


The analysis of social media usage
Case Study: Fashion Designer *X*

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<p>The recent remarkable growth in Internet-based business activities has demonstrated that many different benefits can be derived from communication technology platforms. Internet technology has changed the way people conduct business, communicate, and learn. The Internet has delivered to firms a global market presence, and online marketing has become an essential part of business. One of the reasons for this phenomenon is the ability to create online environments where users can communicate and obtain valuable information.</p> <p>Both consumers and companies are more and more involved in social media. Different social networking sites, blogs and forums have experienced significant growth in recent years; this encourages marketers to communicate with consumers in new and interesting ways. These recent developments provide an opportunity for researchers to study social media marketing, in particular its different online channels.</p> <p>The aims of this research are as follows: 1) to analyse social media usage in marketing activities, 2) to explore the relevance of different social media platforms, 3) to ascertain their benefits and challenges, and 4) to examine the social media activities of fashion designer X in order to develop some recommendations for her marketing activities.</p> <p>In this traditional research the triangulation approach was used to collect mainly qualitative data through an online semi-structured interview, online questionnaires, and a review of the relevant literature. The quantitative method was also used for analysing the data collected through these questionnaires. The research was conducted during the period from October to November 2012.</p> <p>The results indicate that social media provides a great opportunity to give exposure to companies' brands at low cost. It was found that the most popular social media tools used by entrepreneurs are Facebook and Twitter. The findings also show that enterprises face some challenges, such as measuring social media performance. However, it is possible to overcome these challenges by committing more time to social media, including the listening and monitoring processes, or by hiring a social media strategist.</p>	
<p>Keywords social media, online strategic planning, marketing communication, social media tools, social networking, small and medium-sized enterprises</p>	

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1 Introduction

There has been growing interest in online marketing and social media in particular not only by business but also governments and education organisations. The internet users can participate in online conversations, look for the people with similar interests, check on friend's status updates on the go and be a valuable source of data for marketers.

Khang et al (2012, 1) in their research indicated a “definite increasing number of social-media-related studies” that shows incredible growth of social media users and its impact on different “aspects of individuals' lives and society”.

1.1 Background

The initial reason behind choosing social media as a topic for this research is the researcher's personal interest in the study. While doing work placement in the marketing department in a hotel, with all advantages that offer social media, she faced some challenges using it. At this time she was interested in to acquire knowledge about different techniques on how to use effectively online platforms. Also being creator and administrator of an online community on Facebook, she lets members-entrepreneurs of this community to freely promote their products and services. It was the place where the author met the Mumbai-based fashion designer *X* who was trying to grow her brand exposure and reach potential clients with help of social media in addition to traditional marketing activities. Despite her busy schedule, she agreed to participate in the research. And the researcher hopes that the results of the study and recommendations could help to the fashion designer in question to use effectively and efficiently social media tools and channels. As regards the author's expectations, she hopes to gain valuable experience by doing the research, reading academic material, and learning about online marketing.

The overall of the research aims to explore and analyse the relevance of social media usage in business practices of small and medium-sized enterprises; what tools and applications are used by entrepreneurs; and also to define the social media benefits and challenges. Based on the theoretical research and the analysis of data, some recommendations will be developed for further marketing activities of the fashion designer *X*.

In this research the qualitative method approach was used. Some quantitative data were gathered through online questionnaires and analysed by applying qualitative analysis approach. Informal semi-structured interview, observations and online survey provided the research with primary data. While secondary data were collected via a relevant literature review. The thesis does not contain the names as the fashion designer in question and other participants of the study have requested to be anonymous.

1.2 Thesis objectives

This research aims to carry both theoretical and empirical researches in order to answer following question:

- Why do SME entrepreneurs use social media tools and channels?

This study will also answer the following sub-questions:

- What are the different platforms of social media used by SME?
- What are benefits and challenges of social media for SME?

The major objectives of this study are to develop a theoretical framework to understand the marketing planning process for social media, to examine the current social media activities of the fashion designer *X* in order to develop recommendations.

Other objectives of this research are as follows:

- to explore the stages of online strategic planning
- to explore the different tools/applications of social media used by SME entrepreneurs
- to define benefits and challenges of social media usage for entrepreneurs of small and medium-sized enterprises.

1.3 Limitations of the research

Social media is a very wide area to explore. Due to time constraints it was impossible to cover each aspect. The study did not cover different marketing strategy, analysis of consumer behaviour, pricing and product analysis. The author decided to limit the

research and to explore only major platforms and channels of social media such as social networking sites (Facebook), blogs and microblog (Twitter), photo and video sharing sites (YouTube and Pinterest). The sample of research population was small based on limited time and availability of respondents. The author decided not to determine the geographic limits for research population; however, for online survey she purposively chose five entrepreneurs of small and medium-sized business. Due to busy schedule of the author and the Mumbai-based social media strategist (hereinafter referred to as the "the consultant"), and also time difference between Mumbai and Helsinki, it was difficult to agree on an interview. Instead of this, the author designed a separate online survey in order to obtain important information from the consultant that could supplement collected data.

This study will not provide a strategic plan but only recommendations for case entrepreneur for her further social media marketing activities.

1.4 Thesis structure

The project is structured in six sections (figure 1). In the first section the author explains the reason for choosing current topic and the aim of the study. Theoretical part consists of two sections and introduces into fashion industry and to the fashion designer *X* that commissioned this research project; theoretical framework for marketing planning process, communication strategy, and social media ecosystem were also provided in this section. Entrepreneurs and social media section is the empirical part of the research that explores the research process, methods of data collection, the analysis and results of study. Validity and reliability are also presented in this section. The discussion part illustrates assessments and recommendations for future research. While the last section of the thesis concerned with conclusions of the study where the author will answer the main and sub-questions of the research and will suggest recommendations for further social media activities for the fashion designer *X*.

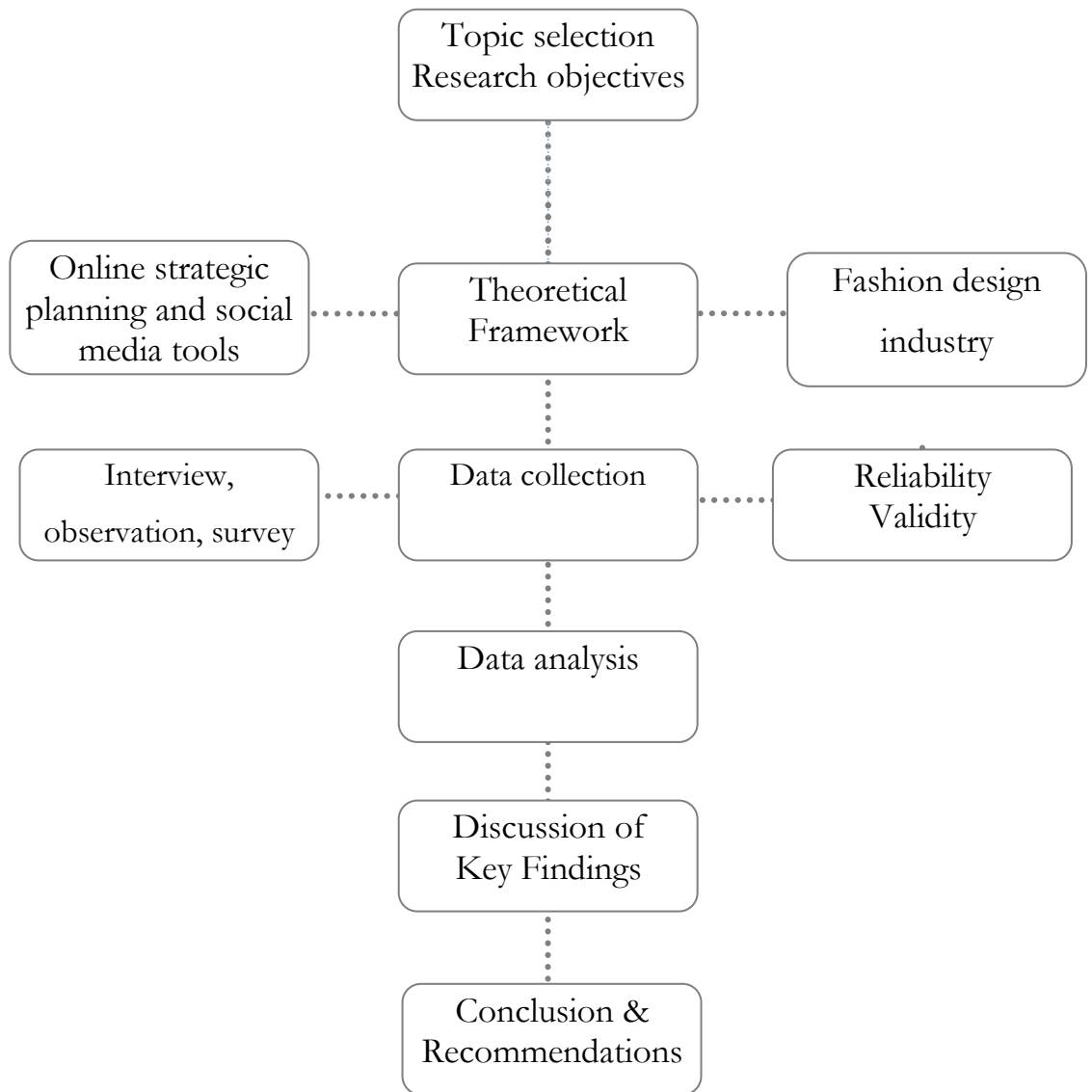


Figure 1. Thesis structure

2 Fashion Industry

Born in Paris, fashion has moved to New York and Milan, to Tokyo and London. “Fashion” word came from French “façon”, that means to do something in a particular way or manner. One of the main characteristic of the fashion is its constant change. And this change can refer not only to product but to place where this product made and to the person created it. (Tungate 2005, 8-11.) Nowadays India is a fast-growing fashion market. According to Indian Mirror (2012), Indian fashion industry has great potential to appear on the global stage. The India Fashion Week became popular internationally and annual fashion shows are held in different cities of India.

2.1 Fashion marketing

For many people the word “fashion” refers to models walking on a podium. The combination of creativity and glamour is the driver’s aspects to desire to have products that we maybe even do not need. When clothes or accessories leave the workshops they are just “apparel” until marketers start to promote them and present as a “fashion”. The amount spent on fashion goods is enormous. This huge industry that includes clothes, footwear, cosmetics, and other fashion accessories is driven by a very complex marketing and branding techniques. (Tungate 2005, 1.) Tungate (2005, 2) explains that we are surrounded by fashion and the importance of fashion in our live is obvious. In fact, fashion is not limit to clothes and cosmetics; mobile phones, cars, media and the place to go – these are also subjects that have direct impact of fashion trends.

Fashion designers do not only create their collections, they are also connected to other brands. In their creation process, designers involve design teams, the photographers, the event organizers and the art designers. This complex industry includes such important factors as the consumers of fashion clothes and accessories, and their vision on the fashion that impacts the entire process of fashion change. Fashion brands are embraces social media. They are using its different platforms in order to reach a large audience, to control brand perception, and measure marketing performance. (Wright Lee 2009.)

2.2 Fashion Designer X

My commissioning party who preferred do not be named is the Mumbai-based fashion designer. She was born in Russia then moved to other country, town N , to study sociology. When she moved again but in this time to India, Mumbai, she saw a great opportunity to bring her hobby to a professional level by starting to create fashion clothing for women.



Creating unique and elegant-styled fashion garments in combination with quality, she ensures to make women feel gorgeous (own fashion designer X's website 2012). Designer X is a freelance designer. Designing and manufacturing made-to-measure (haute couture) and ready-to-wear (prêt-a-porter) clothes, she guarantees its exclusivity. Her team consists of three persons: the fashion designer (herself), the pattern cutter and the tailor. She as a fashion designer sketches her own ideas, considering some technicality. The pattern cutter creates pattern templates from the fashion designer's sketches. His job is very important because the fit of the clothes depends on his accuracy. The tailor sews together final pattern templates, and also repairs, or alters clothes. Fashion designer creates mainly smart and casual-styled dresses and blouses. The photo on this page displays one of the fashion designer X's creations - the dress is from spring-summer collection 2012.

The fashion designer X emphasizes on personal approach to each client by giving advice on different aspects of fashion look. For short period of her activity as a fashion designer, she has already created more than 460 different models, has developed her client base and partnerships with the merchandisers. (Fashion designer X 23 Oct 2012.)

3 Internet and marketing

“The Internet is a global network of interconnected networks” including corporate, governmental, private and other organisational networks (Strauss & Frost 2012, 27). Started in 1969 as the ARPANET, as a network for academic and military use, 10 years later the Internet had the first online community, the USENET. The revolutionary period for the Internet happened in 1990s, when millions of individuals could go online. It was the first appearance of Web 1.0 with Internet browsers and web pages. Popularity of Web among companies, media, and web users grew very quickly. At this time early marketers already wondered how Internet could be used for marketing; how it will change customer behaviour and their perceptions; what new opportunities it could bring. While Web 1.0 gave the possibility to connect people to computer networks, today’s “second-generation” technology (Web 2.0) creates the ability to interact with other web users. (Strauss & Frost 2012, 31.)

3.1 Social media and Web 2.0

Bernal (2010, 3) defines Web 2.0 as a technology that enables us to reach our customers and provide services in completely new way. If the focus of Web 1.0 was on delivering to end user products, Web 2.0 implements new approach such as interactions, participations and contributions. Today’s users can create and edit contents, tag and leave comments by providing other participants of the community with new and valuable data. (Figure 2.)

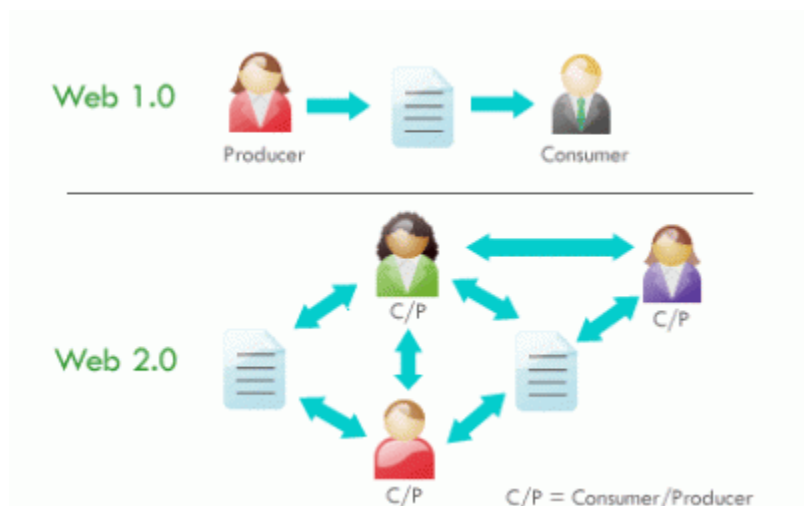


Figure 2. Web 1.0 vs. Web 2.0 (Yuan 2011)

A web 2.0 technology does not only transfer information in new way, but it also improves the user interface, providing new data much quicker and in more dynamic way (Bernal 2010, 3-4). One of the main aspects of the Web is the flexibility it gives web users to choose the time and application to use (Ward Hanson 2010, 23). Safko and Brake (2010, 6) refer social media to social activities and behaviours of online participants to share information, knowledge, and opinions using web-based applications that can be sent in different forms such as words, pictures, videos, and audios.

Social media often associate with marketing - probably the reason is that initially social applications were more focused on advertising and the conversation and were mostly related to marketing and sales issues. However, social media applications extend far beyond marketing (Evans 2010, 189). Evans (2012, 37) explains that it is a “complimentary extension of all of marketing efforts.”

Social media and Web 2.0 have a primarily goal to allow users to form communities and interact with one another, in other word, to communicate (Safko & Brake 2010, 7). Members of a virtual community can share, collaborate, and even argue about the topics of common interest. Online communities grow to critical mass as they are often self-forming ensuring greater acceptance by online participants. (Bernal 2010, 14.)

Alen et all (2001, 11) state that Web technologies provide marketers with real-time experience on customer’s behaviour. And what important is that it shows current behaviour that could guide to draw capability profiles and to predict even future behaviour. Computer software (e.g., customer relationship management) is providing marketers with data from all media and channels where they interact and build a relationship. Using Internet technology, customers interact with real human beings behind the communication platforms such as real-time text chat, web-based telephony, and the instant messaging services. Gillin (2010, xxi) believes that people are more honest when speaking with their peers, and it is a good opportunity for marketers to receive valuable feedback while listening their conversations. With great growth of the number of online channels and participants the quality of information tends to

improve. Users are getting data directly and almost instantaneously using different social media sites. And this information has a higher degree of confidence because each message is connected to an individual profile. Hanson (2000, 21) suggest that the evolution from brand management to customer relationship management has led to the change in the marketing approach. According to Jue (2009, 2), the advantages of online marketing are organizational learning and strong relationships. Within organizations, social networks give the new reality where employees are cocreators of business success rather than servants who only take an order.

