



2014 The Global
Social CEO Survey

BRANDFOG SURVEY 2014 THE GLOBAL, SOCIAL CEO

There is no question that social media has forever changed the complex dynamics of modern business communications. The influence of social channels is felt acutely across marketing, PR, brand and product positioning. While the value of social media at the brand level is well understood, BRANDfog's annual surveys set out to examine the less explored aspect of social media engagement in the C-Suite, including its effect on brand reputation, transparency, brand trust, and overall company leadership.

What's often missed in the discussion of CEOs and social media is the inherent risk of ignoring this powerful communications channel. Conversations taking place on Twitter, LinkedIn, Tumblr, Medium, YouTube, Instagram and other social channels do not stop because management is not looking. When executives fail to speak for themselves, other voices fill the void and the conversations continue without them. The opportunity cost for executives who ignore social media is the loss of voice, and it enables others to shape the brand story and influence brand reputation. Alternatively, C-suite executives who embrace social media gain a competitive edge. They use social channels to provide context for business decisions, address brand issues, showcase company culture and most importantly, demonstrate thought leadership.

Today a company's brand image and that of its leaders are definitively linked. Think of Richard Branson, Martha Stewart, Mark Zuckerberg or Jeff Bezos. Social-savvy consumers understand this link and seek transparency when supporting a brand. While customers use social media channels to learn about product quality and brand reputation, they formulate brand sentiment beliefs based on great leadership, transparency and innovation. This sentiment extends to brand trust, and is based upon a company's reputation for workplace conditions, clean supply chains, board diversity, and social consciousness. Consistent, C-Suite social media engagement about these broad management themes has a real and lasting impact on how customers view a brand, and ultimately affects a company's long term success.

BRANDfog's 2014 Global Survey demonstrates that social media's importance for executive and C-Suite communication is more critical than ever. Our survey highlights three recent trends that will shape modern business communications.

1. SOCIAL CEOS MAKE BETTER LEADERS

Between 2012 and 2013, the perception that C-Suite and executive participation in social media leads to better leadership increased from 45% to 75%.

2. SOCIAL CEO ENGAGEMENT LEADS TO BRAND TRUST

Roughly two-thirds of UK respondents and nearly three-quarters of US respondents believe that a company whose C-Suite executives and leadership team use social media to communicate about core mission, brand values and purpose is more trustworthy.

