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THE APPLICATION OF INTERNET  
MARKETING COMMUNICATION  
CHANNELS IN INCREASING  
BRAND AWARENESS

Lipton case

Bachelor's Thesis  
Business management

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## DESCRIPTION

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<b>Abstract</b>  <p>The main objective of the research was to analyse the most effective and prospective e-marketing communication channels that would be of great importance in planning brand promotion campaigns in 2013 and several years ahead. The research was based on the case campaign study for Lipton, with the company-employer full service digital marketing agency situated in Moscow, Russia – Nectarin.</p> <p>The thesis consists of four main parts through which a reader can promote his knowledge on the current marketing communication tools and their application in real-life brand promotion campaigns. The theoretical part explains the main concepts of the research: digital marketing, online marketing communication channels, branding, and brand awareness. The accent in the theory is put on the discussion of the role of social media marketing, website designing, and game-thinking mechanics application in brand promotion.</p> <p>The empirical part includes the description of case study research design, data collection methods utilized, the operating principle of the digital marketing agency Nectarin, and its project campaign via Internet for Lipton brand, Unilever. In the methodology chapter there is also a depiction of the Lipton tea production line and the target customer groups of the campaign that were concentrated in Russia.</p> <p>In the results the talk is concentrated on presenting the information obtained by the data collection methods. All in all, it is about the Lipton campaign's deployment and its success, about the effectiveness of the marketing communication channels applied, its measurement principles, and the potential additions to the brand promotion activities proposed by the marketing professionals. The conclusion chapter includes the response to the main objective of the research and provides several recommendations to the company-employer on the effective communication techniques in marketing of 2010s. The limitations of the research are also discussed in this final part.</p> <p>The research conducted is precise in the current marketing conditions, although as the marketing communication mechanisms and techniques are rapidly developing these days, its results might be considered useful and applicable for 2-3 years ahead. This feature is possible mostly because of the up-to-date data researched on the growing in popularity marketing communication ways, as social media and game application, quizzes and quests are.</p>		
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## CONTENTS

1	INTRODUCTION .....	1
2	DIGITAL MARKETING COMMUNICATIONS .....	3
2.1	Marketing and its development from 1990s.....	3
2.2	Marketing communications .....	5
2.3	Definition and characteristics of digital marketing .....	6
2.4	E-marketing vs. Traditional marketing communication channels.....	8
2.5	Digital media and Internet marketing communication channels.....	12
3	E-MARKETING COMMUNICATIONS IN BRANDING .....	17
3.1	Definition of brand concept.....	18
3.2	The concept and aims of branding.....	19
3.3	Brand awareness .....	20
3.4	Increasing brand awareness .....	21
3.4.1	Setting up a website and video marketing.....	25
3.4.2	Social media marketing.....	28
3.4.3	Gamification as a marketing communication tool in 2010s.....	31
3.5	Brand awareness indicators and measuring tools .....	33
4	METHODOLOGY .....	35
4.1	Introduction to Nectarin .....	35
4.2	Internet communications in Russia .....	37
4.3	Introduction to Lipton .....	39
4.3.1	Lipton tea products, positioning and target groups.....	40
4.4	A case study in theory .....	42
4.5	Data collection methods .....	43
4.5.1	Primary data collection methods .....	43
4.5.2	Secondary data collection methods .....	46
5	RESULTS .....	46
5.1	Marketing communication channels .....	47
5.1.1	Brand's website.....	47
5.1.2	Social media marketing.....	52
5.1.3	Gamification.....	57
5.2	Measurement of results .....	59
5.3	Numerical results on gaming mechanics' effectiveness.....	60

5.4	Results of the questionnaire.....	61
5.5	Results of the interviews .....	63
6	CONCLUSIONS .....	65
6.1	Efficient marketing communications in branding and their significance.	65
6.2	Recommendations to Nectarin .....	67
6.3	Limitations of the case study research.....	69
7	CONCLUDING REMARKS.....	71
	BIBLIOGRAPHY .....	72

## APPENDICES

## 1 INTRODUCTION

What is the role of marketing communications in marketing campaigns? How may the choice of the communication channel impact the success of brand promotion? What is branding about, and what are the current marketing communication channels that are to be applied to overcome competition and obtain positive results in brand marketing?