Why online marketing became relevant in marketing activities? Moor's law illustrates a process of the falling cost of Internet technology (figure 3) that affected growth of the Internet usage as it became radically cheap to retrieve and store information. (Hanson 2000, 33.)

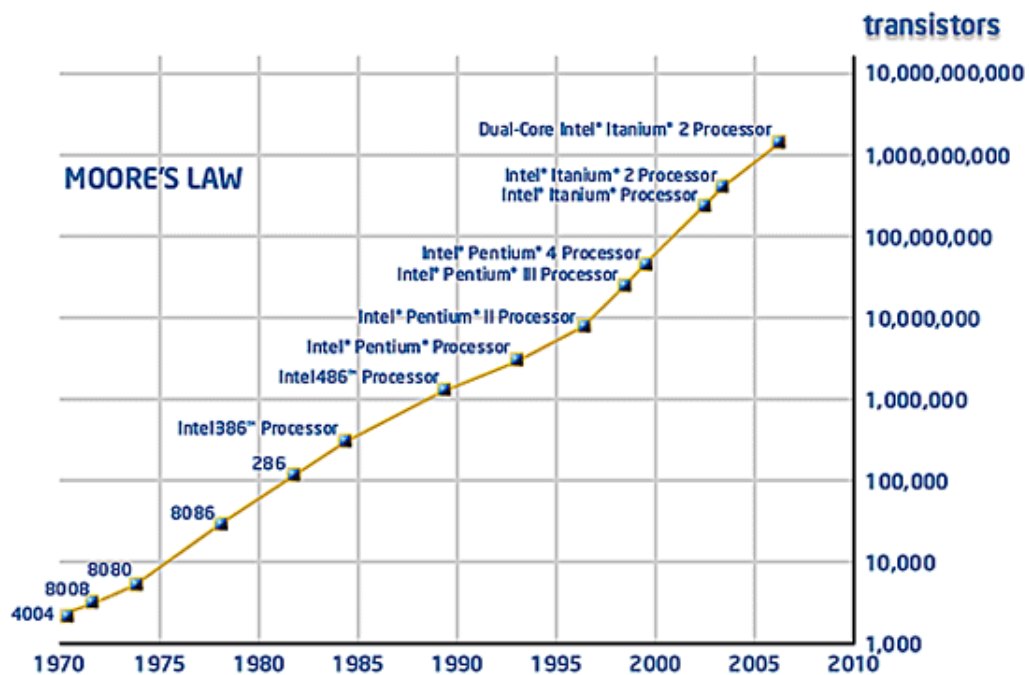


Figure 3. Moor's law (NJTechReviews 2011)

Hanson (2000, 33) indicates one more benefit of online marketing that is convergence. He explains that today more devices become digital and the distinction between product functions is vanishing, for example, telephone became more like computers and you can make calls using your computer. In our daily life we are more and more surrounded by the Internet-based products. Sankar and Bouchard (2009, 34) argue that

mobility is a constantly growth tendency. Mobile devices are all around us and mobile services propose a large variety of applications allowing to upload, to create and communicate.

But despite of the numerous advantages, all of the Internet technologies have their disadvantages, for example they could be used by the hacker and intellectual property thief (Hanson 2000, 32). According to Alen et all (2001, 307-308), one of the main challenge of online marketing is privacy. The issue of privacy has become a critical mass where marketers have to adapt it in technology in accordance with privacy laws to satisfy individuals, privacy advocates and government. In order to get more knowledge about customers marketers have to collect personal data. They have to ensure customers that their websites are concerned about privacy principals and that their personal information is kept safe and secure.

3.2 Strategic planning

Safko and Brake (2009, 7) claim that “it is all about engagement”, meaning social media strategy. But engaging does not mean just using the same social media tools and applications as customers, this requires more than that (Calibey & Beaudreault 2012). The foundation of the business is always starting with its purpose (Jue et all 2010, 127). Without a strategic basis for engagement, any involvement in the social media will end on passive listening and simply using social networking site for talking. It will hardly bring the desired outcomes. (Evans 2010, 111.) Company has to determine what its goals are for social media, how to measure success, what tactics to use, and how to implement it (Calibey & Beaudreault 2012). According to Evans (2010, 112), driving the business in accordance with its objectives is always an end goal. The company objectives and well-targeted audience are the specific actions that need to be taken. The use of social media to create an online presence for your company will build durable and relevant relationships.

Strategic planning is the strategic decision process on allocating company’s resources and developing capabilities to achieve specified business's objectives (Solomon et all 2008, 41). Gillin and Schwartzman (2011, 145) have created four-step planning process

for social media tool selection (figure 4), highlighting that the choice of tool should be the last step in your marketing planning. However, most of the companies go the opposite direction. They explain that in “*this constantly growing and changing social environment difficult to succeed with this unfocused and undetermined approach.*”

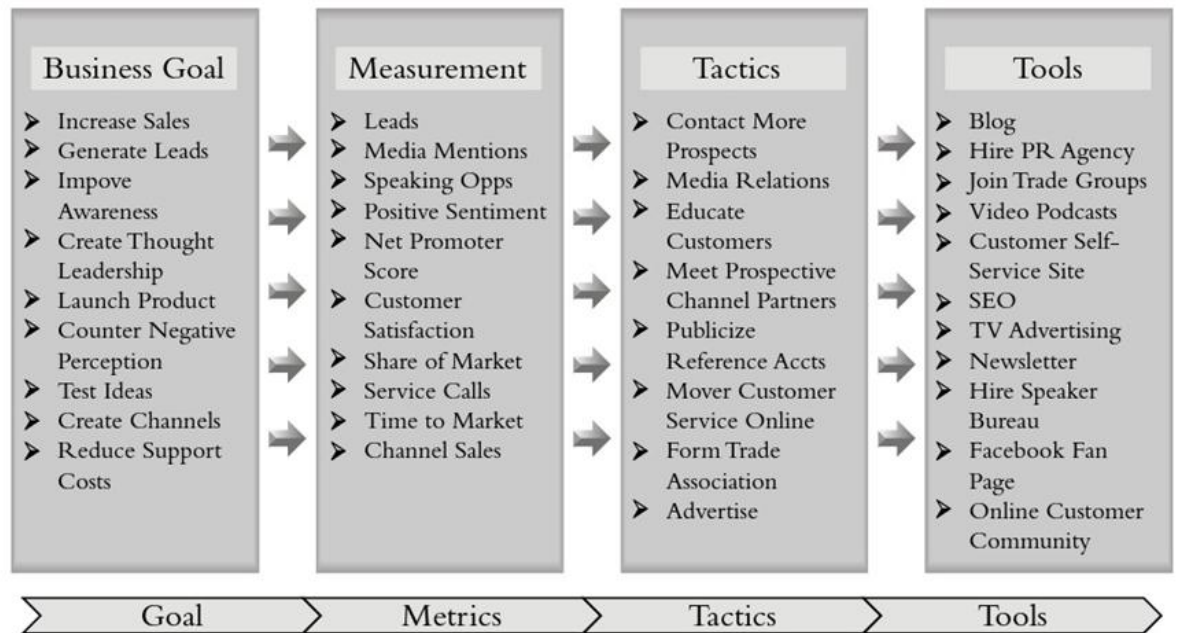


Figure 4. Four-step process for social media selection (Gillin & Schwartzman 2011, 145)

Chaffey and Smith (2008, in Chaffey et al 2009, 211) suggest more complex strategy process shown on figure 5. The overall process starts with situation analysis where company gathers information about the internal and external environments as well as develops SWOT analysis.



Figure 5. The online strategic planning process (Chaffey et al 2009, 211)

3.2.1 Situation analysis

Situation analysis means where the business is now? At this stage company is reviewing an Internet-specific SWOT analysis considering the micro-environment factors such as customers, competitors and intermediaries. It also involves analysis of the macro-environment including social, legal, ethical, economic, political, and technological factors. (Chaffey et al 2009, 211.)

The SWOT analysis examines company's strengths and weaknesses in regard to its environment and competition, and also considers external opportunities and threats. Opportunities could help to specify a target market and determinate new product opportunities. It is important to know that company's online strengths and weaknesses could differ from the strengths and weaknesses in real world. (Strauss & Frost 2009, 50.)

The micro-environment or "the operation environment" is the marketplace of an organisation that shaped by the customer needs, major competitors and their services, the recruited staff, suppliers and intermediaries within the marketplace (figure 6) (Chaffey et al 2009, 50). Micro-environmental analysis defines the main types of online presence which describes the consumer behaviour and flow of online participants between company's websites, intermediaries and its competitors. Organisations need to

examine key phrases that consumer uses when searching for product or services, specific phrases and brand names taking in account not only their brand name but also competitors. (Chaffey et al 2009, 53.)

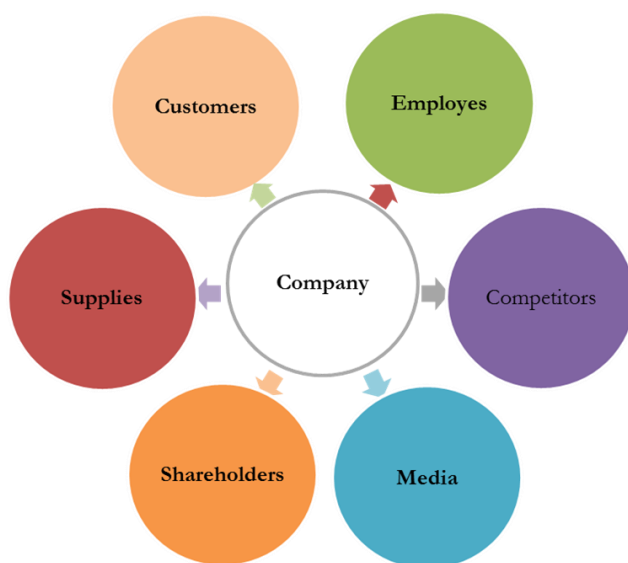


Figure 6. The company's microenvironment

The macro-environment factors influenced by external factors such as economic conditions and legislations but cannot be controlled by the firms (Chaffey et al 2009, 50). In order to have a deeper understanding of the company's macro-environment, Chaffey et al (2009, 128) suggest to analyse SLEPT factors known as PEST factors but for online practices it is important to consider not only **P**olitical, **E**conomic, **S**ocial and **T**echnological aspects but also **L**egal aspects of marketing activities.

3.2.2 Objective setting

Next step of the process is goals and objective formulation. "Goals are objectives that are specific with the respect to magnitude and time" (Kotler & Keller 2009, 92). They can range from increasing brand awareness to reduce costs on marketing activities. It is important to set specific goals in order to easily go through overall process towards achieving company's objectives. (Gillin & Schwartzman 2011, 146.) According to Strauss and Frost (2009, 52), an objective in online marketing has to include the task, has to be measurable and time framed. Solomon et al (2008, 45) emphasize that objectives have to be also attainable.

Chaffey (2010) assumes that there is a challenge to set objectives for online marketing due to different measures. Chaffey and Smith (2000, in Chaffey 2010) developed 5S's of online marketing that could help to review and control performance of marketing activities (figure 7).

- **Sell** – grow sales, attract customers using the Internet technology
- **Speak** – be closer to customers through communication and participation, use mobile technology.
- **Serve** – add value, increase quality of service.
- **Save** – save costs using online marketing
- **Sizzle** – build the brand online. Interact, engage with your customer, and increase the level of satisfaction and recommendation.



Figure 7. 5Ss of objectives setting for online marketing

3.2.3 Marketing strategy

Strategic decision of online marketing strategy is similar to traditional strategic decision. The difference is that online strategy includes information technology elements such as the Internet, digital content and data. (Chaffey et al 2009, 232.) Online marketing strategy is development of marketing strategy based on Internet technology capabilities to achieve company's objectives Strauss and Frost (2009, 27). Chaffey et al (2009, 232) state that the keys of effective online marketing are segmentation, targeting, differentiation and positioning. It involves defining of target group and formulating the method to deliver the value to customers. Online marketing strategy is a channel marketing strategy, thus it should consider following factors:

- to be supported by objectives for increasing sales or leading in specified channel
- to target logically group of customers that could be easily reached through this channel
- to attract and engage with customers for creation of long-term relationships
- to formulate a unique and differential offer for this channel
- to define the way to communicate this offer and convince the customers to use online services.

According to Strauss and Frost (2009, 52-54), in order to achieve objectives marketers develop strategy regarding to traditional 4Ps, such as product, pricing, place and promotion, including also people (i.e., customer and partner relationship management (CRM/PRM)). In order to deliver better service, Chaffey et al (2009, 276) extend marketing mix from 4Ps to 7Ps including process and physical evidence described by Booms and Bitner. 7Ps of online marketing mix will be as follows:

- **Product.** Increasing the sale of current product or creation of new product.
- **Price.** Decision on price differential of online and offline product/service.
- **Place.** Definition of product distribution or creation of efficiency using intermediaries' distribution channel.
- **Promotion.** Drawing customers and interacting with them.
- **People.** Building relationships with customers and partners.
- **Process and Physical experience.** Maintaining the online presence

Safko and Brake (2009, 675) describe social media strategy supported by four pillars. These four pillars stabilize the strategy platform and make it work. They presented as categories of online engagement with customers, employees, stakeholders and prospects: communication, collaboration, education, and entertainment.

3.2.4 Tactics

At this stage company defines what tactical online communication tools they will use to achieve effectively and efficiently specified objectives. They select the marketing mix (4Ps or 7Ps), decide on relationship management action, and check for resources (i.e., skilled staff, service providers, and needed software). Marketers have to bear in mind

information-gathering tactics (i.e., online surveys, cookies, e-mail) in order to get information about visitors, customer behaviour, their needs and competitors. (Strauss & Frost 2009, 54.)

3.2.5 Action implementation

Chaffey et al (2009, 257) suggest that this element of strategy refers to action plan that describes who does what and when. A useful model for assessing organisational capabilities to meet the challenges were developed by McKensey consultants in the 1980s and summarised by EConsultancy in 2005. (figure 8 and attachment 2).

The main challenges of online management and their key issues are:

- **Strategy** – identification of budget, monitoring of actual revenue and cost.
- **Structure** – the adaptation of organisational structure to support online marketing.
- **Staff and Skill** – in/outsourcing, training staff to manage online marketing.
- **Style** – identifications of the role of marketing team in achieving company's objectives.
- **Superordinate goals** – increasing the awareness of the importance of online marketing team in organisation.
- **Systems** – choice of technologies, monitoring, and information collection.

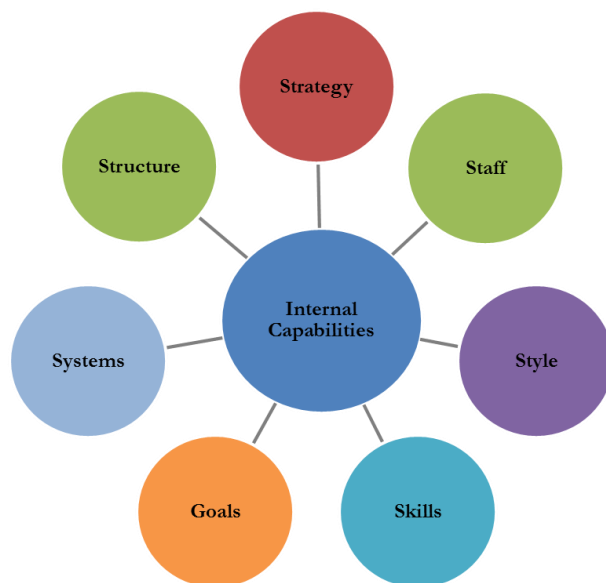


Figure 8. 7S framework of organisational capabilities (Chaffey et al 2009, 24)

Solomon et al (2008, 56) conclude that action plan might include a time line for achievement of specified tasks; it is important to incorporate the overall marketing process into the plan to portray the timing of each task.

3.2.6 Control

This step of strategic planning includes monitoring of performance, assessing whether company's objectives are achieved and, making adjustment in strategy to improve results derived. It is essential for successful planning to have possibility to make changes when required. (Chaffey et al 2009, 212.) Solomon et al (2008, 55) suggest that control requires right marketing metrics to measure various factors of marketing performance. Since the importance of using appropriate measurement became crucial, the term "web analytics" were created to portray online marketing activities. Web analytics are techniques that assess quantitative data such as web traffic, surveys, sales transactions and etc. to improve the performance of marketing activities. (Chaffey et al 2009, 576.)