3. SOCIAL MEDIA IS MODERN PR

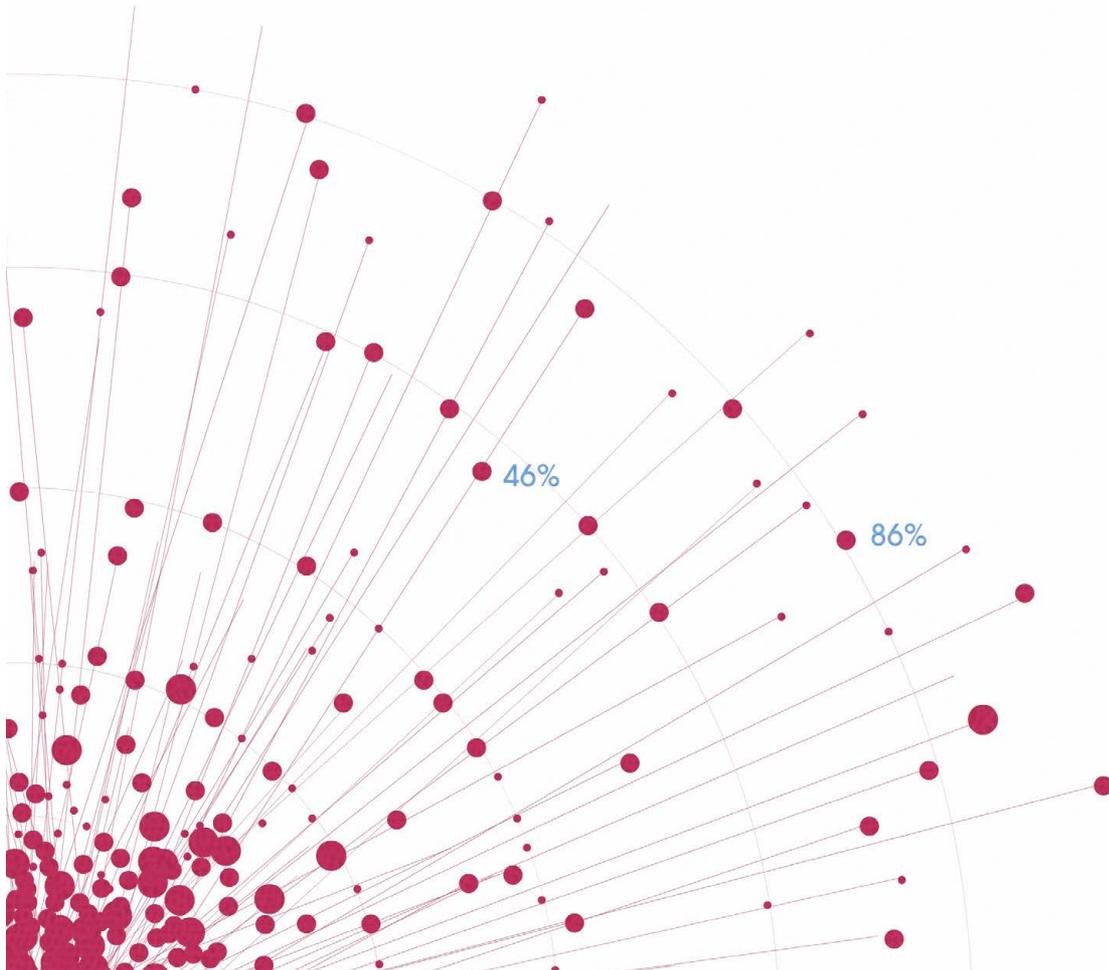
One of the most revealing survey insights is that social media has become Modern PR for executives, especially for a brand in crisis. Over 2/3 of US and UK respondents agree that social media has become an essential aspect of PR and communications strategy for C-Suite executives.

“In today’s hyper-connected, information-driven world, CEOs and senior executives alike are expected to have an active social presence. Brand image, brand trust, and a company’s long term success depend on it.”

** Ann Charles, BRANDfog Founder & CEO*

SURVEY METHODOLOGY

BRANDfog's 2014 Global, Social CEO Survey surveyed 1000 US and UK employees in diverse companies. The companies surveyed ranged in size from startups to Fortune 1000 companies, and spanned various industries.



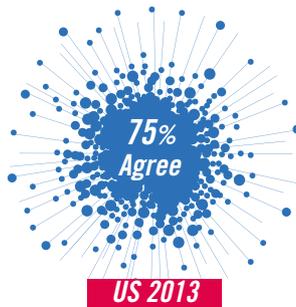
SURVEY RESULTS

S1

SOCIAL MEDIA ENGAGEMENT MAKES CEOS BETTER LEADERS

Q1

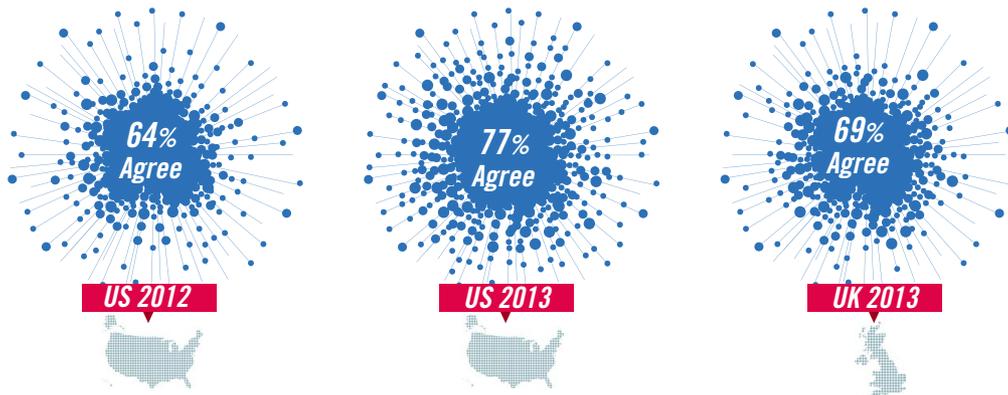
CEO participation in social media leads to better leadership.



