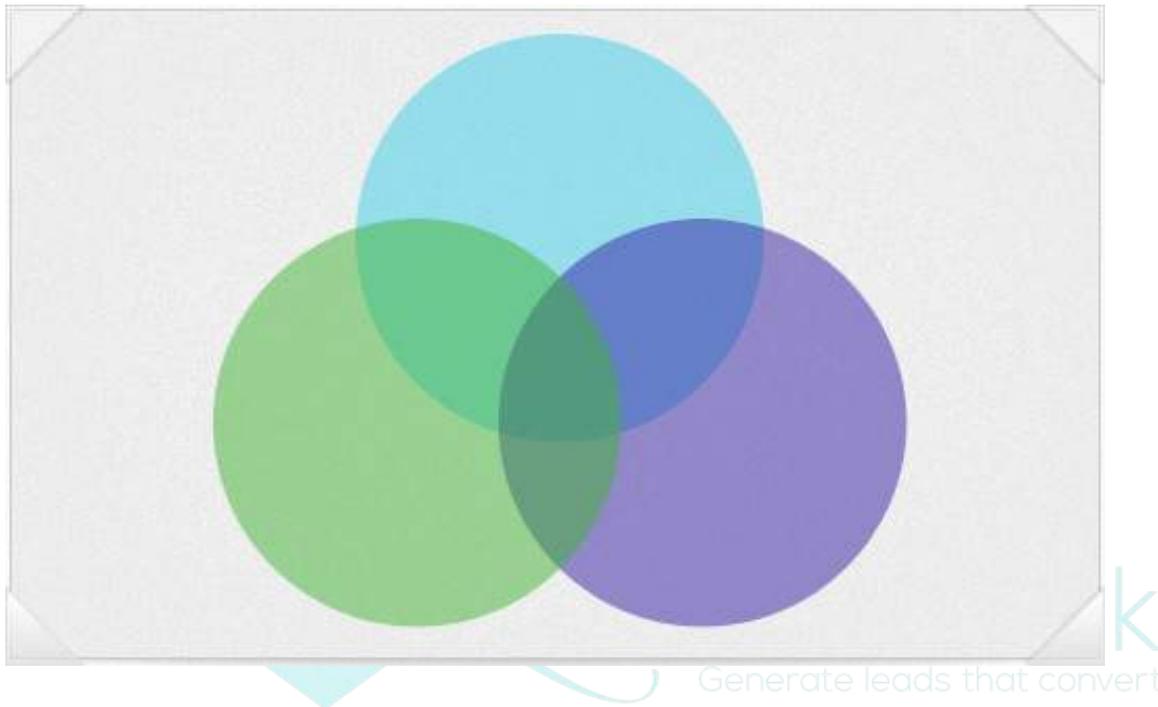


Another useful report is the Twitter followers one. Knowing about who their audience is can be very beneficial, and it's also good to know if they have any influencers following them:

Your Most Influential Followers							
Top Influencers Sorted By: Followers							
Username	Followers	Following	Followers-to-Following	Tweets	Listed	Klout Score	Topics
KenneyMyers	1,160,045	9,087	127.7	2,483	36	66.0	
colortheory	980,374	583,970	1.7	15,431	1,834	73.4	music, reverbnation, los angeles, engineering, amazon
Variety	392,807	88,082	4.5	54,108	8,181	75.8	entertainment, media, films, movies, celebrities
BLSportsNetwork	385,983	15,733	24.5	2,444	10	51.2	
gula_Publicidade	269,639	84,510	3.2	16,235	31	40.1	money, money
lDeepuDJ	261,583	106,162	2.5	9,064	4,546	69.2	blogging, social networks, marketing, writing, social media
KKentGroup	196,356	1,179	166.5	1,561	6	42.7	

15. FOLLOWERWONK

With Followerwonk, you can analyse your Twitter followers more in-depth, discover social influencers from your industry, search for Twitter followers and more. But the main feature for this article is that you can use it to compare your followers with your competitors'.



Use it to explore your competition's followers and to make comparisons between your own followers and theirs and see how your audiences overlap.