Analysing and recording the performance of marketing activities are the challenges of the social media adoption. By examining company's online activities, marketers could identify the most valuable metrics and get results. In table 2 are shown some available metrics to measure social media performance presented by Robert Scoble and other consultants. (Evans 2012, 149.)

Table 2. Social media metrics (Evans 2012, 150)

Target Knowledge	Interpreted information	Underlying Metrics
Audience	Who's reading what	Aggregate profile data
Unique visitors	Page views, visitor info, blog mentions, click analysis, traffic patterns, sources of traffic via referrer measures	Web analytics: unique visitors
Influence	Memes: thoughts, ideas, current conversations, and intensity over time.	Time on site, blog context, review polarity or other measure of author influence
Engagement	Number of clicks, length of stay, conversations	Time on site, pass-alongs, comment-to-post ration, blog mentions, reviews, bounce rates
Action	Conversations	Pass-alongs, conversations, reviews, likes,+1s, followers
Loyalty	Trends, subscribers, repeat visitors, referrals	Pass-alongs, blog mentions, time on site, bounce rate

3.3 Marketing communication

Bovee and Thill (2010, 38) define “communication as the process of transferring information and meaning between senders and receivers, using one or more written, oral, visual, or electronic channels”. The key factors of communication are to provide and share data. Communication benefits business in different ways:

- it provides with stronger decision
- it helps to solve problems faster
- it increases productivity
- it sends clear and persuasive messages.

Being the part of marketing mix, marketing communication plays an important role in marketing. Communication is a sub-category of promotion part that shape customer attitude and behaviour. (Solomon et all 2008, 375.)

According to Solomon et al (2008, 376) the role of marketing communication is to help to create and strengthen professional image:

- it *informs* consumers about new offers and promotions;
- it *reminds* consumers about past transactions and that product/service is still exist;
- it *persuades* to consumers to use one product instead of other;
- it *builds* long-term relationships with customers and all its shareholders.

Strauss and Frost (2012, 291) agree that online marketing is the effective way to build brand image and long-term customer relationship. They suggest that marketers have to be clever and convinced while designing brand messages. It is essential to decide on relevant and interesting information, to choose the right time and place to deliver these messages, and to engage the consumers with contents, comments or applications.

Kotler and Keller (2009, 526) define the major tools of communication mix, on which companies could concentrate their funds. Each tool is unique and has own cost. They are:

- **Advertising** (including online advertising)
- Sales **promotion** (e.g., coupons and contests)
- Online and offline **public relation**. The qualities of public relation and publicity are high credibility and ability to catch buyers.
- **Events** and experience. Advantages of events are relevant and involved customer personally.
- **Direct marketing** (e.g., e-mail marketing) that are usually customised, up-to-date and interactive.
- Online and offline **word-of-mouth**. This approach has important factors such as credible, personal and timely.
- And **personal selling**. The most effective communication tool with three qualities: personal interaction, cultivation, and response.

Marketers develop marketing communication strategy and use one or all tools of marketing communication mix. Technology now allows creating and utilising customer database that gives opportunity to small and large companies to understand customers and to develop personalised communication program. Same technology gives

possibility to customers to communicate with each other, talk about products and brands, viewing advertisements while using the Internet or watching TV. (Solomon et al 2008, 387.) The concept of integration and coordination of different communication channels in order to deliver clever, regular messages about the company and its product describes integrated marketing communication (IMC) (Chaffey et al 2009, 487). Strauss and Frost (2012, 292) state that the integrated marketing communication is “a cross-functional process for planning, executing, and monitoring brand communications”. Every touch points that consumers have with company’s employees, corporate website, advertising, and the physical store lead to the formation of brand image. While integration of different online and offline communication together with value-added product experience, pricing, and distribution channel contribute to a strong brand image creation.

Pickton and Broderick (2001, in Chaffey et al 2009, 487) identify the characteristics of integrated marketing communication as the 4Cs of:

- Coherence – logically connected different communications channels
- Consistency – different messages support and reinforce, and do not contradict.
- Continuity – communications are connected and consistent through time.
- Complementary – synergistic, or the sum of the parts is greater than the whole!

Since profitable customer relationship is an initial aspect of company’s existence, marketers with help of technology monitor and analyse customer profitability, and then focus on high-value customers using online and offline communication media. (Strauss & Frost 2012, 292.) According to Chaffey and all (2009, 487), integrated communication strategy can easily integrated in online marketing. IMC strategy starts with setting of objectives of marketing communication and the analysis of internal and external environments. It proceeds with identification of media to deliver message to customers. After action implementation they monitor and measure effectiveness of promotional and media mix. The aim of IMC strategy is to reach the customers, to identify the relevant frequency for message delivering, to get impact for each media that was used.

Offline communication is important factor in driving customers to visit corporate websites, blogs and other online platforms. Hitwise (2006, in Chaffey et al 2009, 561) discovered that there was a significant increase in searches on particular brand names when online and offline communication techniques were combined. When Graham and Havlena (2007, in Chaffey et al 2009, 562) studied the relevance of advertising formed in word-of-mouth online discussion, they indicated an evident consumer interest and engagement with a brand. According to Chaffey et al (2009, 563), offline communication is “effective in achieving four critical things”: reach, brand awareness, emotional connection and explanation. But integrated marketing communication much more effective in achieving these objectives because of its essential characteristics (4Cs) mentioned before.

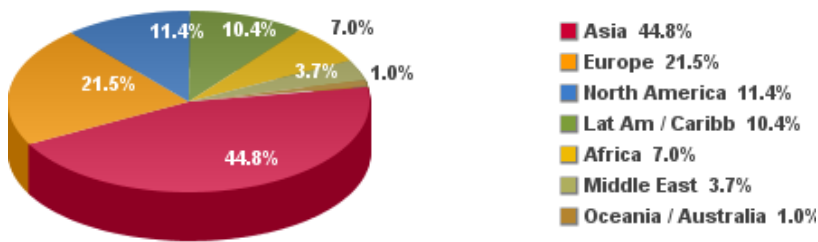
Using different communication channels to build brand together with value-added products are initial aspects in catching attention and establishing long-term relationship with customers (Strauss & Frost 2012, 291). In addition, integrated marketing communication can support customers through the whole purchase process, across multiple communication channels (Chaffey et al 2009, 488).

3.4 Social media landscape

Increasing use of the Internet is obvious. The number of users visiting different websites, using various web applications has colossal growth. People spend more and more time searching and communicating. (Sankar & Bouchard 2009, 14.)

According to internet world stats (Jun, 2012), there are more than 2 billion of global online participants (figure 9) and more than one billion of online users participate in social media (Lunden 2012).

Internet Users in the World Distribution by World Regions - 2012 Q2



Source: Internet World Stats - www.internetworldstats.com/stats.htm
 Basis: 2,405,518,376 Internet users on June 30, 2012

Figure 9. Proportion of global Internet users (Internet World Stats 2012)

Sankar and Bouchard (2009, 15) believe that the possibilities to communicate effectively with customers, to innovate, to have new opportunities, and to cut cost increase business drivers, hence willingness to use and implement online channels and applications in business practices. Crowther (2012) presents the different operational groups of social landscape: relationship building platforms, content distribution, entertainment and rating. These groups include a great number of different channels and platforms. (Figure 10.)



Figure 10. Social Channels and grouping (Crowther 2012)

3.4.1 Social networking

A great number of social networking sites can be found on the Internet. They connect members of community in different ways but the aim of every networking site is to allow members to communicate and connect with friends, uploading photos and tagging. (Evans 2010, 26.) Members of social networks connect with one another for many different purposes. There are social networks for meeting peoples, sharing information, and entertainment. Other networks are professional that could be used as recruiter sites for example. Social networks are widely used by marketers for advertising purpose. (Strauss & Frost 2009, 341.) Individuals are the essential elements of social network. By creating professional network, the number of people that you can reach is increasing when it comes to share knowledge and experience about company and its product. (Sankar & Bouchard 2009, 91.)

According to Sankar and Bouchard (2009, 91), social networking has great impact on companies and their brands. For example, only Facebook has around one billion monthly active users (Facebook 2012). Social networks can impact on overall business process – its internal and external factors, e.g., increasing service quality or even developing product through participation and collaboration (Sankar & Bouchard 2009, 91).

Some of the various benefits of social networking are the improvement of customer responsiveness and ability to bring customers closer to companies. Corporate online communities, support and R&D forums together with customer engagement are becoming the essential parts of company's networking system. Social networking provides an amazing opportunity for employees to work effectively and efficiently by reading relevant materials and by providing more information about other employees that improve communication among co-workers. (Sankar & Bouchard 2009, 93.)

Sankar and Bouchard (2009, 95) assume companies can use social networking:

- as marketing tool using viral nature of networks
- to develop appropriate applications to entertain and engage customers
- to combine social networks with internal corporate networks in order to link with customer and obtain control and compliance.

Solis (2011, 47) presumes that “participation is a key to growing community and ensuring its integrity and associated activities.”

Facebook is the most largest and important social networking site in the world that unites people and organisations. Companies, regardless of size, use this great opportunity to connect, communicate and interact with customers and prospects. And Facebook pages are becoming more valuable than even own corporate websites. (Rouhiainen 2012, 21.) Facebook provides crucial connections between customers, companies, content, and data. Success on this social networking site is determined by time spent, resources allocated, and creativity used. And the terms “*share, like, comment, and add*” became the aspects of successful business outcomes. (Solis 2011, 222 -224.) Sankar and Bouchard (2009, 96) define three essential aspects of Facebook: “deep integration, mass distribution and new opportunity.” Rouhiainen (2012, 24) highlights several benefits provided by Facebook pages for business:

- it is easy to create and maintain them
- advertising could be integrated through Facebook ads
- it gives statistic to track visitors
- enabling customers to contact directly companies
- Facebook pages classify highly in search engines listing.

According to Alexa’s global traffic rank (Nov 2012), Facebook is the most popular site. The most active general audience of Facebook is 18-24 years old users. They use it for its interaction but they complain about poor customer service (table 3).

Table 3. Review summery for Facebook (Alexa 2012)

Facebook	
Likes	Dislikes
1 Active community	1 Poor customer support
2 Good content	2 Site is slow and unresponsive
3 Easy to navigate	3 Hard to navigate

Concerning to mobile users, there are 600 million monthly active users who used Facebook mobile devices (Facebook 2012).

LinkedIn is the biggest professional social network that counts over 175 million business people, over 2 million companies that have LinkedIn company pages (LinkedIn). It allows building network and engaging among the people of specific industry. LinkedIn focuses particularly on Business-to-Business relationships. (Rouhiainen 2012, 88.) LinkedIn personal profiles provide with important information including current and previous positions, education background and recommendations. These data help to find suitable person for job or for partnership. (Sankar & Bouchard 2009, 104.) Social networking sites have challenges as well: privacy and security issues, viruses and copyright violations (Sankar and Bouchard 2009, 94).

LinkedIn population is quite young – 18-24 years old. The LinkedIn users like this platform for its activity and dislike for its slowness; they also indicated its good quality of customer support (table 4) (Alexa 2012).

Table 4. Review summary for LinkedIn

LinkedIn	
Likes	Dislikes
1 Active community	1 Site is slow and unresponsive
2 Easy to navigate	2 Hard to navigate
3 Good content	

3.4.2 Blogging

Blog (from the term Web log) is online diary or journal, constantly updated and appeared in reverse chronological order on Webpages (Strauss & Frost 2009, 337). Marketers started to get interest in blogs because often users had important information by writing them. The aim of blogging is to create and engage audience in appropriate to this network communication. Usually blog articles are presented in a more personal way, allowing consumers to see a real person behind the company and brand. Bloggers allow companies to establish trustful relationship with customers that could lead to contributions. Blog audience is more interested in and kept by the personal action and attitude. Since more bloggers published their articles, the blogging phenomenon is become very popular. (Cass 2007, 200-201.)

Blogs give opportunity to comment on almost everything, your company posted. It enables company to get feedback that could impact on its marketing. It became easier, faster and cheaper to create and provide, thus more efficient. Other factor that affects marketing process is the fact that marketers can't control messages or content that could be found easily in search results by competitors, analysts etc. Then marketers started to leverage blogs and other social sites to analyse and measure consumer behaviour. (Sankar & Bouchard 2009, 37.) According to Cass (2007, 13), since marketing is about to understand the consumer needs and wants, a corporate blog is a great opportunity to know customer concerns, to get feedback and to develop better product and service.

Search technology is playing important role in success of blogging as blog articles can be found through the search in search engine. Blog platforms provide users with various tools that help to find people with the same interests. Keywords describe published contents and help other bloggers to find it among blog community. However, there is a challenge to track comments on blog entries because every blog is an individual website. (Cass 2007, 201.) Trackbacks and RSS feed are also important tools for bloggers and their readers. Trackbacks communicate blogs by automatically notifying that one blogger has cited your article in his/her blog entry. RSS feed benefits blog readers who subscribed to specific blog by notifying about new contents. (Cass 2007, 5.) Many social media channels have widgets that allow a blogger to link published on blog content with numerous networking sites, YouTube and Facebook as example (Cass 2007, 202).

Microblogging is a popular feature that comes in the form of status update. There are more people who update almost every day their status on microblogs than those who write posts in blogs. **Twitter** is one of the largest microblogging services among Facebook and Google. (Solis 2011, 51.) According to Rouhiainen (2012, 88), journalists, celebrities, and large companies found Twitter suitable for their social media activities because due to its huge user base. Twitter is also right place to share interesting information, to interact with potential consumers, and to provide customer support. Solis (2011, 52-54) suggests that companies can leverage Twitter services in

various ways by creating community of brand advocates, by advertising, and by collaboration for new products and services. Important aspect of Twitter is that it encourages word of mouth communication.

The age group of global users on Twitter is from 18 to 44 years old (Alexa 2012). Alexa (2012) reports that the Twitter's users find Twitter's community active but dislike it for its slowness and unresponsiveness (table 5).

Table 5. Review summary for Twitter (Alexa 2012)

Twitter	
Likes	Dislikes
1 Active community	1 Site is slow and unresponsive
2 Good content	2 Hard to navigate
3 Easy to navigate	3 Poor customer support

Some of the problems can be highlighted while using blogs. First of all it is lack of the editorial review and to know what news and information could be relevant to the readers. Other issues are the quality of the content and a code of ethics. (Cass 2007, 208.) Kaplan and Haenlein (2009, 63) indicate that disappointed customer for some reason could complaint in corporate blog which might cause a potential damage to company's image.

3.4.3 Photo and Video sharing sites

Sankar and Bouchard (2009, 60) believe that YouTube, Pinterest and other web-based platforms give possibility to make websites more visual and personalised by posting videos and photos. Visual contents created by customers or employees could be used as the key tools in marketing, especially if this video or photo is posted on company website.

YouTube is a popular platform that utilise video technology to display video contents Sankar and Bouchard (2009, 63). YouTube generates embed code to boost people to add easily preferred videos on different social media sites. This same code encourages creating more contents, such as animated video, presentations, and games. To capture

audience’s attention and to have large number of viewers and shares, video has to be creative, professional, and with “context that speak volumes”. This is the great opportunity to connect and engage people by gaining and holding their attention with human voice and exciting content. Videos could have “storytelling, entertainment or education” content and can range from small interviews, product demos to family collages. (Solis 2011, 65-67.) Solis (2011, 68) suggests to entitle, give description and tag video using keywords to easily find relevant information.

YouTube audience consists primarily of young people: 18-24 years old. This sharing site is also popular for visitors between 25 and 34 years old. (Alexa 2012.) Its users prefer this site for interesting contents; however they find its customer service poor (table 6).

Table 6. Review summary for YouTube (Alexa 2012)

YouTube	
Likes	Dislikes
1 Good content	1 Poor customer support
2 Easy to navigate	2 Hard to navigate
3 Active community	3 Site is slow and unresponsive

Pinterest is one of fastest growing content sites that connect people based on tastes and interests (Pinteres 2012). This platform allows its members to organise, to share and comments on photos. Since Pinterest is linked to Facebook, various websites and YouTube, company or personal activities can instantly be published on these pages. Businesses with visual products (photographer, designers, for example) have more advantages from Pinterest services by sharing and distributing interesting photos. Pinterest is also providing applications for mobile devices that help to harness it wherever you go. (Rouhiainen 2012, 89-91.)

General Pinterest population is 25-34 years old users. Pinterest members indicate that they can easily navigate and find many good contents. Anyhow there are many users who have challenge to increase traffic to their Pinterest accounts. (Alexa 2012.)