These and some other questions will be discussed in the following chapters. The interest in this business area is based on the view that nowadays the understanding of the communication trends and tendencies has an incredibly huge impact on successful marketing campaign planning. But, first of all, it is necessary to distinguish what is going to be meant by the term “marketing” in this paper. According to the American Marketing Association (2007) marketing is the activity, set of institutions, and processes for creating, communicating, bringing, and swapping offerings that have worth for customers, partners, and society at large. Marketing has a great impact on the whole process of company’s activities. Its management has to deal with creating a concept of the business commodity and conveying it to the customers. So it results in meeting customers’ demands and reaching the company’s objectives simultaneously.

Marketing consists of several elements that are known as marketing mix, or the concept of 4Ps, that includes product, price, place, promotion. However, the whole attention of the author is concentrated on the last one that is associated with marketing communications. In real life people can hardly survive without communicating with each other, and the same situation is in business – communication is vital for its prosperity and overall operations. Nowadays there is an evident involvement process of various devices and Internet in people’s lives. Because of the significant increase in the number of mobile and Internet users - the potential target customers for all types of businesses - applying digital marketing communications has become inevitable and essential in creating marketing campaigns and promoting commodities and brands.

In fact, online marketing means focusing on the use of Internet for promotion where both pull (a banner, search engine result pages) and push (e-mailing, instant messaging) strategies can be applied (Kitchenman 2010, 7). Over the last 10 years many companies have become more willing to utilize online advertising when launching new product lines rather than TV adverts, newspapers, radio commercials – offline

communications. However, there are still not so many of them who can boost great results in e-marketing campaigns due to the lack awareness and education on the online marketing communication tools and their appropriate application.

Because of the fact that digital marketing can be seen as a new arena for marketers, the great interest of the author is in having a closer look at current Internet marketing communications and their efficiency for successful brand promotion – and this is what this bachelor's thesis considers. Facing the situation of every day appearing technologies and marketing communication channels, the significant number of managers of various sized companies might consider it challenging to select the best promotional tools. But as in today's business world it is nearly impossible to overcome competition without going online, the marketing communications that are considered in the research analysis are utilized via Internet.

Therefore, the main objective of the study is to find out the effective and prospective Internet communication channels that can be used for creating and increasing brand awareness and to analyze their benefits. This aim can be reached by carrying out a deep analysis of the marketing campaign of the case company, and the current research questions are following:

1. How did the company deploy online marketing communications in brand promotion?
  - a) What were the results of the communication channels appliance?
  - b) How were the results measured?
2. What other e-marketing communication tools could be used in the campaign?
3. What would be their potential impact on a campaign's success?

The paper is divided into five parts: introduction, theoretical framework, methodology, results, and conclusions. The first part gives an understanding on the main research objective and the sub-questions of the paper, while the theoretical part includes the analysis of the most important concepts for the research: digital marketing, e-marketing communication channels, branding, and brand awareness. The methodological part deals with the description of data collection methods and a case campaign study. The results are based on the data collection and analysis, whereas conclusions involve answers to the research questions, relying on the results and theory gained.

## **2 DIGITAL MARKETING COMMUNICATIONS**

In order to create an image of the considered theme in the readers' minds, it is appropriate to start the discussion of the theoretical framework with describing the main concepts of the thesis. They include marketing as an evolving multifunctional management process, marketing communications as a part of marketing mix, and digital marketing as a rapidly spreading way of promotion. Besides, the following sub-chapters involve the discussion on the nature of e-marketing communication channels, their application and significance in current situation in marketing that has been formed in virtue of economic, political, and social modifications.

### **2.1 Marketing and its development from 1990s**

In the majority of cases it is extremely complicated to judge the situation fairly if there is not enough information on background factors. For this same reason, it is worth getting some knowledge concerning the concept of marketing and its historical background, starting from the last decade of 20<sup>th</sup> century. The selection of this time period is made so, as this is where the roots of Internet marketing come from.

Looking through the works of the giant marketing historians, as Robert Bartels (1988), there is no denying that marketing as we know about today is a result of some development activities that have happened in the economy as a whole. Marketing is considered to be a comparatively new phenomenon, although its history goes back to the nineteenth century. According to the article by Lefter (2010) the first one to assume marketing to be the leading and center line of entrepreneurial activity was Cyrus McCormick. Cyrus invented the business of selling reapers to farmers from all over the world, and he stayed behind the creation of such concepts as marketing, pricing, market research, and services. He was one of the first who applied the main ideas and principles of marketing.

The current understanding of the concept of marketing defines the company's guidelines about the current and future needs of customers, and the creation of the appropriate and unique proposition with the aim of meeting these demands and gaining profit. The function of marketing can be determined as the operations of all kinds of entrepreneurship targeted at selling goods and services. (Fedko 2007, 185.)