- 2012 US results: **45%** agree, **55%** disagree
- BRANDfog found a profound shift in responses in just 12 months. In 2012, only **45%** of US respondents believed that social media is a tool for better leadership. That number rose dramatically to **75%** in 2013, and **62%** of UK respondents also agreed.

Q2

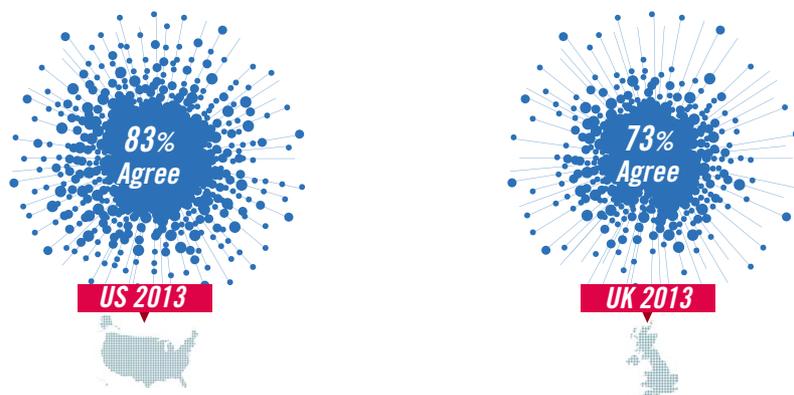
C-Suite executives who actively engage on social media create more transparency for the brand.



- 2012 US results: **64%** agree, **36%** disagree.
- In 2013, **77%** of US respondents and **69%** of UK respondents agreed that executive use of social media fosters brand transparency.

Q3

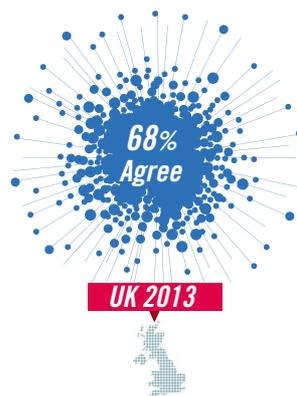
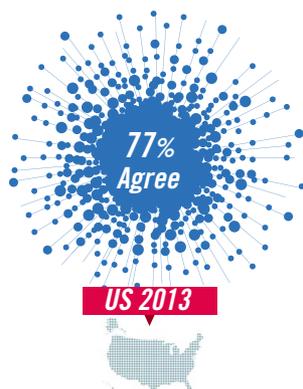
CEOs who actively participate in social media can build better connections with customers, employees, and investors.



- **83%** of US respondents and **73%** of UK respondents believe that CEO participation in social media can build better connections with customers, employees, and investors.

Q4

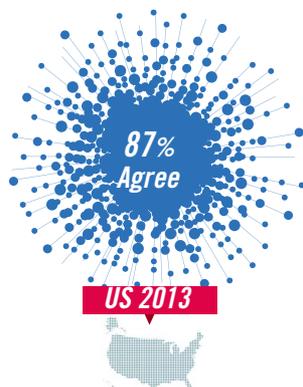
Executive use of social media creates a channel for authentic engagement with a company's stakeholders.



- 77% of US respondents and 68% of UK respondents believe that that executive use of social media creates a channel for authentic engagement with a company's stakeholders.

Q5

Having a social media policy allows a company's leadership team to be proactive rather than reactive in response to company challenges.



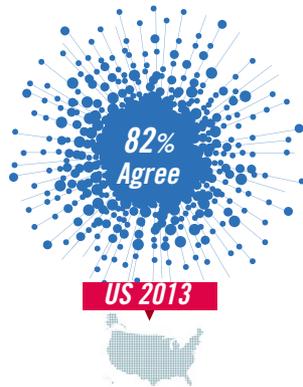
- 87% of US respondents and 79% of UK respondents agree that having a social media policy in place allows a company's leadership team to be proactive rather than reactive in response to company challenges.