3.5 Textual Data Analysis

Many businesses are leveraging social media and mobile devices today. Business executives try to find directions in which firms can use social media channels and applications to improve business outcomes. Social media is changing the way how social channels and information about customers are used by marketers. Business owners can use social media for external purposes in order to build long-term relationship with existing or potential customers; or for internal purpose by providing employees effective platform to collaborate and participate in organisation's success.

Marketers bring customer relationships efforts to the individual level. Vernocchi (2010, 47) suggests to target not audience but individuals. He believes that the era of mass marketing is over and companies have to engage with individuals - who spend more and more time with digital media - as never before. According to Forrester Research (in Kaplan & Haenlein 2010, 59), in 2008 75% users used social media by communicating in social networking sites, reading and commenting blog articles, or providing reviews to shopping sites; this number shows a noticeable rise from 56% in 2007.

Marketingprofs (2012a) published top 50 Websites where a Google sites were the top-ranked social media property by having 187 million visitors. This list included popular social media sites, such as Facebook (No 4 with 150 million visitors), LinkedIn (No 26, with more than 39 million visitors), Twitter (No 27 with 36 million) and Pinterest that appeared first time on the top 50 chart at No. 50 by attracting more than 25 million visitors. Global popularity of online marketing and social media in particular is rapidly evolving. Today more than 76% of business (B2B and B2C) are using social media marketing, and 16% of business intents to adopt it by the end of 2012 (figure 11) (Marketingprofs 2012b.)

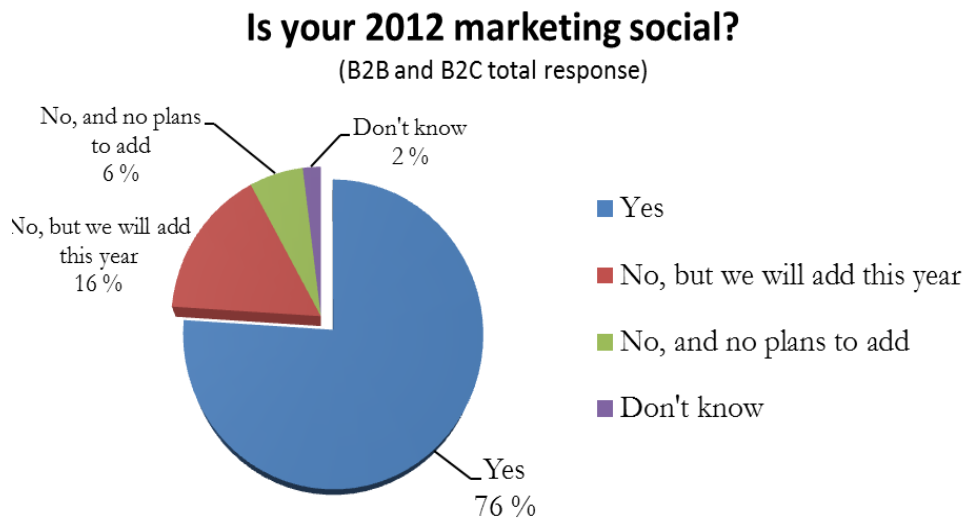


Figure 11. Social marketing trends survey 2012

Levey (2012) says “*Social media is a big source of big data*”. This data are unstructured but give important information about how customer speaks about brand and products; and who converses. Analysing these information is time-consuming and without technology help, it is almost impossible to structure and use data. He suggests that marketers receive great perception by using social media but the challenge is “*linking that back to a customer and using it to interact with customers.*”

Companies can start to receive benefit or to face various challenges by having a corporate page on social networking and user-review sites. A page that has positive comments will drive business; however, negative reviews can turn potential customer off from your business. To improve their rank position, some companies can pay people for making positive reviews about its product or negative comments on competitor’s product and service.

Social media platforms can be very useful not only for business but for governmental and non- governmental organisations. For example, Department of Electronics and Information Technology of India conducted research on social media implementation for Ministry of Communications & Information Technology Government of India. According to Department of Electronics and Information Technology of India (2012, 10, 24), the main challenges of Social Media adoptions are to identify the reason of social media usage (the need and objectives), appropriate platform for engagement, the responsible for such an engagement, and the maintenance of this engagement process

(response time, legal implications and other factors). They also concluded that social media can help to “engage more meaningfully with their various stakeholders”, to provide a broader based consultation, to “reduce the duration of consultation process” and receive immediate feedback on services delivered.

Regardless of all challenges, social media give a great opportunity to different forms of organisations to use same channels and tools as large companies at low cost and harness social media to enhance various potentials (Kaplan & Haenlein 2010, 67). According Kaplan and Haenlein (2010, 67), mobile applications will be the driver for mobile social media evolution that, “*soon accounting for over 50% of the market.*”

4 Entrepreneurs and Social media

More small and medium-sized business owners are concentrating their marketing efforts on social media. They start to realize the power of online marketing, its availability and the value of connection and interaction with customers online. Social media is overflowing, but it is a common aspect of every effective marketing tool. Today's entrepreneurs are trying to implement social media strategy in business integrating it with traditional marketing. (Sadler Nov, 2012.) In this part the author presents the research method used for the study, data analysis of interview and online questionnaires conducted with the entrepreneurs of small and medium-sized business. They shared their real-life experiences with social media, customer interaction and monitoring.

4.1 Research methods

Social Media offer a great opportunity for business to achieve its objectives in a more effective and efficient way. This research attempts to provide with deeper understanding of why marketers or entrepreneurs are using social media, how they are using it and, what benefits it offers and what challenges company could face. There are usually two methods used for research: quantitative and qualitative. These two terms refers to the data collected during the research. Where quantitative data involve measurement and analysis of variables, qualitative data require perception and interpretation of the process. (Farquhar 2010, 17.) According to Denzin and Lincoln (1994, 1), qualitative research implies on the collection of the empirical materials – interviews, observations, case study, personal experience, and literature review related to the real time and real person. In order to understand deeper the fieldwork, qualitative researcher conducts interpretative process using narrative, content analyses, and even statistics and tables.

In this study the researcher used mainly qualitative research method. The quantitative method was also used: while preparing data collected from Likert-style questions, the average was calculated by combining the numbers from the list and computing a single number in order to find the most and least popular responses. Regardless the quantitative nature of data, qualitative approach was used to present the findings.

Empirical material was collected and traditional research was used. In order to collect primary data and to provide recommendations for further marketing activities, the author conducted an in-depth investigation of the fashion designer *X* that commissioned her research to analyse social media usage. During this investigation were carried casual online semi-structured interview and observation of her social media activities. In addition, online questionnaires for the entrepreneurs and for the consultant were designed to gain a rich understanding of phenomenon of the study and support data collected through literature review.

4.2 Data collection

In order to have in-depth investigation of the phenomenon, the author decided to use triangulation approach. According to Yin, this method closely affects the data collection process (1994, in Neergaard & Ulhoe 2007, 135). Triangulation introduces to use multiple data gathering techniques, such as interview, literature review, observations and questionnaires in a single study (Neergaard & Ulhoe 2007, 135).

During the research, primary and secondary data were collected and analysed. The semi-structured interview and online questionnaires guided to investigate social media use, the most relevant tools and channels of social media marketing, and its benefits and challenges. Observation provided the author with additional information that assisted to assess the online marketing activities of the fashion designer *X*, to prepare additional questions for the interview, and correlate the data collected through the interview with the observation data.

Additionally, the author conducted online surveys based on questionnaires designed in English on Webropol platform. Through the questionnaires, she collected primary data from five (5) entrepreneurs and a (1) social media consultant. Since my commissioning party is an entrepreneur of small business, the researcher chose to focus on entrepreneurs of small and medium-sized enterprises considering that both categories of enterprises allocate limited resources for their marketing activities. For the study the researcher could also approach a Mumbai-based social media strategist “the consultant”. Due to time limit and the consultant workload, it was difficult to arrange

an interview, thus it was decided to create an extra online survey, which contained almost similar to entrepreneurs' survey questions.

4.2.1 Secondary data

Secondary data benefit with valuable source that can answer the questions of the researcher. These data contain both raw and compiled data. Secondary data classified in documentary data, survey based data and data from multiple sources (Saunders et al 2009, 256.) (Figure 12.)

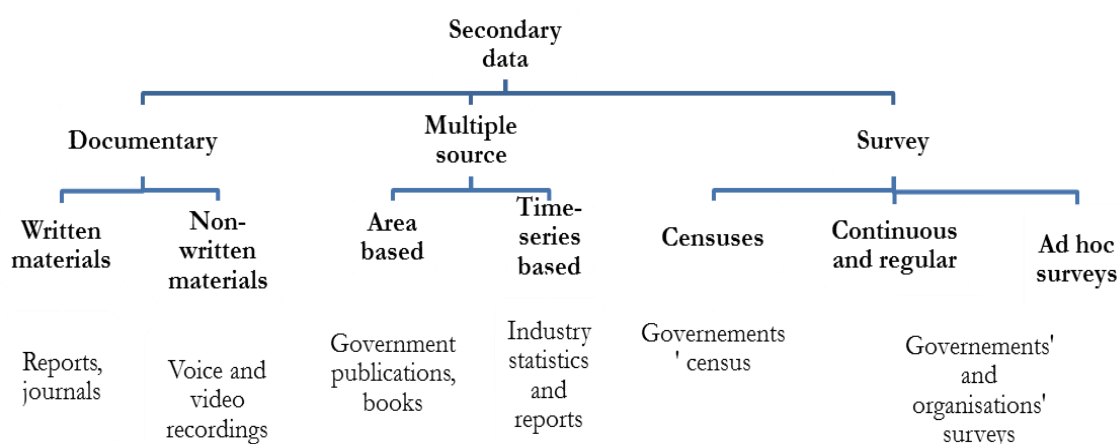


Figure 12 Types of secondary data (Saunders et al 2009, 259)

For this research, the author used multiple sources to collect primary data. The theoretical findings were mainly collected from academic literature. According to Saunders et al (2009, 262) the multiple-source secondary data can be gathered entirely from literature review or from surveys, or can be based on combination of these data sources. Multiple internet sites provided this study with online data including qualitative data and statistics from social media related articles, reports and surveys. The major points of literature review are presented at the end of theoretical framework in sub-section “Textual data analysis”.

4.2.2 Primary data

There are different techniques to collect primary data. The researcher can choose to use interview, oral/written questionnaire, observation or to combine all methods for the study. (Churchill 2010, 186.)

Interview has different forms, including structured, semi-structured and unstructured. The structured interview is usually conducted systematically and collected in numerical form. (Neergard & Ulhoi 2007, 109.) Using the semi-structured interview the researcher focuses on specific subject matter to explore, has several prepared questions and ready to ask questions that could assist in organising received information. In the unstructured interview, the interviewer has a topic but improvises during the interview, formulating questions depending on previous answers. (Rubin & Rubin 2012, 31.)

Observations can be an important approach to gather and analyse understanding of fieldwork because it offers opportunity to observe the subject matter from various perspectives. Observation is often used in the exploratory process to help to understand what is happening in real time. This method also could support and compliment collected data. (Neergard & Ulhoi 2007, 409.) During the research, the author used observation technique in order to analyse activities of the fashion designer X on Facebook and her corporate website. All observations were recorded and collected in diary.

Online survey

Survey is the method of gathering the data through questionnaires (Saunders et al 2009, 601). According to Saunders et al (2009, 144), it is a standard strategy in the business research. Surveys intend to collect a significant amount of data from a large sample in cheapest way. The challenge of survey is that the process of analysing the data is time consuming. In order to collect valuable data and high response rate the sample of the research has to be representative. Punch (2003, 61) indicates that the main principals of questionnaire: questions must be short and simply worded; question carries on idea, there are no double negatives; and language used is clear and appropriate. Punch (2003, 2) states that surveys can provide with quantitative or qualitative data. Qualitative surveys often include open-ended questions that do not present numerical data and can be analysed without converting words into numbers. The quantitative surveys are created to provide with numerical data, and advance by measuring variables in order to study the relationships between them.

During the study online survey was designed to gather supplement primary data. Five entrepreneurs were interrogated through online questionnaires. The responses provided their own view and experience with social media. The online survey was open for respondents from 17 to 30 October 2012. It was consisted of six (6) parts with thirty nine (39) questions in total. (Attachment 3.) In order to get valuable information from respondents, the author has designed:

- 18 close-ended questions where respondent could chose only one option
- 7 close-ended questions by using a 5-point Likert-style rating scale from “strongly disagree” to “strongly agree” that provided the researcher with opinion data.
- 2 close-ended questions where respondent could chose more than one options
- 12 open-ended questions

According to Saunders et all (2009, 378-379), rating questions are often provide opinion data. Likert-style rating scale enables the respondents to demonstrate how strongly the respondent agrees or disagree with a statement and insists to deliberate on their feelings towards positive or negative statement. For the rating questions, Saunders et all (2009, 386) suggest to enact coding scheme in order to group negative and positive opinions and calculate an average using a computer. This qualitative technique helped the author to identify easily the most and the least favourable opinion towards a particular statement.

Close-ended questions give possibility to choose from provided answers, whereas in open-ended questions respondents have possibility to express their thoughts and opinions in their own words. (Bradburn et all 2004, 153.) According to Saunders et all (2009, 376), close-ended questions take minimum time and easy to answer from respondent point of view. The data are also easier to analyse and interpret. For this research, almost every close-ended question in survey included the “other” option, where the respondent could provide alternative answer. Bradburn et all (2004, 153-154) explain that open-ended questions are valuable aspects in the questionnaires. It is important factor in such research where the researcher tries to explore deeply a particular topic. However, there are some disadvantages. The free-responses data are time-consuming to analyse. And from respondents view, it implies more time, patience,

and also concentrations to answer to open-ended questions.

For this research, entrepreneur-respondents answered the same online survey with the same questions. All of them filled in the questionnaires on the same or next day after they had received the link to the survey.

4.3 Sampling

Sampling technique facilitates to decrease the amount of data required to gather and analyse. Some research findings involve generalising about all the elements of population, others do not require this kind of generalisation. (Saunders et al 2009, 210.) Population is the large group about what the researchers want study. Since they cannot use all elements of population, they draw a sample that represents a small subset of this population (figure 13). (Punch 2003, 36.)

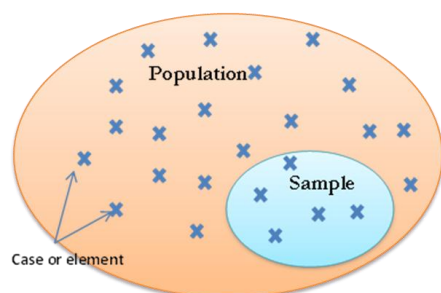


Figure 13. Population, sample and individual cases (Saunders et al 2009, 211)

In this research sampling was purposive and deliberate and concentrated on relevant individuals to whom the investigated fieldwork was well-known. Due to limited time, resources and access, the researcher could approach a small sample. For the study she identified through her observation some entrepreneurs who implemented digital and social media in their marketing activities. Via Facebook the author made pre-survey contact with twenty people, either owners of Mumbai-based enterprises or persons who had relevant contacts, by inviting to participate in this research. At this time four positive replies were received. When the link to the survey was sent to the relevant entrepreneurs, then the researcher got only three filled questionnaires. In order to obtain more data for the study, she decided to wider geographic area of the research population considering that Internet technology gives almost equal opportunity to all

its users.

The research sample of the study consists of five respondents: three - from Mumbai, two other respondents reside in London and Los Angeles. All of them are owners of small or medium-sized enterprises and all of them have key role in the process of choosing, implement and monitoring marketing activities in their enterprises.

According to Oxford dictionary (2012) an “entrepreneur is a person who sets up a business or businesses, taking on financial risks in the hope of profit” and “small and medium-sized enterprise is a company with no more than 500 employees.” In India SME in the service sector is a company where the investment in equipment does not exceed \$1.5 million (SME development chamber of India).

4.4 Data analyses

Data analysis process is the process of emphasize on important information by cleaning, transcribing and coding gathered data, to establish theory and draw conclusions (Saunders et all 2009, 480). In the qualitative research, interview is usually recorded, translated if needed and transcribed representing same words or meaning of the phrase when translated. Word-process files have to be carried with confidentiality and keep anonymity. (Saunders et all 2009, 485.) This research sought to examine the social media tools and applications to understand why entrepreneurs have incorporated it into their marketing activities. She did not intend to generalise the survey findings but obtain detailed information in this fieldwork; also the data of the research are not set out to test hypotheses.