In the introduction part there was already a discussion of the “marketing” definition by AMA that will be followed in the thesis. However, there is also another one which is very interesting, exact and fairly capacious from the UK Chartered Institute of Marketing (2008). With accordance to this source, marketing is the management process accountable for recognizing, forecasting and meeting customers’ demands at a profit.

In its entirety the idea of marketing is well explained by the marketing guru Dr. Philip Kotler. In one of his interviews (2012) he defined marketing as the art and science of investigating, creating, and communicating value to satisfy the needs of a target audience profitably. Marketing is thought to identify people’s outstanding wants and desires. It determines, measures and quantifies the size and features of the selected target market and the profit potential. Marketing operations are structured so to recognize the segments that the company is able to serve best and to create, design and eventually promote the appropriate and required products and services.

Marketing is commonly thought to have evolved through five distinct phrases: the simple trade era, the production era, the sales era, the marketing department era and the marketing company era. However, while the classic five era progression is taught in business schools, seven distinct eras (Figure 1) are apparent; and the further talk is concentrated on the last two eras – relationship marketing era and social/mobile marketing era. (White 2010.)



Pre-Industrial Revolution    1860’s – 1920’s    1920’s – 1940’s    1940’s – 1960’s    1960’s – 1990’s    1990’s – 2010    2010 – Present

**FIGURE 1. The evolution of marketing (White 2010)**

While the marketing company era has started in the 1960s and still is thought to be actual, at the beginning of 1990s there was an emergence of relationship marketing era that is also continuing these days. It is characterized by the existence of the companies’ focus on building a long-term, mutually advantageous relationship between companies and customers. Therefore, in comparison to the previous eras, the orientation of marketing communication in relationship marketing period has changed from



simply meeting customers' demands to creating lifetime customer value and customer loyalty. (Sharipo et al. 2002.)

The current era that is thought to be of the major interest for further discussion is the social/ mobile marketing era. It has started not so long ago, and the understanding of its main principles is crucial for any company's operations. The priority in this time period of marketing development is given to the real-time connections, communication, and exchange of information with the use of high-tech gadgets and devices. (White 2010.)

## **2.2 Marketing communications**

The substantial marketing tool which was first expressed in 1960 by E. Jerome McCarthy and still is widely used is marketing mix. It consists of 4Ps for product (product, price, place, promotion) and 7Ps for services (all the mentioned before plus to physical evidence, people and process). However, in this part of the thesis the concentration is on promotion, because it is directly connected to marketing communications.

Promotion is responsible for putting the marketing offer to the target market. In other words, it assists the potential customers to gain information on the values that they are able to get from the advertised products or services. (Eisenberg & Eisenberg 2006.) In general, it will be surely enough to state that a dynamic dialogue should be considered at the heart of successful and elaborate marketing (Chaffey & Smith 2008, 14).

In real life situations it is possible to characterize communication as a constant search for the apropos and suitable approach. In marketing it is relatively the same, but communication is mostly about getting the knowledge of what customers need and want, and conveying the coordinated promotional message to a specific target market in order to obtain profitability. (Management Study Guide 2012.) Efficient marketing communication is decisive for companies, as it ensures the remedies by which entities and brands are introduced to the target audience. This is also the reason why companies try to apply different communication tools to transfer the identified and clear message. (Fill & Jamieson 2011, 5.)

The promotional message of any campaign can be delivered through one or more communication channels, and the choice of these channels usually depends on the objectives of a campaign, the size and financial capacity of a company. Nowadays lots of agencies and firms prefer to apply several promotional communications simultaneously, so called integrated marketing communications (IMC). The primary objective of IMC is to gather all aspects of promotional communications such as advertising, sales promotion, public relations, direct marketing, personal selling, online communications, and social media and make them work together as a unified force, rather than allowing each to operate in isolation. Therefore, this principle of applying several communication channels as one power maximizes their cost effectiveness. (Clow & Baack 2012, 8.)

These days companies are trying to sell the up-to-date commodities with the help of current marketing communication tools. For example, Internet is a powerful, fast and flexible way of communication, and the communication principles that we use in everyday life nowadays can be applied in mobile and web marketing communications. That is where digital marketing takes place. (Eisenberg & Eisenberg 2006.)

