# The future of social media analytics

By Jessica Tennant                                                                  22 Aug 2016

[Crimson Hexagon](#), a global social media analytics company based in Boston, recently launched in South Africa in partnership with [YouKnow Digital](#).

To celebrate the launch, [The Clay Collab](#) hosted an event entitled 'The future of social media analytics' at [NATIVE VML](#), where Marian Cramers, director strategic alliances EMEA at Crimson Hexagon, gave insights into where social analytics is headed.

With image-based social networks on the rise, the latest being Instagram, Pinterest and more recently Snapchat, businesses are increasingly adopting social media analytics tools to gain insights from social data, particularly images, to drive strategy.



Marian Cramers

Crimson Hexagon is one such company providing insights for brand strategy and market research, allowing brands, agencies and non-profits access to consumer trends, purchase intent, product attributes, drivers of sentiment, competitors, and the like. It holds the world's largest repository of social data anywhere, with 850 billion+ posts stored in its warehouse.

Its technology is rooted in an algorithm designed by Gary King, a professor at Harvard's Institute for Quantitative Social Science. "This algorithm will always be the heart of the platform," said Cramers, "but it keeps evolving and, although it was designed for text-based analytics, there's a new world out there and that world is Snapchat and Instagram and all of those images."

She quoted Evan Spiegel, the founder of Snapchat, who said, "Photos are no longer just a means of capturing a moment, they are a means of communicating."

If you look at the trajectory of social media platforms over the years, they're increasingly becoming more about images and less about text. Camera-enabled smartphones, the low barrier for self-expression, and the ease of curating content are just some of the reasons for this.

## Context is the real issue

Crimson is moving passed the point of sentiment and the advanced emotional attachment, to a contextual understanding of images, the stories they tell and their brand implications.

Some emerging use cases discussed are:

- A more robust audience and campaign analysis
- Brand affinities
- Content ideation, creating and curation
- Identification of most effective/real influencers
- Product development
- Scene/action recognition to identify growth opportunities

Cramers referred to an image featured at the London Olympic 2012 opening ceremony, quoting inventor of the World Wide Web Sir Tim Berners-Lee's tweet, "This is for everyone", which was instantly displayed in LED lights attached to the chairs in the arena. And that's exactly what this is.



[Pinterest](#)

"It's important that you keep seeing the bigger picture because that is where the future lies, and it's also where the interesting angles are that will make you future proof."

If you're interested in hearing more about how businesses are leveraging the power of Crimson Hexagon and social analytics, register [here](#) for the next edition of Crimson Hexagon's 'CEOs Talk Social' webinar series with Steve Bartlett, CEO at [Social Chain](#).

## ABOUT JESSICA TENNANT

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