S2

CEO SOCIAL MEDIA ENGAGEMENT LEADS TO BRAND TRUST

Q6

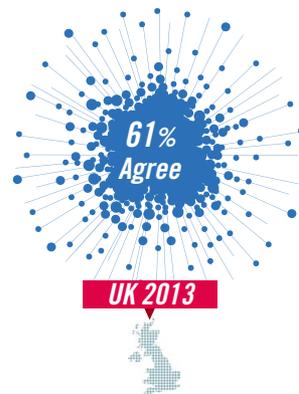
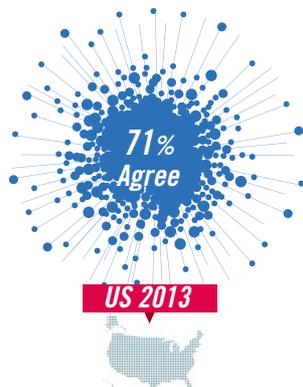
Executive use of social media raises brand awareness and helps establish industry leadership.



- 82% of US respondents and 71% of UK respondents overwhelmingly believe that executive use of social media raises brand awareness.

Q7

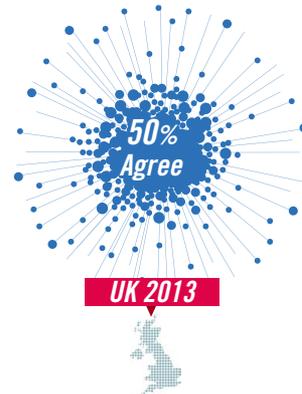
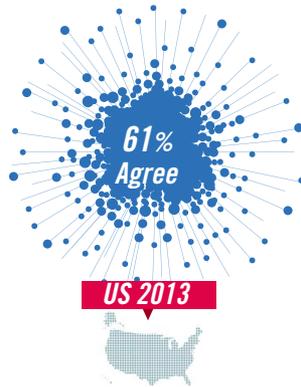
A company whose C-Suite executives and leadership team use social media as a public relations channel to openly communicate about its core mission, values and purpose is more trustworthy.



- 71% of US respondents and 61% of UK respondents agree that a company whose C-Suite executives and leadership team use social media as a public relations channel to openly communicate about its core mission, values and purpose is more trustworthy.

Q8

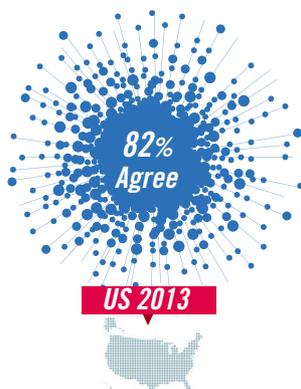
I am more likely to purchase from a company whose values and leadership are clearly communicated through executive leadership participation on social media



- **61%** of US respondents and **50%** of UK respondents are more likely to purchase from a company whose values and leadership are clearly communicated through executive leadership participation on social media.

Q9

CEO engagement on social media helps to communicate company values and shapes a company's brand reputation.



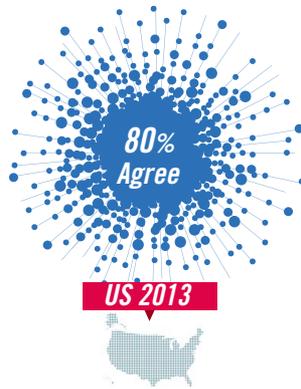
- **82%** of US respondents and **71%** of UK respondents believe that CEO engagement on social media helps to communicate company values and shapes a company's brand reputation.