### **2.3 Definition and characteristics of digital marketing**

The description of digital marketing in this sub-chapter is based on the ratification of the Digital Marketing Council (2008) of the IDM (Institute of Direct and Digital Marketing). So according to this source digital marketing is 1) using digital technologies which generate integrated online channels 2) to support marketing activities objected at achieving profitable acquisition and retention of customers 3) through recognizing the strategic significance of digital technologies and developing a well-thought-out approach to improve online services to meet customers' needs and increase their knowledge on the company, its commodities or brands. As the definition has a complex structure and is multipartite, all its sections are explained in detail below.

The first part of the statement is about highlighting the wide range of digital communication channels like blogs, feeds, social networks, web etc. that the marketer should be aware of, should follow and apply in marketing campaigns. It also gives the idea of the online communication channels being integrated with other marketing instruments and tools, as they are not effective in single applying, but much better in a mix. All

this digital marketing principles promote company's ability to stay up-to-date among competitors and attractive to customers.

In the second part of the definition the author expresses the thought of attracting new customers and continuation of relations with already existing clients as the essential source of profitability. It is considered to be a primary orientation of digital marketing communications utilization.

The last part of the definition states the importance of digital technologies and summarizes the approaches to customer-centric online marketing. It means the pre-analysis of customer's values, needs, knowledge, and experience, of the possible best ways for conveying the clear marketing message. It is also about the analysis of what creates customer loyalty.

Enumerating the vivid and significant characteristics of digital marketing as a current process in marketing, it is acceptable to allocate its addressability, connectivity, interactivity, accessibility, and control. (Pride & Ferrell 2011, 283.)

### ***Addressability***

Digital media provides companies with an ability to distinguish the potential customers before the actual marketing activities implementation. This is what addressability is about. The basic principles of obtaining the information on the target audience could be registration on a website where the user should put some background data, like age, city of origin, sex. (Pride & Ferrell 2011, 283.) Therefore, it gives the company an opportunity to approach customers on a personal and individual level, and this is a social component of digital marketing (Blythe 2006).

### ***Connectivity***

Social networking as a process of Internet users' interaction and communication on special social media platforms has its key feature in connectivity. By involving digital media in marketing companies can easier get in touch with customer groups and stay in contact, getting the necessary information on the possible customers and providing them with valuable data. (Pride & Ferrell 2011, 286.)

### ***Interactivity***

Communication style of digital marketing is represented in two-way communication, so in interactivity between the company and the client, which is not a characteristics of traditional marketing communication channels (Chaffey & Smith 2008, 19). Interactivity is expressed in the customers' ability to express their needs, desires, and demands directly to companies, also give feedbacks and comments on entities' operations (Pride & Ferrell 2011, 285).

### ***Accessibility***

Accessibility represents customers' capacity to obtain the information on Internet easy and to determine the most useful and valuable data that is in user's interest. With the usage of digital media communications customers are becoming better-informed on the competing products, its features and potential values in case of purchasing. (Pride & Ferrell 2011, 285.)

### ***Control***

Consumer control of contact means that consumers are more willing to participate in some e-marketing communication activities as they feel a sense of control over them. Meanwhile consumer control of content is about the interactive way of information creation and spreading. (Blythe 2006.) All in all, control deals with the users' ability to determine the information viewed and to contribute to the content on such platforms as blogs, forums, social media (Pride & Ferrell 2011, 285).