4.4.1 Interview with the fashion designer X

In order to collect the primary data, casual semi structured interview was conducted on Skype with the fashion designer X. The Internet interview was convenient due to different geographic location of interviewer and interviewee (Rubin & Rubin 2012, 31). The interview was executed mainly in Russian and sometimes in English when using some specific words and phrases; and lasted almost 80 minutes. Later the interview was transcribed and translated fully in English. During the interview the discussion was started with brief presentation of entrepreneur and her background then moved

towards to the research topic, e.g., her experience with social media. The interview concluded 24 main (attachment 7) and about 45 secondary questions in order to clarify the response or to develop new facts came out during the conversation. The interview questionnaire was divided in six sections (figure 14).

Interview	i Introduction
	ii Reasons and Purposes of Social Media Usage
	iii Social media tools
	iv Targeted Audience
	v Monitoring
	vi Benefits and Challenges

Figure 14. Interview questionnaire layout

The interviewee started her activities as the fashion designer “*from scratch*” a year and half ago, in 2011, after moving from town *N* to Mumbai. In town *N*, she studied Sociology, then had her Master of applied Finance and finished the course “Introduction to fashion.” For a few years she had an idea to start her business but could realise her dream only in India when she got the support from the family. Since 2011 she has already created about 460 models of dresses. The participation of the pattern cutter and tailor is an essential factor in the creation process. The fashion designer *X* is not only a creator of her fashion clothes but also responsible for marketing in her small enterprise. She performs market analyses and maintains her social media accounts. Participating in exhibitions, the fashion designer *X* could develop valuable partnerships with merchandisers - owners of boutiques situated in the centre of Mumbai.

Since she had already had an experience with social media using her personal account on Facebook, she “*decided to create the Facebook page because it was fast, easy and effective.*” One more reason using social media in her marketing activities was its interactivity.

While asking about the integration of social media in marketing activities and its purposes, she mentioned that it *“was important to know that people aware about what I am doing”*. She also *“would like the people to buy ... models by ordering it online”*. In order to make it possible, together with Facebook page, she has *“created a corporate website”*. Nowadays she *“is working on this”*. She mentioned that *“First of all, you need a good website, platform. It has to look professionally (clear and easy to use), otherwise people will leave the site.”* She has revealed that it is not always easy to work one-to-one with clients, some of them *“are so demanding”*. *“I would like that”* clients *“just click two buttons and buy”* the dresses but the main aspect of her business is *“personal approach”* that justifies the price of her dresses. She said that clients *“can come to my place and to have a personal approach. I can also give an advice, because many Indians are little unsure what to wear with, how to dress. I can advise on shoes, jewellery, handbags, and etc. Customer has a picture of how it will look and realizes that she does not come to the store to try on and that’s it ... so I think people appreciate that a little bit”*.

During the observation the author noticed that she has also started a blog integrated in her corporate website. While talking about social media tools, this fact was brought up by asking for the reason using the blog. She replied: *“To be honest I would love to”* develop it. *“I like writing; I studied sociology, but at this moment, I do not have a lot of time. It takes time and I don’t have it.”* *“The blog - is new to me... Write for nothing, who will actually read it?”* But the blog is *“just for self-expression, a sort of informality. It is not just a website with photos, but a person behind it. You can interact; you can comment..., to attract others with your ideas and thoughts.”*

Later during the interview was learnt that she is also using Blackberry Messenger as a marketing tool. *“Very often, some of my new clothes, specifically photos of them, I am posting instead of my personal photographs. It happens that I receive a message: “I like it. Can I see it and try it on? “. ” I often use it for work. This is a great option to show my work and make people aware. There are contacts that I have on my blackberry, but not on Facebook”*.

For the question “what other social tool she wants to learn more?” she replied: *“I would like to have articles about me in online magazines. In Bombay there are “MB” (review site), “BPB” (review blog). ...there is often written about exhibitions, about the designers, who offer and what. They*

are independent; you pay nothing for this. ... Thus I'm trying to approach them. And I would like to use it". "I think they are effective and they are popular, accessible and free of charge."

The interviewer also asked the series of the questions to understand better the contents and activities on Facebook. She admitted that she is not creating strategic plan, *"I found, for example, these sites (review sites); I started to check them and realized that I could take an advantage of them, maybe it will help me. And then I'm trying to avail myself of this opportunity."* However she creates *"weekly plan ..., but not long-term plan."* Her contents are more *"informative"* and include *"photos, updates about collections, announcements about the events and occasional posts."*

Discussing about the target audience, the fashion designer X suggested that her *"clients are housewives"* who use *"this kind of websites"* (review sites and blogs). She also explained that she has two types of clients: *"Those who come to the store ... are 22 years young women who want to go to a party today; they come, buy these dresses... And clients who come to me are older; they are 30-year old woman and more.... Generally they know what they want."*

In order to increase her client database, she is creating it with help of social networks. One particular local community *"sends a list with contact information of all its registered members. I have the last updated version. Since I will have"* the presentation in new store, *"I plan to send out an invitation to everyone via e-mail."* To establish online presence, she has also *"registered in Burrp"* (review and recommendation site).

For the question about the most comfortable tool, she highlighted Facebook and the corporate website: *"Facebook is convenient when you want to invite people to an event, in this interactive process Facebook is the best. ... I can communicate with my people."* *"The website too. ... It is easier for me to post images and I like its presentation. As a user, I like to do it on the website."*

Next questions referred to monitoring the customers and its conversation, and also competitors. For the question about listening to customers, she said that *"As for my website – no. On my page on FB, people are able to respond to press like or comment on. If they comment, I always try to answer. Here again, the same interaction. ... everything is fast and it is convenient."* However, she can monitor website traffic: *"Periodically, I can place my page"*

(author: share her website link in social networking sites), *“after that, I see that traffic to my site is increased.”* Here fashion designer faces a challenge to understand this statistic: *“I can see how many individuals visit my site. But it does not give me any education, whether they like, dislike, and etc.”*

On the question concerning to listening to about her competitors, she answered that *“It is difficult, there are lots of them.”* She tried to learn about them during the exhibitions or visiting different stores. When the interviewer suggested the possibility to monitor them through the review magazines that she mentioned earlier, she replied: *“Well, if only in this way. But there are either a very famous designers ...or online sales of inexpensive clothes...”* “Not many” designers *“have website pages. Anyway, it is very difficult to track them online. Sometimes “MB” writes articles about them, I want to see what they do, but many do not have the resources, they give only phone numbers.”*

Other challenges mentioned by the fashion designer X concern monitoring and understanding the customer behaviour were: *“It is difficult to trace who unsubscribed from your page. I cannot understand who and why she unsubscribed. And it would be interesting to know why they left. Maybe I post too many photos or something else. It is very difficult to know who left.”* Also it is difficult to understand how customer *“found me, through whom she found me.”*

She also emphasised that *“it takes a lot of time and patience”*, talking about Facebook and website. Regarding the engagement she told that this is her *“concern: I will write, and it can be ignored, it is why I'd better to spend time on something other than on this. If someone writes me or leaves a comment, for me it is much easier to write personal message than public one.* She adds that *“in order to write something, it is important to think over. I cannot write impulsively, and then everyone could see it. I have to be responsible and careful. I have to know what to write, how to write.”*

With Facebook pages there were some issues *“at the beginning, when I created the page, it was difficult to understand what and how to do.”* She said that sometimes *“it's hard to keep track of all the messages, everything is fast...”* and *“on Facebook is very difficult*

to sort. It is very important to me, in what sequence appear photographs.” In this case she prefers the website features mentioned earlier.

By defining effectiveness of social media, she explained that *“for me, a success is when someone found me on FB, “like” page, this person came to me and ordered a dress. To me this is the most important.”* She was agree that *“on such a small level, but there is a brand exposure.”* *“I’m trying to take an advantage of social media opportunity. I think sometimes to focus on something one, but on the other hand, there are so many people, I am trying to embrace everything. I don’t know.”*

She concluded that social media experience is more likely to be positive. *“It is important at the initial stage; you do not have to spend money. Yes, it takes time, but there are some benefits: new customers, possibility to communicate with them, to show your work, the opportunity to let people know that you exist.”*

At the end of our conversation the fashion designer said: *“... a woman called me today and said that she wanted to order a dress. The same woman who organized an exhibition I participated in” a year ago.* When fashion designer decided to check if this person is in her Facebook friends list, she was little bit touched by the fact that people actually follow her posts. *“That’s interesting. I even did not think of it.”*

4.4.2 Observations

During the study the researcher observed the activities of commissioning party (the fashion designer X) on her Facebook page and her corporate website. All observations were recorded and collected in diary. The Fashion designer’s profile on FB was created on 20 May 2011; today it has 63 followers and consists of photos, announcements, some messages and events. Average frequency of contents appearance is about 10-15 days. The content of posts is more likely to be informative. There is some attempt to engage people to conversation. The fashion designer X is answering almost to each comment but there is one important comment that she left without any comments. Probably she preferred to answer personally; however, this could leave people without important information or with negative impression.

In order to inform about new collection, she regularly shares the posts in different social networks that links to her Facebook Page. Examining Facebook page account, it was found that description of her activities was limited to the couple of words such as “product/ service”. That actually does not give enough information about her business. However, it included a URL of her corporate website. By following this link, the visitors can go directly to the fashion designer’s home page. The website also links back to the corporate Facebook page.

The website structure is presented in clear way. It is divided in seven parts including “Home”, “Just arrived”, “Collection”, “About”, “Contact”, “Faces & Places” and “more”. The photographs of current and previous collection were presented on “Home” and “Collection” pages. “Collection” page is divided in several parties presenting different fashion collections. The observer could indicate one of not the least of the points of the photo navigation: to view next range photos, it was needed to click on the page number. It would be easier for visitors to move to the next set of photos by using pointers. The contents of the website are more likely to be informative than interactive and educative. Exploring all pages of the website, she found interested information about tissues with high quality of photos. It was also interesting to learn from where she finds her inspiration. When the author visited the website for the first time, each clothes displayed the price, now the fashion designer made some changes and decided to delete this options. There are some disadvantages and advantages of visible pricing: it could attire or in contrary, take away the potential buyer.

The website has also an integrated blog that was started on February 2012 and abounded on March 2012, containing just three entries. During the interview, the fashion designer explained that she would like to write but has no time for it.

The informative content is very important, but to attire more people and to convince them to stay longer on the pages, interactive, educative and engaging contents are missing.

4.4.3 Survey analysis

For this research online survey with questionnaires were conducted with five people in order to acquire knowledge from their experiences with social media. All of them are owners of small or medium-sized enterprises and all of them have key role in the process of choosing, implement and monitoring marketing activities in their enterprises. The questionnaire consisted of 39 questions, was divided in six parts (figure 15), and was open for respondents from 17 to 30 October 2012. (Attachment 8.) All questions of survey were answered.

In order to understand in depth the research topic and answer the research questions, I also interrogated the consultant via online questionnaire created separately from those for entrepreneurs. The questionnaire for the consultant contained similar questions to those for entrepreneurs; however, questions were reworded, for example, the questions for entrepreneurs supposed to answer about their own social media experience in their own enterprises, then the consultant shared her experience with social media by providing her services to other companies as social media strategist. The questionnaire for the consultant consisted of 33 questions, was divided in six parts (figure 15), and was open for respondent from 19 to 30 October 2012. (Attachment 9.) Twenty seven (27) questions were answered, and five (5) open-ended questions remained unanswered including entire part concerned to a targeted audience.

Entrepreneurs and Social Media Specialist Surveys	i Company 's Background
	ii Respondent's Background
	iii Social Media adoption
	iv Targeted Audience
	v Measure and monitoring of Social Media Performance
	vi Benefits and Challenges

Figure 15. Entrepreneurs and consultant questionnaire layout

Since both parties of respondents have similar questions, the researcher decided to examine data of the entrepreneurs' questionnaires together with the consultant's one.

This method allowed the researcher to analyse data from different angles and perception.

First two parts of questionnaires included company and respondent's background. All respondents were entrepreneurs of SME, including the consultant. Four of them, including consultant, were from Mumbai, two others – from London and Los Angeles. All of their enterprises provide services but operate in different industry sectors, such as consultancy (two persons, including the social media consultant), sport, food and beverage, photography, and tourism industries. Their companies can be classified as B2C –majority, B2B and both B2C/B2B (figure 16); consultant's enterprise is B2B.

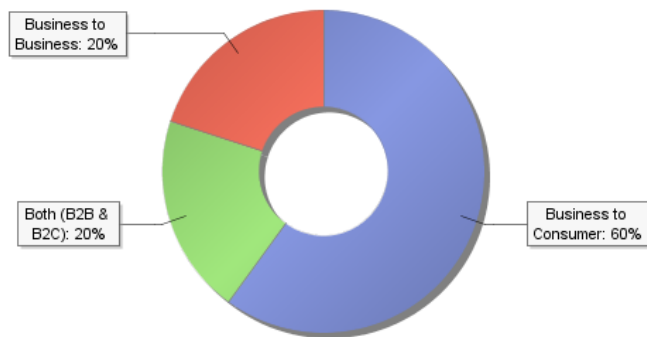


Figure 16. Companies' classification of the entrepreneur-respondents

All companies are in business less than 5 years, where half of respondents are working nationally, including consultant, and other half - internationally. Concerning the respondents' backgrounds, the questionnaires showed that majority of respondents are more than 30 years old (figure 17).

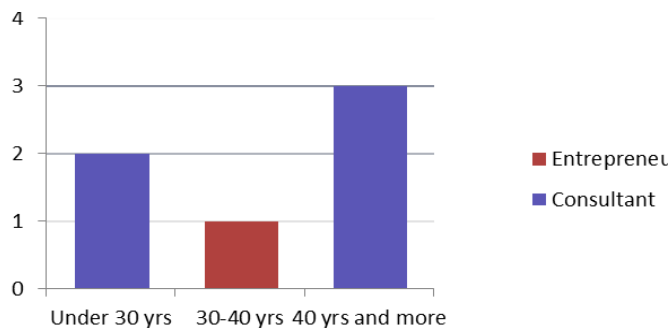


Figure 17. Respondents' age category

Third part of questionnaires referred to the willingness, ability and reason to use social media for marketing purpose. By social media the author meant conducting marketing activities with help of social media tools and channels such as: social networking sites, search engines, blogs, online communities and etc.

First questions intended to identify if all respondents uses social media to market their business. This question helped the researcher to eliminate an error in sampling in the initial stage: one of the respondent (sixth) answered that they do not use social media for marketing purpose; however, there were positive answers about social media tools and channels. I found the data of this respondent unreliable and did not include in the overall research process. Other five respondents implemented social media in their marketing activities and are adopting it. The majority of the respondents have been using social media more than a year (figure 18). The consultant has been working with social media about two years.

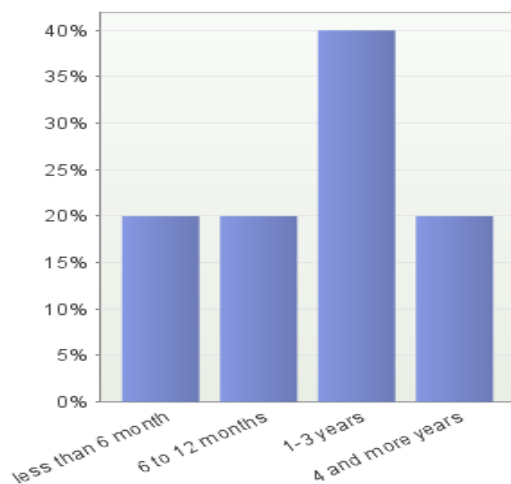


Figure 18. How long have you been using Social Media for marketing purpose?

Using Likert-style rating scale from very important to unimportant, respondents rated the importance of social media for business as very important and important. The consultant also agreed that social media is an important part of marketing. Additionally to this, entrepreneurs indicated that for social media marketing they spend weekly about five hours. The results are shown in figure 19.

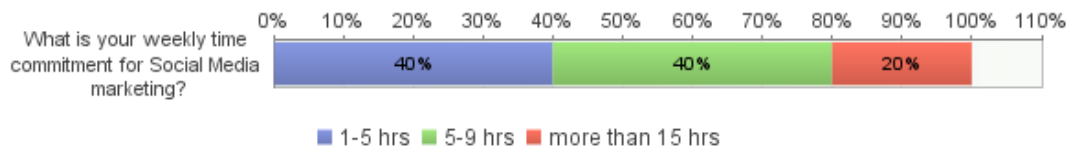


Figure 19. Entrepreneurs' weekly time commitment to social media marketing

Next questions concerned to the reasons and purposes of social media usage. These questions were also rated with a 5-point Likert scale from strongly disagree to strongly agree.

Overall, the consultant and the entrepreneurs highlighted practically the same reasons of social media usage (table 7 in attachment 3). Analysing the answers of the entrepreneurs and the consultant, it was found that the most common reasons using social media tools and channels for them were (attachment 3):
an improvement of effectiveness in work and the quality of marketing activities.