S3

SOCIAL MEDIA IS MODERN PR FOR EXECUTIVES

Q10

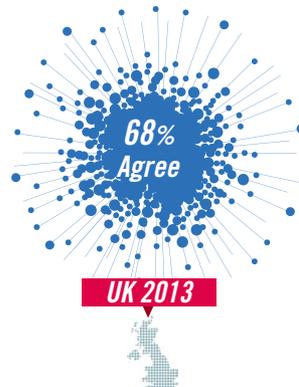
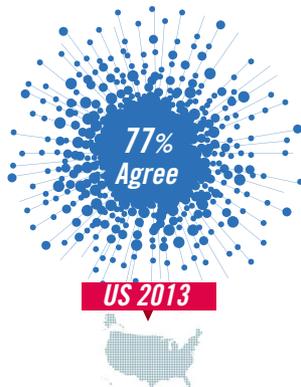
Actively engaging on social media helps to enhance the image and reputation of C-Suite executives as forward-thinking, trend-setting leaders.



- **80%** of US respondents agree that social media enhances the image and reputation of executives. Only **67%** of respondents in the UK agree - there is a notably large gap between the attitude towards social media as a reputation tool in the US and UK.

Q11

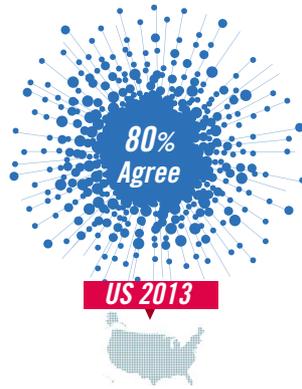
Social Media is a powerful tool for building thought leadership and enhancing the credibility of C-Suite executives with stakeholders, including press / media.



- **77%** of US respondents and **68%** of UK respondents believe that social media is a powerful tool for building thought leadership and enhancing the credibility of C-Suite executives with stakeholders, including press.

Q12

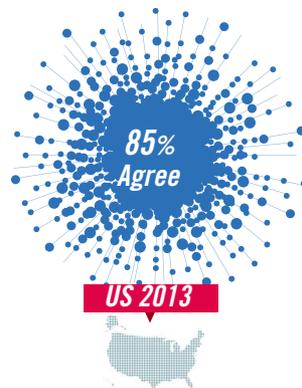
Social Media has become an essential aspect of PR and communications strategy for C-Suite executives and brands.



- 80% of US respondents and 71% of UK respondents believe that social media has become an essential aspect of PR and communications strategy for C-Suite executives and brands.

Q13

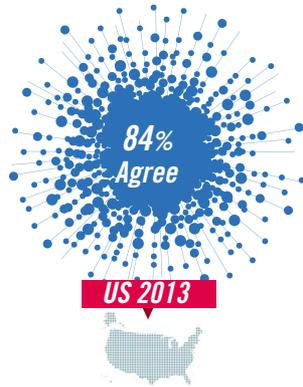
Social Media is a valuable public relations channel for managing brand reputation.



- 85% of US respondents and 75% of UK respondents agree that social media is a valuable public relations channel for managing brand reputation.

Q14

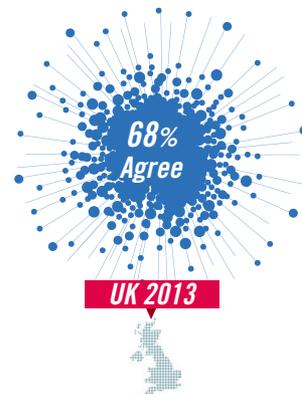
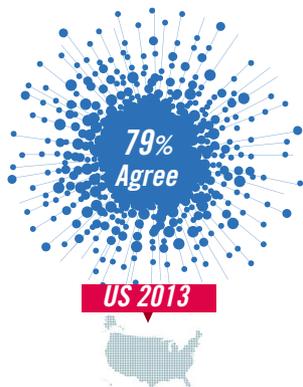
Social Media is an effective way to monitor conversations about a brand online and to help brands prevent potential reputation crises.



