

# Introducing The Conversation Prism

By Brian Solis, blogger at PR 2.0 and principal of FutureWorks PR, Co-Author *Putting the Public Back in Public Relations* and *Now Is Gone*



Last year, Robert Scoble and Darren Barefoot debuted the Social Media Starfish to visualize and document the rapidly evolving landscape for social tools, services, and networks.

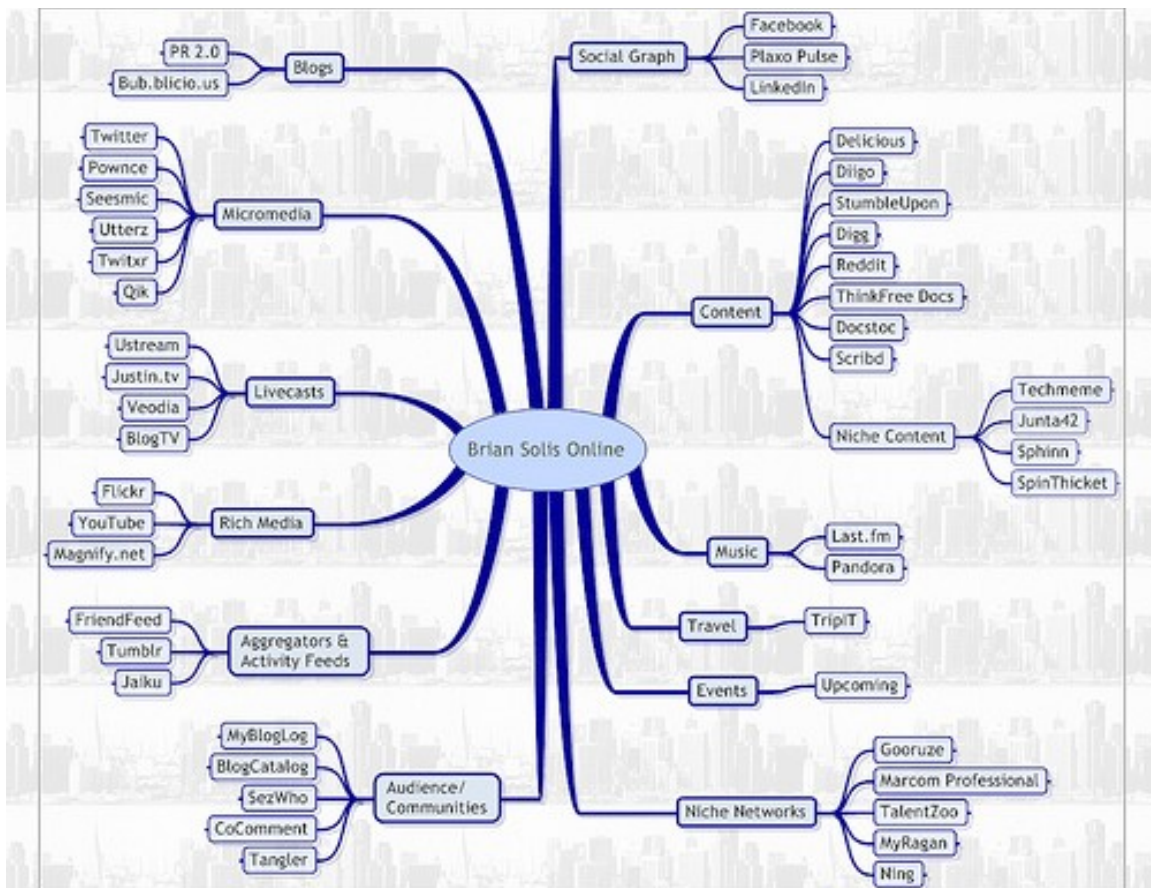
If you work in marketing, public relations, advertising, customer service, product development, or any discipline that's motivated, shaped, and directed by customers, peers, stakeholders and influencers, monitoring and in some cases,



that can impact and influence your business and brand.

As a communications or service professional, you'll find yourself at the center of the prism - whether you're observing, listening or participating. This visual map is the ideal complement to *The Essential Guide to Social Media* and the *Social Media Manifesto*, which will help you better understand how to listen and in turn, participate transparently, sincerely, and effectively.

As conversations are increasingly distributed, everything begins with listening and observing. Doing so, will help you identify exactly where relevant discussions are taking place, as well as their scale and frequency. This dialog can be charted into a targeted social map that's unique to your brand. In the example below, I created a *Social Map* using MindJet to represent the communities where I either need to or currently contribute based on my initial research.



Perhaps most importantly, the process of listening and observing will reveal the cultures of the very communities you may wish to engage.

Remember, participating in Social Media is more meaningful when you have a deeper understanding of anthropology and sociology and not just the social tools that facilitate interaction. This is about creating and cultivating relationships with

people, online and in the real world, and these relationships are defined by mutual value and benefits.

In the social economy, relationships are the new currency.

Enjoy the Conversation Prism and please let me know how you'd like to see it evolve.

Please also see [The Social Media Ecosystem](#) by Deb Schultz, which debuted in November 2007.

For more on the subject, please also read:

- [Comcast, Dell and The Socialization of Service](#)
- [New Communication Theory and the New Roles for the New World of Marketing](#)
- [The Social Revolution is Our Industrial Revolution](#)
- [The Art of Conversation - It's About Listening Not Marketing](#)
- [Will The Real Social Media Expert Please Stand Up?](#)
- [Cultural Voyeurism and Social Media](#)
- [Free ebook: Customer Service, The Art of Listening and Engagement Through Social Media](#)
- [Distributed Conversations and Fragmented Attention](#)

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**Brian Solis** is globally recognized for his views and insights on the convergence of PR, Traditional Media and Social Media. He actively contributes his thoughts and experiences through speaking appearances, books, articles and essays as a way of helping the marketing industry understand and embrace the new dynamics fueling new communications, marketing, and content creation.

Solis is Principal of [FutureWorks](#), an award-winning PR agency in Silicon Valley. Solis blogs at [PR2.0](#), [bub.blicio.us](#), [TechCrunch](#), and BrandWeek. Solis is co-founder of the Social Media [Club](#), is an original member of the [Media 2.0](#) Workgroup, and also is a contributor to the Social Media [Collective](#).

Solis has been actively writing about new PR since the mid 90s to discuss how the Web was redefining the communications industry – he coined PR 2.0 along the way. Solis is considered an expert in traditional PR, media relations, and Social Media. He has dedicated his free time to helping PR professionals adapt to the new fusion of PR, Web marketing, and community relations. PR 2.0 is a top 10,000 Technorati blog and is ranked in the Ad Age Power 150 index of leading marketing bloggers.

Working with Geoff Livingston, Solis was co-author of “[Now is Gone](#),” a new book that helps businesses learn how to engage in Social Media. He has also written several ebooks on the subjects of Social Media, New PR, and Blogger Relations.

His next book, co-author Deirdre Breakenridge, “[Putting the Public back in Public Relations](#),” will be released by Pearson by Q1 2009.

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