16. QUINTLY

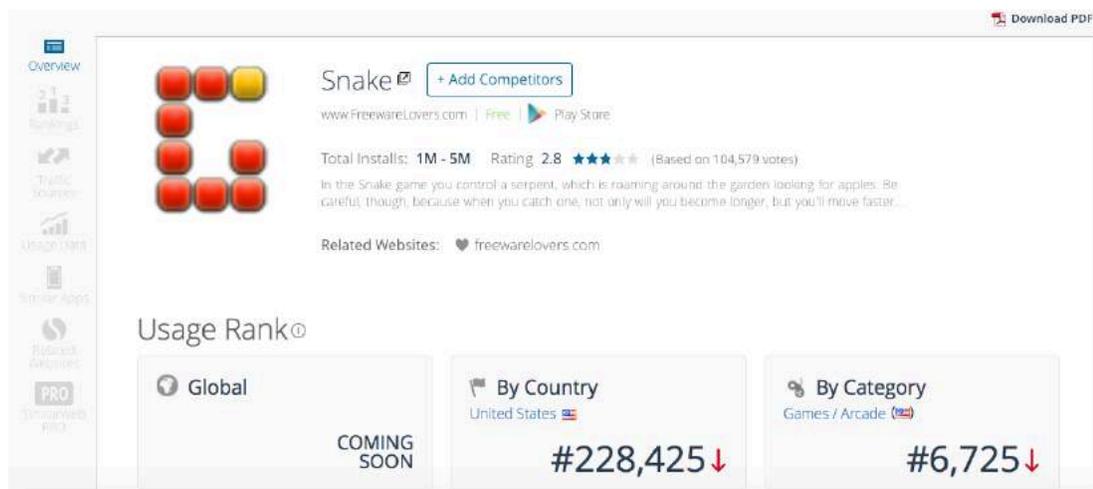
Quintly is a social media analytics tool for Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, Google+, Instagram, LinkedIn and blogs, all in one central dashboard.

The best part about Quintly is that it allows you to easily benchmark your social media analytics and performance against those of your competitors, as well as best-practice examples. With Quintly's help, you will be able to more easily create a strong, powerful social media strategy that will make you stand out amongst your competitors.

MONITOR THEIR RANKING AND TRAFFIC

Let's face it, what we all really want to know is how much traffic our competitors are getting. Luckily, there are a few tools that will help you do just that.

17. SIMILARWEB



With SimilarWeb you can search for any website or app to see what traffic/installs they are getting, as well as ranking by country and category, and much more. And that's just the free version – with Pro, you'll have access to your competitors' detailed traffic statistics.

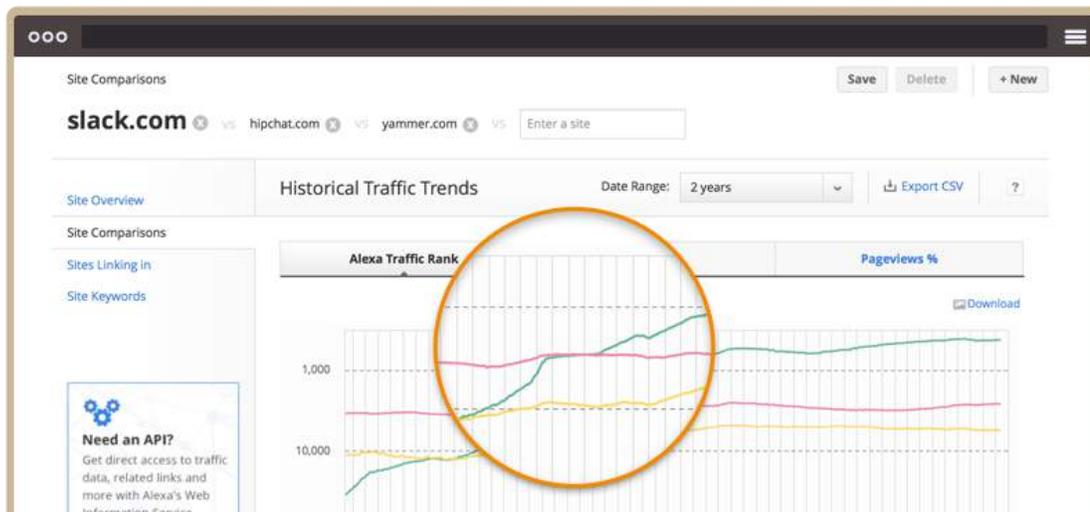
18. TRAFFIC ESTIMATE

You can use Traffic Estimate to perform searches for any website and see traffic estimations and other analytics, such as their Alexa Rank.