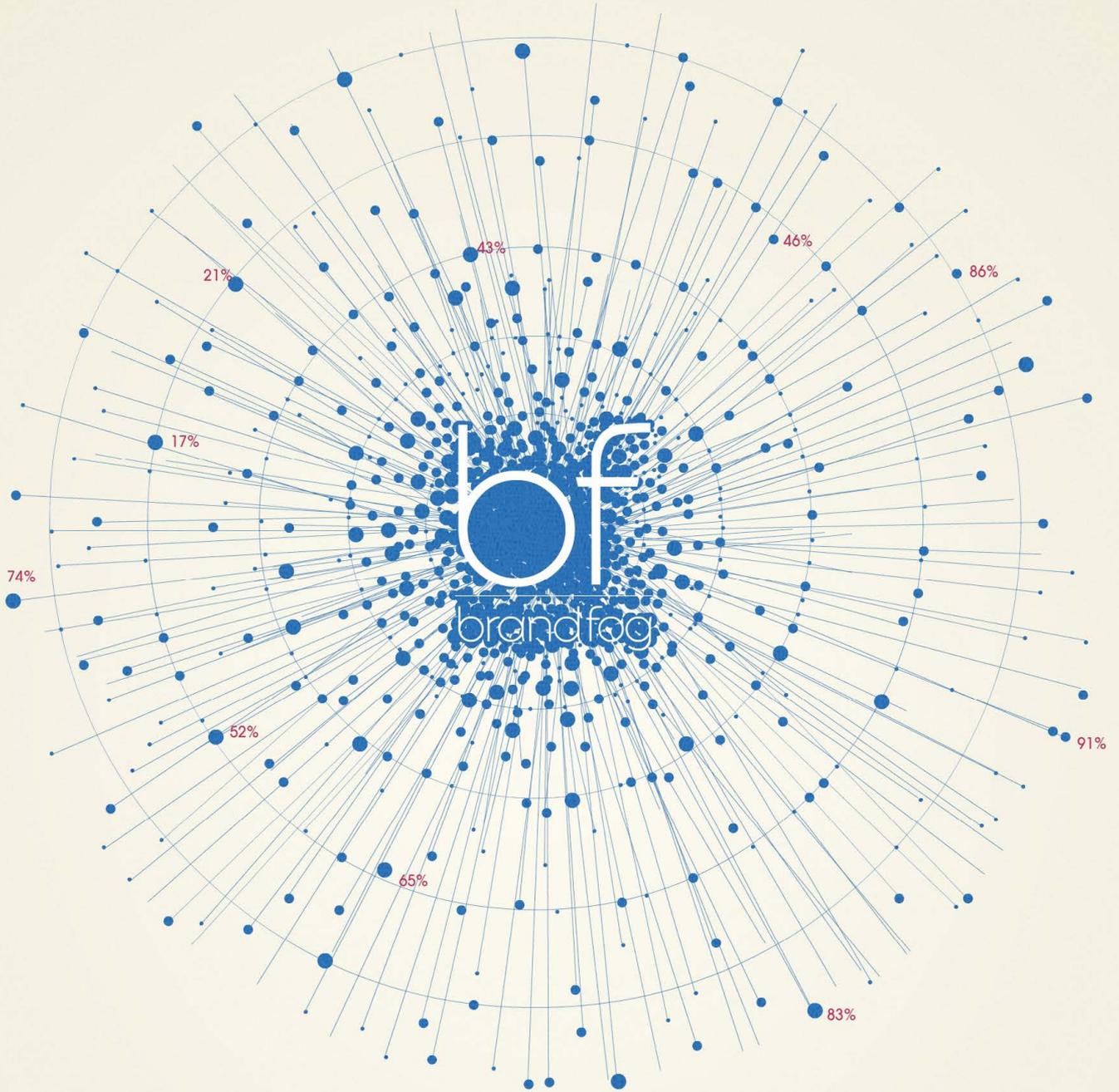
- **84%** of US respondents and **76%** of UK respondents believe that social media is an effective way to monitor conversations about a brand online and to help brands prevent potential reputation crises.

Q15

Having a socially active C- Suite leadership team can mitigate risk before a brand reputation crisis occurs.



- **79%** of US respondents and **68%** of UK respondents believe that having a socially active C- Suite leadership team can mitigate risk before a brand reputation crisis occurs.



BRANDfog 2014 Survey:
The Global Social CEO