The entrepreneurs explain that they use social media as a response to market trend and that the majority of their customers feel comfortable using social media tools. Respondent 1 also highlighted that social media provides his company “*high visibility on customers' social pages.*”

One of the respondents disagreed with the facts that social media gives a possibility to conduct market research without qualified staff. Quite the contrary, the consultant believes that entrepreneurs often use social media for this reason.

For both the entrepreneurs and the consultant the main purposes for using social media were “*get exposure, starting conversation and sales*” (the consultant's survey 19 Oct 2012). The entrepreneurs also stated that with different social media tool they intend to increase traffic to their corporate websites and to improve customer relationships. The interesting fact was raised when the consultant together with an entrepreneur disagreed that social media reduce marketing expenses. (Table 8 in attachment 3.)

In order to understand how to assess an appropriate tool or channel, entrepreneurs answered this open-ended question as follows: “*exposure*” (respondent 1), “*by reach*”

(respondent 2), “*number of likes and comments on the posting and interactions*” (respondent 3), “*from the customers’ responsiveness to inputs*” (respondent 4), and “*by checking its effectiveness and reach*” (respondent 5). The consultant stated that the choice between the different social media tools “*depends on the company profile and what it has to offer.*”

The researcher also asked a relevant question to learn what social media tools and channels the entrepreneurs use. According to the questionnaires, all respondents use Facebook, Twitter and Email, other popular platforms were Google+ and video sharing sites/YouTube. (Table 9 and 9a in attachment 4.) Same was true for the consultant who added to this list also Pinterest (photo sharing site). Regarding to the most comfortable tool, the consultant and all entrepreneurs agreed on *Facebook*. The second popular tool for the entrepreneurs was *Twitter*, and for the consultant – *Pinterest*.

While answering the question “what social media tools do you want to learn more about?”, majority of the entrepreneurs indicated *LinkedIn*. Among the other platforms, they were also interested in blogging (*Blogs* and *Twitter*) and in photo sharing (*Pinterest*).

The questionnaires showed that the entrepreneurs integrate social media strategy in their marketing activities, and only one respondent utilizes social media without planning his strategy.

The next section of the questionnaires refers to targeted audience, eliciting the techniques used by the entrepreneurs to reach and engage their customers in social media. For this open-ended question, the entrepreneurs answered as follows:

- “*Based on Client Segment of the company*” (respondent 1).
- “*Through Facebook Pages/ Websites/ Blogs*” (respondent 2).
- “*Send info to existing customers who provide their contacts*” (respondent 3).
- “*Through Facebook demographics*” (respondent 4).
- “*By choosing the right sections and by seeing our current customers*” (respondent 5).

In order to understand how they convert a targeted audience in their customers, a relevant open-ended question was designed. The respondents explained that they “*build relationship*” by inviting “*them to join page/ site and*” informing “*about regular activity*”

(respondent 2), by “*promoting posts that can be interesting to that target group*” (respondent 4), and by providing “*personal service whenever they needed us*” (respondent 5). Respondent 3 indicated that “*generally they are customers; we use this to communicate and inform them about new happenings and get more sales.*”

The respondents also suggested that their audiences are using *Facebook* (1st popular response), *Twitter* (2nd most), *LinkedIn* and *YouTube* (3rd most). In order to drive more traffic to their brand, they are *blog blasting*, proposing *lots of activities via Facebook and Twitter* (respondent 1), providing *special promos for social media contacts* (respondent 2), and *post more updates* (respondent 4).

The next section of questionnaires contained four questions and concerned with the measure and monitoring of social media marketing performance. The answers to the first question showed that the majority of the respondents are listening not to only their customers but about competitors (figure 20); and they agreed that it is easy to monitor conversations. However, some of the entrepreneurs found it difficult.

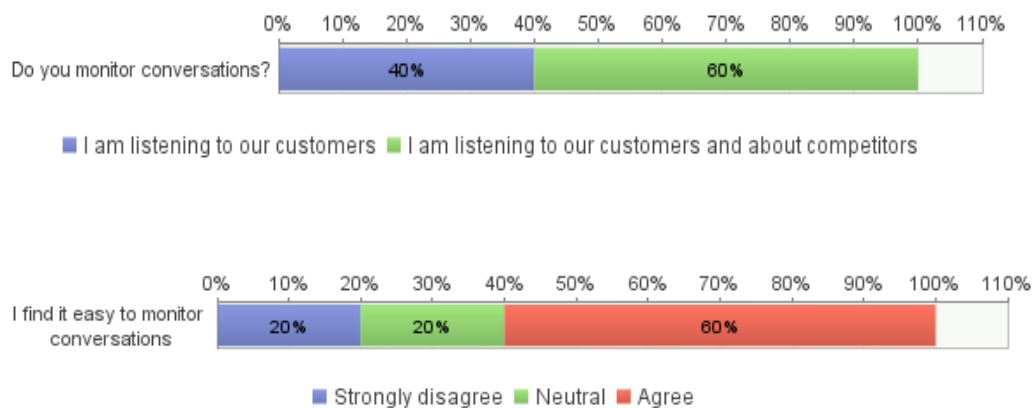


Figure 20. Social media monitoring

Other questions referred to the measures of social media effectiveness and provided with the results as follows: all respondents either measure the effect of social media marketing on their business or trying to do it. In order to measure performance, the majority of the entrepreneurs evaluate primarily “the number of subscribers, followers and fans”. For others, “reduced cost of customer support”, “values of sales generated” and “*message and brand exposure*” (Respondents 1) are the most important measures.

Whereas the consultant, she relies primarily on “*website traffic*” rate and on number of “*downloads of apps*”.

The questions regarding the benefits and challenges of social media usage were presented in the last section of the questionnaires. In this section, additionally, the researcher asked about the entrepreneurs’ experiences with social media; again about its effectiveness, but in this case she designed open-ended questions where respondents shared their own thoughts and not just picked an answer from a given number of options.

Answering on the questions on challenges and benefits using social media tools and channels, the respondents rated each statement with a 5-point Likert scale from “strongly disagree” to “strongly agree” (table 10 and 10a in attachment 5).

Overall, both the entrepreneurs and the consultant did not face significant challenges while using social media; however, their answers showed that the most challenges were to measure ROI on social media efforts and responding to customer in real-time. Same was true for the consultant. Therefore she considered the maintenance of a healthy relationship with customers as the most challenge in social media. When asking how they overcome the challenges, the entrepreneurs answered “*by hiring professionals*” (respondent 2); by “*keeping communicating, generally response to social media is immediate and can be seen if not accurately measured*” (respondent 3); “*by taking efficient measures and by observing work of other companies*” (respondent 5).

Concerning the social media benefits, both the entrepreneurs and the consultant agreed or strongly agreed that it helps to increase brand awareness, and to improve traffic to corporate website. The entrepreneurs also believe that they could set communication media to their customers and build a customer service. However, it is not always easy for them to attract new customers and to analyse marketplace in social media. The consultant, on the contrary, strongly agreed that social media offer a great opportunity to attract new customers. However, she doubts on the facts that social media channels could help to grow business partnership and reduce marketing

expenses. Though the entrepreneurs most likely to agree or even strongly agree that social media reduces their marketing costs.

When the researcher asked if social media is effective for their business, the respondents answered positively by justifying: *“low cost high exposure”* (respondent 1); *“primarily for reach, and awareness, and as a cost effective marketing tool”* (respondent 2); *“Keeps the brand alive in customers social interaction space”* (respondent 3); *“because it offers a direct way to response to customers’ needs and feed backs”*(respondent 4); *“it is one of the most efficient and easy to use tools”* (respondent 5). The consultant remained the questions on effectiveness unanswered.

The entrepreneurs also gave the examples of the most effective way using social media for their business:

- Respondent 1 suggested educating potential clients:
“http://www.meetup.com/BusinessMentoring/messages/archive/ has list of post that get posted across the world in less than 1 hour a week. This helps to educate my potential clients to what my Business does and how I can support them”.
- *“To reach out to people”* (Respondent 2).
- Respondent 3 advised to send *“regular weekly messages and reminders of new upcoming events”*.
- *“To keep updates fresh and to connect to other industry professionals to be able your offer the best product-price resolutions”* (Respondent 4).
- *“Targeting consumers at the place where they are”* (Respondent 5).

For the question on overall experience with social media, the entrepreneurs believe that with social media they are *“gaining a global exposure with little time and resource commitment”* (Respondent 1); experiencing *widespread reach and great communication* (Respondent 2); learning *“what messages attracts customers”* (Respondent 3) and *“to identify the “hot topic” and how to manipulate them”* (Respondents 4). And respondent 5 could *“reach the right people”* and get *“instant results”*.

For the conclusion, the entrepreneurs answered the open-ended question giving their own opinions on how marketing is changing since the growth of the social media:

- *“It helps engage the potential clients more effectively”* (Respondent 1).
- *“It has reduced costs, and increased reach and awareness”* (Respondent 2).
- *“One more channel to communicate with customers with low cost on their social page”* (Respondent 3).
- *“It has an immediate impact and needs high responsiveness to be effective. Also the customer research and segmentation is easier as more and more consumers information become available online”* (Respondent 4);
- *“It has taken things to the next level and benefited both companies and consumers”* (Respondent 5).

4.5 Interpretation of results

Analysing the literature review, interview and questionnaires, the researcher might conclude that today social media play important role in marketing practices in small and medium-sized enterprises. Entrepreneurs are using social media marketing by integrating it into the traditional marketing. The results show that social media are easy to use and effective tool. However, companies face different challenges by using these complex but accessible communication platforms.

While analysing literature review, the researcher can conclude that the process of social media marketing adoption is almost similar to traditional marketing. The first step of any marketing is the development of strategic plan that will incorporate relevant elements of marketing mix in order to achieve companies’ objectives. (Tuten & Solomon 2013, 36.) According to Tuten and Solomon (2013, 36), social media marketers have to define their expectation from marketing campaign and assess the ability of financial and human resources to meet companies’ goals. According to the Marketing Shepra’s survey (2011), the most important objectives set by social media marketers are: brand exposure, increase website traffic, to improve public relations and generate sales needs. Many of marketers and businesspeople highlight that social media marketing helps them to reduce marketing expense, however, Tuten and Solomon (2013, 40) believe that social media is not a free tool. They explain that social media is less costly compared to some traditional advertising, but it implies other costs, for

example it increases labour costs. The content must be created, shared, monitored and all this requires funds.

Social media plans have to identify a relevant audience in terms of demographic, geographic, and product features. After the companies define targeted audience, they select the relevant social media mix by specifying the set of social media channels and platforms to achieve the marketing objectives. (Tuten & Solomon 2013, 42-43.)

According to Crowther (2012), the social landscape is split into operational groups: relationship building platforms, content, entertainment and monitoring. In order to increase online presence, Evans (2012, 168) suggests to include in your social media activities, for example Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn. To have better interaction with the customers, the company can choose such social contents as YouTube (for product presentation) or blogs (for brand humanisation).

According to Alexa statistics (Nov 2012), the most popular social media platforms and sites are Facebook, Google.com, and YouTube (table 11).

Table 11 .Global and Regional traffic ranks

	India	United Kingdom	United States	Global rank
Facebook	2	2	3	1
Google.com	3	1	1	2
YouTube	4	3	4	3
Twitter	11	8	11	8
LinkedIn	12	11	8	12
Pinterest	27	15	29	38

The final stage of the strategic plan is implementation and evaluation of social media performance. Social media propose different metrics to measure the effectiveness of the campaign. The choice of the metrics depends on the data that have to be measured. (Tuten & Solomon 2013, 43.)

Social Media give opportunity to companies to engage and establish contact with consumers “at relatively low cost and high levels of efficiency”. However using social media is not always as easy as it seems. It requires new ways of thinking, engagement and interaction. (Kaplan & Haenlein 2009, 67.)

When it comes to the analysis of the interview, the author assumed that the fashion designer *X* is using social media by integrating it into traditional marketing. To establish online presence, brand awareness and communicate with the consumers, she is using such social media tools as Facebook, website and Blackberry Messenger. These tools and channels are easy to create and maintain, they are effective, but there are also some issues: how effectively monitor and evaluate the data? How to understand customer's satisfaction? From one side social media allow her to interact with people, to share photos with her collection, to invite to offline events, in other side this process is time-consuming and implies patience.

She feels that traditional marketing works well for her. She can establish partnership and understand her competitors; participating often on different offline events and meeting different people, she has a possibility to let them know about her business practices. And as the fashion designer mentioned in the interview, the word of mouth technique is essential aspect of marketing in India. Nowadays she embraces this opportunity with traditional marketing but later she could take an advantages of online word of mouth, as viral marketing is spreading much far than just to family or friends circle. As it was shown at the end of the interview, sometimes we underestimate social media, maybe because it is difficult to trace all activities?

After observing the fashion designer activities on Facebook and websites, it was found that contents of these two platforms are more informative and less interactive. For her short period in social media, she could attract to corporate Facebook page more than 60 people. The researcher could also observe the fashion designer interaction on different Facebook communities that had primarily informative character. It was interesting to observe her website that contains the photos of dresses from different collection, and to learn about some fabrics. The blog integrated to website remains in its infancy.

Regarding to analysis of questionnaires, the researcher concludes that the most common reason using the social media is a response to market trends; in addition, the entrepreneurs and the consultant found the social media tools and channels useful to

improve effectiveness in works and the quality of marketing activities. Majority of the respondents, including the consultant define social media strategy by setting such objectives as brand exposure, a corporate web traffic growth, customer relationship development through communication media, and sales growth.

The most popular tools and channels of social media regarding the questionnaires are Facebook, Twitter and email. The second popular tools used by entrepreneurs are Google+ and video sites (YouTube as example). The consultant also highlighted Pinterest (photo site) as one of the popular social platform for companies. Other essential social media tools mentioned were platforms to monitor and measure marketing effectiveness by evaluating the number of followers, values of sales generated, and level of brand exposure and traffic to website.

Analysing the questionnaires of the entrepreneurs and the consultant, the researcher was able to define some challenges that faced or are facing companies. The main issue is to measure return on investment (ROI) and responding in real-time. As for the consultant opinion, the primary challenge of companies is to maintain a healthy customer relationship.

The questionnaire results revealed some benefits that social media offers companies. It includes first and foremost brand exposure and possibility to maintain online presence. The entrepreneurs also could build a customer service and experience a “*great communication*” by engaging with customers. The consultant also agreed with entrepreneurs on the same statements; however she more likely disagreed on that social media reduce marketing expenses and help to develop business partnership. Then all entrepreneurs indicated that their marketing costs were reduced and majority of them could improve business partnership by using social media.

4.6 Reliability and validity

In order to get the correct research findings, research design has to be assessed in terms of a set of criteria including validity and reliability (Denzin & Lincoln 1994, 479).

Reliability is the consistency of the methods, procedure and findings and also “an indicator of validity” (Denzin & Lincoln 1994, 487). Reliability means that the research results can be replicated or reproduced by other researcher (Denzin & Lincoln 1994, 100); and transparency in interpretation of collected data (Saunders et al 2009, 157). Saunders et al (2009, 157-158) define four threats to reliability: subject or participant error and bias, observer errors and bias. To overcome these threats, the researcher has to define the right place and time for questionnaires, interview and observation; to ensure anonymity; to provide elaborated analysis of the data; to elicit answers by asking same questions in different ways.

Kidder (1981, in Denzin & Lincoln 1994, 381) believes that “findings of observation research have to be statistically analysed to ensure that they are true.” In order to prove reliability, observations can be conducted repeatedly over different conditions.

For this research data were collected from different sources such as the interview, the surveys, the observations and literature review. The date and time for questionnaires were set by the respondents. All entrepreneur-respondents answered on every question, including open-ended questions. This gives to the author some expectation that people chose a right time for them to answer, were closely related to the topic and were interested in the study. Prior to data collection, the questionnaires were pre-tested. This helped to ensure that questions were clear, well worded, and could provide with data that could answer the research questions. The time needed to fill the questionnaire was calculated and also shown in survey introduction. (Saunders et al 2009, 394.)

Regarding to the interview with the fashion designer, the date and time were set by interviewee. It was important to set a right time where an interviewee was not busy and had “right” moods (not too excited and not too tired) for discussion. In order to ensure that questions and answers were understood by both parties, the interviewer reworded questions, repeated them or summarised what was heard. (Rubin & Rubin 2012, 141.)

Denzin and Lincoln (1994, 487) define validity as “the accuracy and truthfulness of the findings”. They explain that validity in qualitative research relates to description and

explanation, and identify internal and external validity. Where internal validity is the degree to which findings accurately represent the phenomenon; and external validity is the criteria to which research findings for the sample of the study can be generalised to the research population (Denzin & Lincoln 1994, 100).