19. STATSSHOW

StatsShow is a free tool that you can use to search for any website and get interesting stats such as the global rank, traffic, unique page views and even an estimated value of the website.

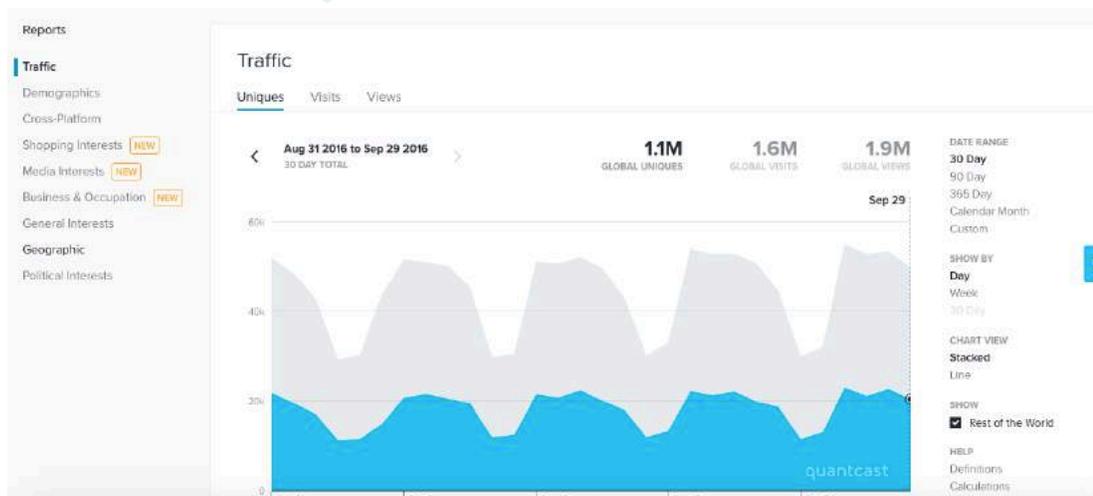
20. ALEXA



Alexa's competitive intelligence tools allow you to perform a more in-depth research. For example, you can see what kind of traffic your competitors are getting, what their traffic sources are and how many monthly unique visitors they have. You can also get demographic, reputation and engagement metrics and create site comparisons.

21. QUANTCAST

Lilach Bullock
Generate leads that convert



Quantcast lets you search for any website to see what their rank is and what kind of traffic they're getting. You can also explore traffic demographics, examine cross-platform traffic and even see what interests visitors have, such as shopping and media, and see what occupations they have and even what their political interests are.

OTHER USEFUL TOOLS

22. BRANDWATCH

BrandWatch is a very powerful monitoring tool, used in particular for getting insights into consumer opinion on any given topic. The tools monitor the web – social media, forums, blogs, videos and images and much more – to track any mentions of your selected keywords and find out what the sentiments behind them are, what customers have to say and what trends are popping up.

That said, you can also use BrandWatch to track more than just your own brand, but also the competition. With this powerful tool, you will be able to find out what customers think of the competition, what the sentiment surrounding them is, demographics data and much, much more.

23. RIVALIQ

RivalIQ is a really cool tool as it allows you to get insight into social media, SEO keywords and website content, all with one tool.

You will be able to see a detailed analysis of your social media activity and how it compares to your competitors, which is great for figuring out how you can improve your social media strategy and learn from the competition.

Activity & Engagement ⓘ

Export ▾

YOUR POSTS IN PERIOD ⓘ

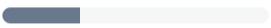
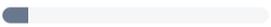
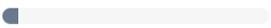
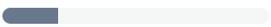
40

Landscape Avg: 43.3

YOUR ENG. RATE / POST ⓘ

0.24%

Landscape Avg: 0.07%

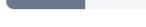
Company	Posts	Engagement Rate / Post
1. Tesla Motors	40	 0.24%
2. Audi USA	12	 0.10%
3. Bentley Motors	29	 0.03%
4. BMW	71	 0.02%
5. Cadillac	26	 0.07%

Another cool feature is their hashtag analysis, as it tells you what hashtags your competitors are using and which ones get the most engagement:

Hashtags ⓘ

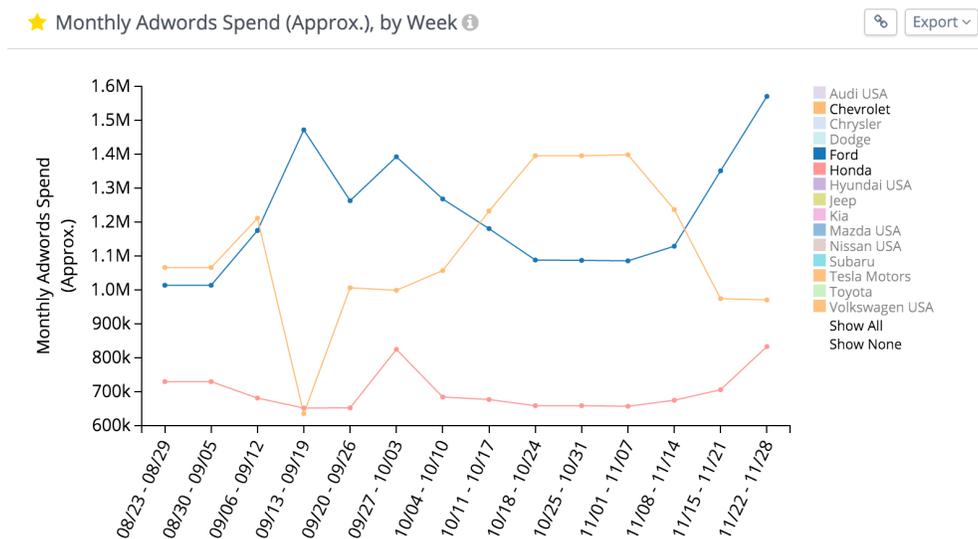
Export ▾

Of the **8** most broadly used hashtags, **#gvamotorshow** generates the most engagement per post. You used **2** of these **8** hashtags, but you didn't use **#gvamotorshow**.

Hashtag		Companies Using	Engagement Rate / Post
#TBT	Show Posts	13	 0.08%
#GIFparty	Show Posts	8	 0.04%
#LeapDay	Show Posts	7	 0.04%
#GIMS	Show Posts	7	 0.07%
#CAS16	Show Posts	5	 0.05%

RivallQ also provides reports on various social media channels, such as Twitter, Facebook, Google+, YouTube and Instagram, as well as a cross-channel report.

Their SEO competitive analysis is also very strong, with meta description comparisons, keyword comparisons and Adwords spending comparisons:



24. COMPETE

Compete is another powerful monitoring tool, as well as a tool for discovering business opportunities and the best marketing strategies in your industry and for analysis consumer behaviour.

25. WHAT RUNS WHERE

The best way to beat the competition is to stay ahead of them and always know what they're up to. With What Runs Where, you can now track your competitor's ad strategy on display, mobile and native. Another cool thing is that you can explore historical data as well, so that you can see which strategies worked and which didn't.

CONCLUSION

Monitoring your competition is essential – most likely, your competitor is doing the same with you right now, not just to keep an eye on your activity and plans, but also to learn from your mistakes and success stories. Are you monitoring your competition? Which tools are you using? Which stats do you think are the most important to watch for?



About Lilach Bullock

Highly regarded on the world speaker circuit, [Lilach Bullock](#) has graced Forbes and Number 10 Downing Street with her presence! In a nutshell, she's a hugely connected and highly influential serial entrepreneur – the embodiment of Digital Intelligence.



Listed in Forbes as one of the top 20 women social media power influencers and likewise as one of the top social media power influencers, she is one of the most dynamic personalities in the social media market and was crowned the Social Influencer of Europe by Oracle. A recipient for a Global Women Champions Award (by the Global Connections for Women Foundation, GC4W) for her outstanding contribution and leadership in business.

After launching her first business within three years of becoming a mother, her financial success was recognised by being a finalist at the Best MumPreneur of the Year Awards, presented at 10 Downing Street. Following a resultant offer and wishing to spend more time with her daughter, she sold her first business to focus on social media, developing a multi-site blog and online marketing portfolio that generated in excess of 600,000 + visitors per month.

Lilach is consulted by journalists and regularly quoted in newspapers, business publications and marketing magazines (including Forbes, The Telegraph, Wired, Prima Magazine, The Sunday Times, The Guardian, Social Media Today and BBC Radio). What's more, her books have achieved No 1 on Amazon for Sales and Marketing and Small Business and Entrepreneurship.

When Lilach isn't working she enjoys spending time with her family and is an avid fan of Zumba.