Validity is the important part of the research. In order to ensure that findings represent phenomenon in question, the found answers were supported by triangulation, by using multiple data gathering techniques. By including open-ended questions in questionnaires, some uncommon points were displayed, which the researcher was unaware of by concentrating on frequent responses. These led to exploration of additional material that enriches the research topic. (Bradburn et al 2004, 154.) Denzin and Lincoln (1994, 381) explain that observers often rely on their own perceptions that can be based on subjective interpretations of situations.

The author ensures that the data were carefully analysed and believes that the research findings can be replicated by another observant. The anonymity of respondents and commissioning party is also respected. However, some of respondents could be identified due to their responses. The researcher notified these particular respondents about this issue and was ensured to leave the answers as they were.

In this study the author did not intend to generalise the survey findings and the data of the research are not set out to test hypotheses.

5 Discussion

For this study qualitative research was used as a mainly method to collect the data. The author might conclude that quantitative approach as secondary method to gather data from questionnaires was also a good solution. The Likert scaled questions provided this study with comprehensive and manageable data. For the respondents view, it was easier and faster to rate how strongly they agree or disagree. However, the researcher collected more valuable data with open-ended questions. For this research, the author conducted online questionnaires with a Mumbai-based social media strategist who ignored many open-ended questions. The researcher believes that the interview with the consultant could provide with a better results and data. The triangulation approach gave a possibility to have better picture on fieldworks and supported the findings received from different sources. As regard to sample, it would be better for this research to concentrate on Mumbai-based enterprises. The researcher believes that regardless the small sample, she was able to answer the research questions and to get close to different published statistics results.

5.1 Ethical points of view

Regarding to formal codes of ethics, the interviewer has responsibility to behave ethically with interviewee. From the first contact the researcher had obligation to deal ethically. She showed respect, did not tried to pressure the participants of the study. She also let them to choose comfortable time to answer the questionnaires and to meet for the interview. The researcher kept promises of the confidentiality and did not use the names of respondents. (Rubin & Rubin 2012, 85.) However, as it was explained in validity part, some persons could be identified by their answers. These persons were notified and asked if they wish to correct the response or leave as it was.

Some factors of observation techniques can raise questions of malpractice. During data collection process, researcher can constitute a privacy invasion by misrepresenting oneself and entering into private place. (Denzin & Lincoln 1994, 387.) The author ensures that a personal privacy of the respondents was respected. Additionally, she became a follower of majority of the respondents long before of the research process. In this research most of the data gathered were accessible to the public.

Another ethical concern is the researcher objectivity. While collection and analysing data gathered through observation and questionnaires, the researcher tried to exercise accuracy and relevancy to avoid personal subjectivity. The photo displayed on the page 6 is a fashion designer X's property and was used there with her permission. Majority of tables and figures were created or recreated by the author and referenced when it was necessary.

5.2 Suggestions for development and further research

During the research process the author had several ideas for further study of this fieldwork. Since she analysed the social media usage for the entrepreneurs of small and medium-sized enterprises, it would be favourable to study social media marketing for small or medium business separately. It would be also useful to do the research within particular industry, for example to analyse social media for freelance fashion designers. In this research several social media platforms were considered; thus the author could suggest the study of important aspects of social media such as measure ROI. Due to limited time this research did not cover search engine optimisation that is also essential part of social media marketing. The research of this phenomenon could be of interest to not only business owners but also different organisations and governments.

6 Conclusion and Recommendations

Based on the findings the author can conclude that social media bring marketing to the new level and benefit both business and consumers. It gives a great opportunity of high exposure at low cost; it offers a possibility to set interactive communication with customers and to get more information on their needs. But in this constantly changing online environment and growing convergence, the companies face the challenges to follow the trends. There are some issues to measure social media performance, to respond immediately to customers and to incorporate transparency into their business operations. Measuring social media performance, it is time consuming, but it is crucial to take the time to collect necessary data and then to assess all found patterns of social media experience. These can help to identify the most important for company metrics that can show potential results. The research findings also show that Facebook and Twitter are the most popular social media platforms for SME entrepreneurs. It was also found that email is also widely used. Such sites as LinkedIn and Pinterest are taking more and more attention and wished to be more thoroughly explored.

Today's online landscape is a connection point. Online participants create connections or keep it alive. The companies have a chance to create long-term relationships by engaging consumers. Here they target specific audience, deliver exclusive offers, and important constant messages for their existing and potential customers.

Recommendations for the fashion designer X. Analysing multiple collected data, the researcher could develop some recommendations for further marketing activities of commissioning parties. During the study it was mentioned that social media is time consuming. However, to conduct effective online or offline marketing activities, it is important to take time to create a comprehensive strategic plan. Today the fashion designer X has advantages as not so many Mumbai-based fashion designers have created their own websites in order to engage with customers or to sell online. The author suggested to explore this possibility and do not be afraid to be a pioneer. The fashion designer X has clear objectives and goals but not enough strong implementation of the actions, possibly, due to lack of action plan. The researcher feels that fashion designer realizes the value of brand humanisation, but the fact to be

uninterested and misunderstood prevails and blocks the further process of engagement and interaction. During the interview the fashion designer mentioned that she would like to focus on one or two social platform and at the same time she realised that there so many already existing clients that use different platforms. In this case the author could suggest first of all inviting all existing customers to one principal social platform or using widely links to share contents on other social media vehicles.

The fashion designer has a purpose to start selling online through the website. During the observation some points of website layout were presented in the section of the analysis of observation data. The researcher could consider also gathering as many opinions as possible from different categories of online participants about the website itself and its functionality. As regards to the fashion designer X' Facebook page, the author could suggest including in the description more information about her business, geographic location, services and products. This additional information can lead potential customer to her page. In attachment 6 the researcher explains this process in detail. It is also important to include Facebook and Website URLs in all emails, it will help the people to find the fashion designer online.

Last recommendation that the author would draw is to continue blogging. During the interview the fashion designer X admitted that she likes writing, thus it would be a great opportunity to bring other hobby to next level and use it in order to provide interacted and educative contents. Other benefit of blog is that the blog articles can be found in search engines with the keywords provided by author. Thus it can attract some prospects. By creating a blog on one of the most popular blog platforms in India, Blogger or Blogspot.in (Alexa 2012), the fashion designer could be linked to the bloggers community and find people of same interest.

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Attachments

Attachment 1. Definitions

Digital media - form of electronic media where communications are facilitated through interactive services provided by different digital technology. (Chaffey et al 2009, 8)

Made-to-measure (haute couture) - the garment created for an individual client and is often made from high-quality and expensive fabric. (Wikipedia 2011).

Model – here, “design”, “example”.

Partner relationship management (PRM) – is a system of methodologies, strategies, software, and web-based capabilities that help a vendor to manage partner relationships. (Wikipedia 2012a).

Ready-to-wear (prêt-a-porter) – the garments are made not for specific client but in small quantities and of good quality of the fabric. (Wikipedia 2012b).

Review sites - a website that contains the reviews about people, businesses, products, or services (Wikipedia 2012c).

Web analytic – is the study of user behaviour on web pages. (Straus & Frost 2009, 36).

Attachment 2. 7S framework of internal capabilities

Table 1. 7S framework of the organisational challenges of online marketing that needed to be managed in the context of the 7S framework (Chaffey et al 2009, 24-25)

Element of 7S model	Application to digital marketing team	Key issues from practice and literature
Strategy	The significance of digital marketing in influencing and supporting organisations' strategy	Gaining appropriate budgets and demonstrating / delivering value and ROI from budgets. Annual planning approach. Techniques for using digital marketing to impact organisation strategy Techniques for aligning digital strategy with organisational and marketing strategy
Structure	The modification of organizational structure to support digital marketing.	Integration of team with other management, marketing (corporate communications, brand marketing, direct marketing) and IT staff Use of cross-functional teams and steering groups Insourcing vs. outsourcing
Systems	The development of specific processes, procedures or information systems to support digital marketing	Campaign planning approach-integration Managing/sharing customer information Managing content quality Unified reporting of digital marketing effectiveness In-house vs. external best-of-breed vs. external integrated technology solutions
Staff	The breakdown of staff in terms of their background and characteristics such as IT vs. Marketing, use of contractors/consultants, age and sex.	Insourcing vs. outsourcing Achieving senior management buy-in/involvement with digital marketing Staff recruitment and retention. Virtual working Staff development and training
Style	Includes both the way in which key managers behave in achieving the organizations' goals and the cultural style of the organization as a whole.	Relates to role of digital marketing team in influencing strategy –it is it dynamic and influential or conservative and looking for a voice
Skills	Distinctive capabilities of key staff, but can be interpreted as specific skill-sets of team members.	Staff skills in specific areas: supplier selection, project management, Content management, specific e-marketing approaches (SEO,PPC, affiliate marketing, e-mail marketing, online advertising)
Superordinate goals	The guiding concepts of the digital marketing organisation which are also part of shared values and culture. The internal and external perception of these goals may vary	Improving the perception of the importance and effectiveness of the digital marketing team amongst senior managers and staff it works with (marketing generalists and IT)

Attachment 3. The reasons and purposes of Social Media usage

Table 7. What are the reasons of Social Media usage in your company? (Entrepreneurs' answers)

Number of respondents: 5

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Average
It is a very useful tool for my business	0	0	0	1	4	4.8
It is easy to use	0	0	1	2	2	4.2
Possibility to conduct market research without qualified and skilled staff	0	1	1	2	1	3.6
It helps us accomplish tasks quickly	0	0	2	1	2	4
It helps us to improve the quality of our marketing activities	0	0	0	2	3	4.6
It helps us to increase our productivity	0	0	0	3	2	4.4
It helps to improve effectiveness in our work	0	0	0	1	4	4.8
Competitive pressure	0	1	0	4	0	3.6
A response to market trends	0	0	0	1	4	4.8
The majority of our customers are comfortable utilising social media applications	0	0	0	2	3	4.6
Other, please specify	0	0	0	1	0	4

Open text answers: 4

- High Visibility on customers\' social pages

Table 8. What is your purpose of use of social media tools? (Entrepreneurs' answers)

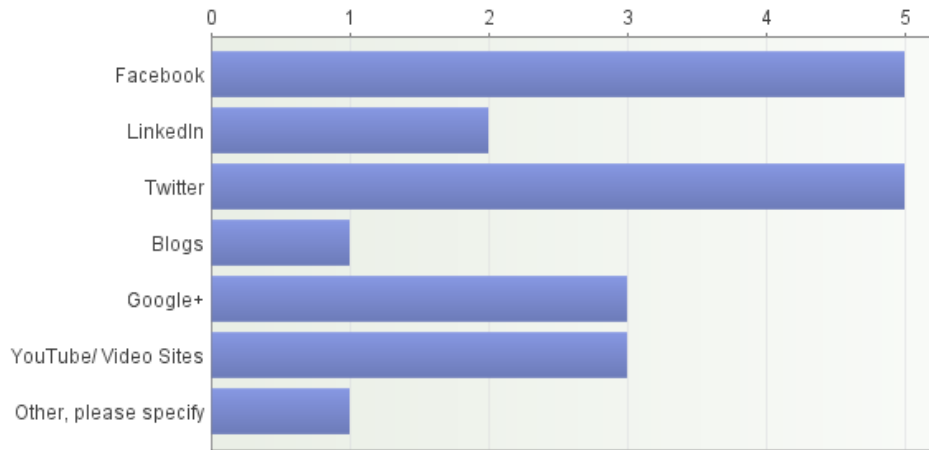
Number of respondents: 5

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Average
To increase brand awareness	0	0	0	1	4	4.8
To increase traffic to my website	0	0	0	1	4	4.8
To reach new potential customers	0	0	1	1	3	4.4
To set communication media to my customer	0	0	0	1	4	4.8
To improve relationships with customer	0	0	0	1	4	4.8
To develop loyal fans	0	1	0	2	2	4
To improve search ranking	0	0	1	1	3	4.4
To build a customer service	0	0	0	2	3	4.6
To develop business partnership	0	0	1	2	2	4.2
To reduce marketing expenses	0	1	1	1	2	3.8
To improve sales	0	0	0	2	3	4.6
To do market research and competition analysis	0	1	0	0	4	4.4
To connect people to offline events	0	0	0	2	3	4.6

Attachment 4. Social media tools and channels

Table 9. What tools/sites/applications of Social Media do you use? (Entrepreneurs' answers)

Number of respondents: 5

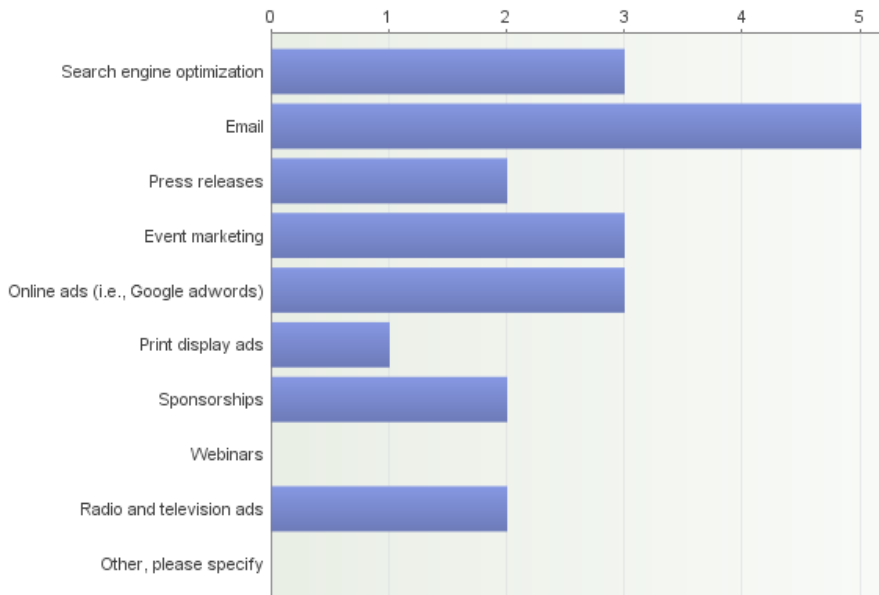


Open text answers: Other, please specify

- Instagram

Table 9a. What other forms of marketing does your business use? (Entrepreneurs' answers)

Number of respondents: 5



Attachment 5. Challenges and benefits of social media

Table10. What are the challenges does your enterprise face when using Social Media?
(Entrepreneurs' survey)

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Average
Responding customer in real-time	1	1	0	1	2	3.4
Social media's privacy and security	0	4	1	0	0	2.2
Transparency in our operations	1	1	1	1	1	3
Difficult to cope up with diversities and culture clashes in Social Media	1	2	0	2	0	2.6
It is difficult to integrate Social Media with our main line of operations	1	2	1	1	0	2.4
Growing convergence of Social Media	1	1	1	0	2	3.2
To maintain a healthy relationship	1	1	1	0	2	3.2
Measuring ROI on Social Media efforts	1	0	1	1	2	3.6
It is difficult to maintain communication with my customers	1	2	1	0	0	2
We did not face any challenges	0	0	3	1	1	3.6

Table 10a. What are benefits of Social Media for your business?
(Entrepreneurs' survey)

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Average
Increased brand awareness	0	0	0	1	4	4.8
Increased traffic to my website	0	0	0	2	3	4.6
New customers were attracted	0	0	2	1	2	4
Communication media to my customer were set	0	0	0	1	4	4.8
Improved relationships with customer	0	0	2	0	3	4.2
Developed loyal fans	0	0	1	3	1	4
Improved search ranking	0	0	2	0	3	4.2
Built a customer service	0	0	0	2	3	4.6
Grew business partnership	0	0	1	1	3	4.4
Reduced marketing expenses	0	0	0	3	2	4.4
Improved sales	0	0	1	2	2	4.2
Do market research and competition analysis	0	1	0	1	3	4.2
Connected people to offline events	0	0	1	2	2	4.2

Attachment 6. Search for Facebook pages

Facebook Pages. During the interview with the fashion designer X, some issues were arisen regarding to fans and how people find the pages. Reading academic literature and experimenting, I could highlight two main ways of how people find pages on Facebook: (1) seeing what pages the friends are fans of or (2) seeing your news feeds on the friends ‘profiles. One more option is a paid Facebook advertising. (Holzner 2009, 74.) When the author tried to explore other ways to find a particular page, she used Facebook search options by entering keywords “fashion designer in Mumbai”. As a result there were two findings: a group “Fashion designer in Mumbai” and a page “designer wear in Mumbai.” (Figure 21.) Thus, it was concluded that in order to be found by other people without browsing friends profiles, it is essential to include the occupation or specific area where business owner operates in the name of page (fashion designer, designer in Mumbai, for example) or in the description (“Iva” example in figure 21). Observing the fashion designer X page, it was found that the page title was her personal name, and description included business area (product/service) and URL of her professional website. Unfortunately this information is not enough to be found by the potential follower/fan.

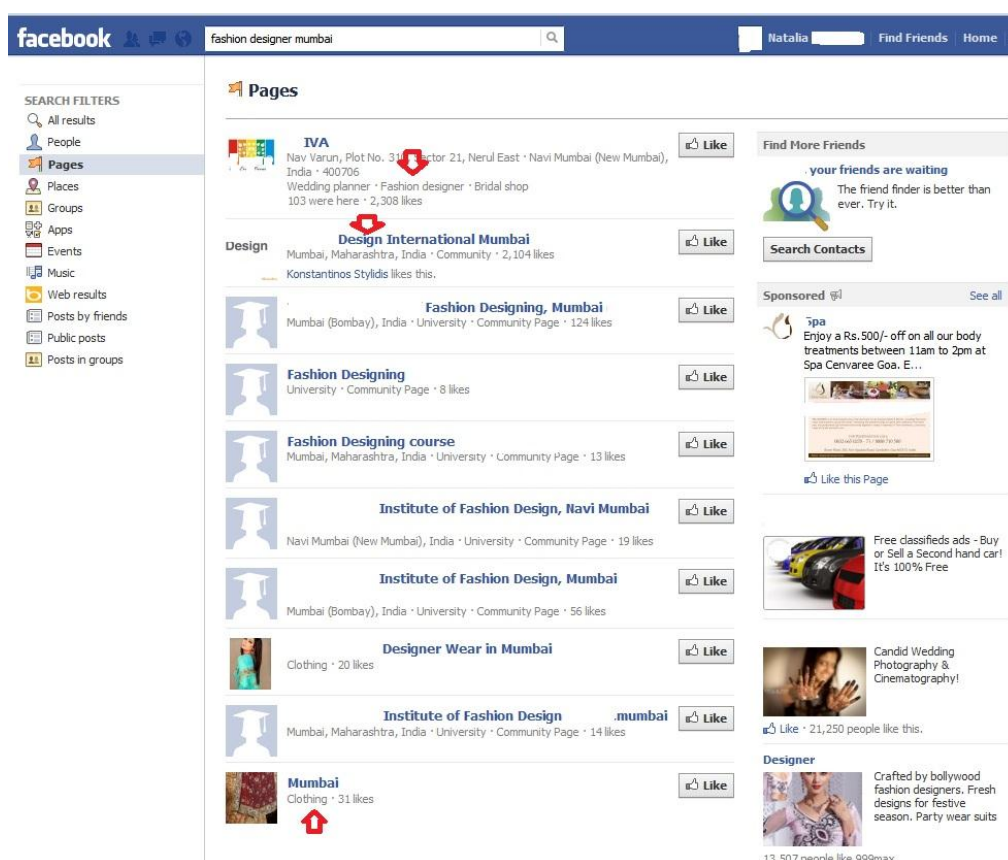


Figure 21. Search for Facebook pages with keyword: “fashion designer in Mumbai”

Attachment 7. Interview questions for the fashion designer X

Part 1. Introduction

1. Please could you briefly tell about yourself, your education and when and how did you become a designer?
2. How many people work with you?

Part 2. Reasons and purposes

3. Do you allocate money for marketing?
4. When did you start to integrate social media in your business activities?
5. What the reason and purpose of social media usage in your company
6. Have you defined Social Media Strategy?

Part 3. Social Media tools

7. How did you assess which of the social tools might be of value or appropriate for your companies use?
8. What tools/sites/applications of social media do you use?
9. What is the purpose of your blog, Facebook, website?
10. Have you created content plan?
11. What activities do you have on FB pages?
12. What kind of content do you post?
13. How do you encourage your audience for participation and interactions on your pages?
14. What tools/sites are you most comfortable with?
15. What Social media tools do you want to learn more about?

Part 4. Targeted Audience

16. How do you identify a target audience with Social Media for your business?
17. How did you convert this audience in your customer?
18. Which social networks does your target audience use?
19. What are you doing at the moment to drive more traffic to your brand?

Part 5. Monitoring

20. Are you listening to your customers? (The term of “listening” was explained)
21. What is your primary measure for evaluating your social media effectiveness?

Part 6. Challenges and Benefits

22. What are benefits and challenges using social media?
23. How do you define social media performance?
24. What experience have you gained while using social media channel/applications?

Attachment 8. Online questionnaires for the entrepreneurs

The analysis of Social Media usage

This questionnaire was designed to study Social Media usage as a marketing tool. This survey should take approximately 15 minutes to complete. Your responses will remain strictly confidential and you are not required to identify yourself. The results of the data may be published; however, no names or identifying information will be included in the final report. Your kind cooperation in this research is appreciated and I hope that you will find this study of interested to you and to your business. If you have any questions after the study is completed, please feel free to e-mail me: marojka77@hotmail.com

Thank you for your time and cooperation.

Natalia Markova

Part 1. Company's background

1. Where is your enterprise based?

- Mumbai
- Other, please specify

2. My enterprise is

- Industrial / Manufacturing
- Trading
- Service
- Other, please specify:

3. In which industry sector does your enterprise operate in?

- Production of fashion goods
- Professional services/ Consultancy
- Computer and IT
- Other, please specify

4. My company can be classified as

- Business to Business
- Business to Consumer
- Both (B2B & B2C)

5. Our enterprise is in business for

- less than 5 years
- 6-10 years
- more than 11 years

6. Number of employees in your enterprise

- 0-9 10-19 20-29 Other, please specify:

7. The annual marketing budget of our enterprise as a percentage of the total company budget

- less than 10%
 10-20%
 21-30%
 I don't know
 Other

8. Our enterprise is trading

- Nationally Internationally Both

Part 2. About You

9. I am

- Entrepreneur
 Marketing manager
 In charge of the online marketing activities

10. Age category

- Under 30 years old 30-40 years old more than 40

11. How long have you been working in your enterprise for?

- 3 years and less 4-7 years 8 years and more

Part 3. The analysis of use of Social Media

Questions in this part concern your willingness, ability and reason to use Social Media for marketing purpose. By Social media I mean conducting marketing activities with help of social media tools/ sites/ applications such as: social networking sites, search engines, blogs, online communities and etc.

12. Do you use Social Media to market your business?

- Yes, we use it
- No, we don't use it
- I don't know
- Other

13. How long have you been using Social Media for marketing purpose?

- less than 6 month
- 6 to 12 months
- 1-3 years
- 4 and more years

14. What is your weekly time commitment for Social Media marketing?

- 0 h
- 1-5 hrs
- 5-9 hrs
- 10-15 hrs
- more than 15 hrs

15. How important Social Media for your business?

- Very important
- Important
- Moderately important
- Of little importance
- Unimportant

16. What are the reasons of Social Media usage in your company?

Please use the following scale to indicate the extent to which you agree with the statement:

1=Strongly Disagree 2=Disagree 3=Neutral 4=Agree 5=Strongly Agree

	1	2	3	4	5
It is a very useful tool for my business	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
It is easy to use	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Possibility to conduct market research without qualified and skilled staff	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
It helps us accomplish tasks quickly	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
It helps us to improve the quality of our marketing activities	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
It helps us to increase our productivity	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
It helps to improve effectiveness in our work	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Competitive pressure	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
A response to market trends	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The majority of our customers are comfortable utilising social media applications	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Other, please specify	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

17. What is your purpose of use of social media tools/sites/ applications?

Please use the following scale to indicate the extent to which you agree with the statement:

1=Strongly Disagree 2=Disagree 3=Neutral 4=Agree 5=Strongly Agree

	1	2	3	4	5
To increase brand awareness	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
To increase traffic to my website	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
To reach new potential customers	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
To set communication media to my customer	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
To improve relationships with customer	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
To develop loyal fans	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
To improve search ranking	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
To build a customer service	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
To develop business partnership	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
To reduce marketing expenses	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
To improve sales	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
To do market research and competition analysis	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
To connect people to offline events	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Other, please specify	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

18. How do you assess which of the social tools might be of value or appropriate for your companies use? (open-ended question)

19. What tools/sites/applications of Social Media do you use?

You can choose several options

- Facebook
- LinkedIn
- Twitter
- Blogs
- Google
- YouTube/ Video Sites
- Other, please specify

20. What other forms of marketing does your business use?

- Email
- Press releases
- Event marketing
- Online ads (i.e., Google ad words)
- Print display ads
- Sponsorships
- Webinars
- Radio and television ads
- Other, please specify

21. What Social Media tools/sites are you most comfortable with? (open-ended question)

22. What Social Media tools do you want to learn more about? (open-ended question)

23. Has your enterprise defined Social Media Strategy?

- Yes, it is integrated into our marketing strategy
- Yes, it has defined as a separate plan
- No, we don't create social media strategy, but we utilise different social media tools

Part 4. Targeted Audience

In this part the questions are designed in order to understand how you reach and engage an audience using Social Media.

24. How did you identify a target audience with Social Media for your business?

(Open-ended question)

25. How did you convert this audience in your customer? (Open-ended question)

26. Which social networks does your target audience use? (Open-ended question)

27. What are you doing at the moment to drive more traffic to your brand? (Open-ended question)

Part 5. Social Media marketing performance

Questions in this part concern the measure and monitoring of Social Media marketing performance.

28. Do you monitor conversations?

Listening here means that you monitor conversations and you assume what needs/wants consumers are, and you know what they think about your brand/competitor's brand

- I am listening to our customers
- I am listening to conversations about our competitors
- I am listening to our customers and about competitors
- No, I don't monitor conversations

29. I find it easy to monitor conversations

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Neutral
- Agree
- Strongly agree

30. Do you measure the effect of Social Media marketing on your business?

- Strongly Disagree
- Disagree
- Neutral
- Agree
- Strongly Agree

31. What is your primary measure for evaluating your Social Media effectiveness?

Please choose only one option

- Number of fans, subscribers, followers
- Website traffic
- Reduced cost of customer support
- Values of sales generated
- Do not measure
- I don't know
- Other, please specify

Part 6. Benefits and Challenges using Social Media

32. What are the challenges does your enterprise face when using Social Media tools/ sites/ application?

Please use the following scale to indicate the extent to which you agree with the statement:

1=Strongly Disagree 2=Disagree 3=Neutral 4=Agree 5=Strongly Agree

	1	2	3	4	5
Responding customer in real-time	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Social media's privacy and security	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Transparency in our operations	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Difficult to cope up with diversities and culture clashes in Social Media	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
It is difficult to integrate Social Media with our main line of operations	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Growing convergence of Social Media	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
To maintain a healthy relationship	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Measuring ROI on Social Media efforts	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
It is difficult to maintain communication with my customers	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
We did not face any challenges	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Other, please specify	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

33. How did you overcome them? (Open-ended question)

34. What are benefits of Social Media for your business?

Please use the following scale to indicate the extent to which you agree with the statement:
1=Strongly Disagree 2=Disagree 3=Neutral 4=Agree 5=Strongly Agree

	1	2	3	4	5
Increased brand awareness	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Increased traffic to my website	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
New customers were attracted	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Communication media to my customer were set	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Improved relationships with customer	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Developed loyal fans	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Improved search ranking	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Built a customer service	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Grew business partnership	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Reduced marketing expenses	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Improved sales	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Do market research and competition analysis	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Connected people to offline events	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
No benefits for my business	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Other, please specify	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

35. What experience have you gained while using Social Media channel/applications? (Open-ended question)

36. How do you belief marketing is changing since the growth of the Social Media?

(Open-ended question)

37. Do you believe Social Media is effective? If yes, why? (Open-ended question)

38. What are the most effective ways to use Social Media for your business? (Open-ended question)

Thank you, your kind cooperation in this research is very much appreciated.

The analysis of Social Media usage

Part 1. Company's background

1. Where is your enterprise based?
2. My enterprise is
 - trading
 - service
 - other
3. In which industry sector does your enterprise operate in?
4. My company can be classified as B2B B2C both
5. Our enterprise is in business for
 - less than
 - 5 years
 - 6-10yrs
 - more than 11yrs
6. Our enterprise is working
 - Nationally, internationally, both

Part 2. About You

10. How long have you been working in your enterprise for?
11. What do you think the approximate annual marketing budget of enterprises as a percentage of the total company budget?

Part 3. The analysis of use of Social Media

Questions in this part concern the willingness, ability and reason to use Social Media for marketing purpose. By Social media I mean conducting marketing activities with help of social media tools/ sites/ applications such as: social networking sites, search engines, blogs, online communities and etc.

12. How long have you been working with Social Media channels and applications?
13. How important Social Media for business?
 - Very important
 - Important
 - Moderately important
 - Of little importance
 - Unimportant

14. What are the reasons of Social Media usage by companies?

Please use the following scale to indicate the extent to which you agree with the statement:
1=Strongly Disagree 2=Disagree 3=Neutral 4=Agree 5=Strongly Agree

	1	2	3	4	5
It is a very useful tool for my business	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
It is easy to use	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Possibility to conduct market research without qualified and skilled staff	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
It helps us accomplish tasks quickly	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
It helps us to improve the quality of our marketing activities	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
It helps us to increase our productivity	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
It helps to improve effectiveness in our work	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Competitive pressure	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
A response to market trends	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The majority of our customers are comfortable utilising social media applications	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Other, please specify	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

15. What are the most 3 reasons of Social Media usage by companies?

16. What do you think is the company's purpose of use of social media tools and applications?

Please use the following scale to indicate the extent to which you agree with the statement:
1=Strongly Disagree 2=Disagree 3=Neutral 4=Agree 5=Strongly Agree

	1	2	3	4	5
To increase brand awareness	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
To increase traffic to my website	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
To reach new potential customers	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
To set communication media to my customer	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
To improve relationships with customer	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
To develop loyal fans	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
To improve search ranking	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
To build a customer service	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
To develop business partnership	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
To reduce marketing expenses	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
To improve sales	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
To do market research and competition analysis	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
To connect people to offline events	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Other, please specify	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

17. How do you assess which of the social channels and applications might be of value or appropriate for companies use?

18. What tools/sites/applications of Social Media do you often integrate in marketing activities of companies? (one or more options)

- Facebook
- LinkedIn
- Twitter
- Blogs
- Google
- YouTube/ Video Sites Email
- Press releases
- Event marketing
- Online ads (i.e., Google ad words)
- Print display ads
- Sponsorships
- Webinars
- Radio and television ads
- Other, please specify

19. What do you think are the top 3 most popular platforms of Social Media marketing for companies?

20. What Social Media tools/sites are you most comfortable with?

21. Do you define Social Media Strategy for companies?

Part 4. Targeted Audience

In this part the questions are designed in order to understand how you reach and engage an audience using Social Media.

22. How do you identify a target audience with Social Media for companies?

23. How do you convert this audience in company's customers?

24. What do you do to drive more traffic to company's brand?

Part 5. Social Media marketing performance

Questions in this part concern the measure and monitoring of Social Media marketing performance

25. Do you measure the effect of Social Media marketing on business?

26. How do you define/measure effectiveness of Social Media?

27. What is your primary measure for evaluating Social Media effectiveness?

- Number of fans, subscribers, followers
- Website traffic
- Reduced cost of customer support
- Values of sales generated
- Do not measure
- I don't know
- Other, please specify

Part 6. Benefits and Challenges using Social Media

28. What are the challenges do enterprises face when using Social Media tools and application?

Please use the following scale to indicate the extent to which you agree with the statement:
1=Strongly Disagree 2=Disagree 3=Neutral 4=Agree 5=Strongly Agree

	1	2	3	4	5
Responding customer in real-time	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Social media's privacy and security	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Transparency in our operations	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Difficult to cope up with diversities and culture clashes in Social Media	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
It is difficult to integrate Social Media with our main line of operations	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Growing convergence of Social Media	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
To maintain a healthy relationship	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Measuring ROI on Social Media efforts	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
It is difficult to maintain communication with my customers	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
We did not face any challenges	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Other, please specify	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

29. What are benefits of Social Media for business?

	1	2	3	4	5
Increased brand awareness	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Increased traffic to my website	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
New customers were attracted	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Communication media to my customer were set	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Improved relationships with customer	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Developed loyal fans	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Improved search ranking	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Built a customer service	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Grew business partnership	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Reduced marketing expenses	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Improved sales	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Do market research and competition analysis	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Connected people to offline events	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
No benefits for my business	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Other, please specify	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

30. How do you belief marketing is changing since the growth of the Social Media?

31. Do you believe Social Media is effective? If yes, why?

32. What is the most effective way to use Social Media for business?

33. Can Social Media marketing hurting the business rather than helping business?

Thank you very much for you time and effort, your kind cooperation is very much appreciated by the researcher.