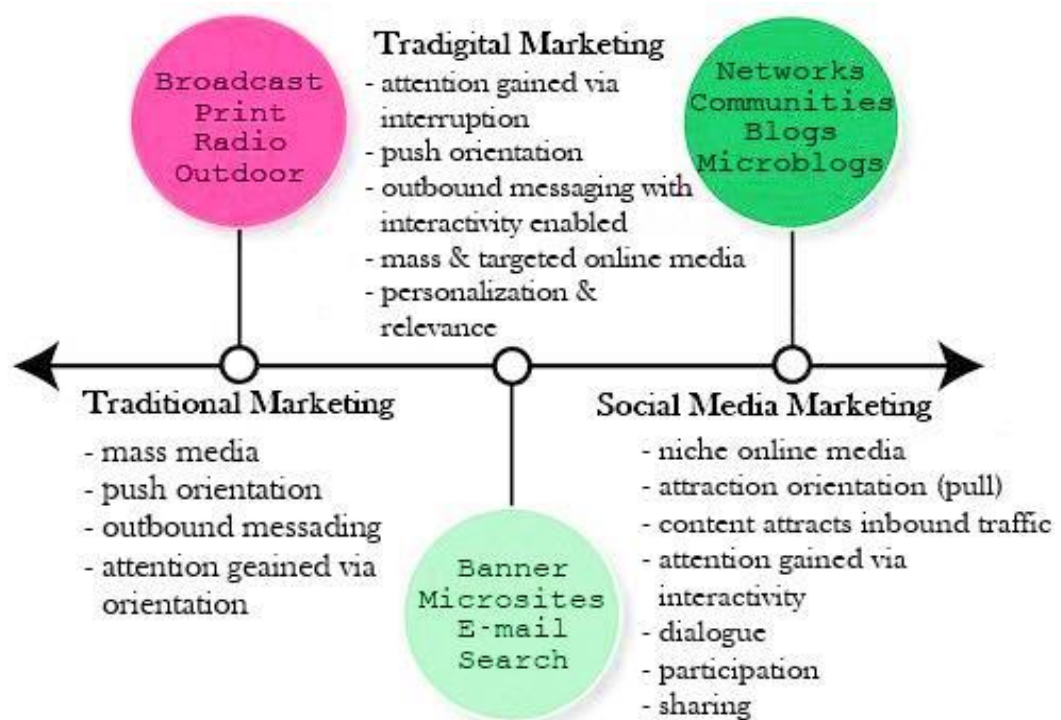
## **2.4 E-marketing vs. Traditional marketing communication channels**

To start with this theory, first of all, it is reasonable to define traditional marketing communication channels in a meaning that they are going to be used when comparing them with online marketing communications. So marketing media, being the delivery tool of the company's message, traditionally have consisted of the following components: publications – newspapers, magazines, journals, leaflets; radio and television; billboards; and telephones (Dahlen et al. 2010, 359).

Over the time the ways of marketing communications as well as personal communications have modified (Figure 2). Digital marketing have matured. Traditional marketing communications have been partly replaced by the new media channels because of the changing customers' values and preferences in communication. People have become

eager to be individually and personally approached, and in the case of necessity to be able to contact the company. (Armano 2009.)

Between the traditional marketing and social media marketing as distinct marketing communication periods there is an intermediate phase - tradigital marketing. The main difference of these three marketing types is the level of social/customer engagement. In case of tradigital marketing the idea of applied communication tools concentrates on providing interactivity between the company and its clients by combining digital and traditional marketing methodology, like mass approach. Tradigital marketing lacks the social factor in its deployment. For instance, when the company designs a website it provides some interactive component in its communication with customers, although it may fail in creating the feedback and discussion mechanisms on it. Thus, the communication tools have to be improved, and this is what Internet and social media marketing provide potential customers with – two-way interactive communication between company and its target audience. (Tuten & Solomon 2013, 16.)



**FIGURE 2. The evolution of Marketing Communications (Tuten & Solomon 2013, 16)**

Marketers are always forced to create something new in order to communicate with the target audience and attract potential clients. Nowadays with the permanently in-

creasing number of Internet users and growing popularity of various Internet communications, e.g. social media, companies prefer to apply these instruments in order to overcome competition and succeed in operations. To make the situation of the current marketing communication trends application by marketers more distinct for understanding, below (Table 1) there is a list of advantages and drawbacks of traditional and online marketing communications.

**TABLE 1. Pros and cons of traditional and e-marketing communications (Chitty et al. 2011, 224)**

	Traditional communication channels	Internet communication channels
Advantages	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. More familiar to customers (older generations)</li> <li>2. Face-to-face communications during selling/buying process</li> <li>3. Opportunity to reach the particular target group (e.g. locals with leaflets)</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Targeting</li> <li>2. Interactivity between a company and its target audience</li> <li>3. Cost effectiveness</li> <li>4. Suitable for any size/type of business</li> <li>5. Customization</li> <li>6. Easiness of tracking and measuring the results</li> </ol>
Disadvantages	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Passive style of customer engagement</li> <li>2. One-way flow of information</li> <li>3. High costs of advertising time or space</li> <li>4. Difficulties in tracking the results</li> <li>5. A fairly low response rate (almost no feedback from target audience)</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. A reliance of an entity on the customer's interactivity and activity online</li> <li>2. Vulnerability of company's image concerning feedback on forums, blogs and discussions</li> <li>3. Lack of security of information</li> </ol>

As there is a lot of important data from the table that will be considered in the further research analysis, here is a more detailed description of the earlier mentioned positive and negative issues of the marketing communication types.

In the advantages of traditional marketing communication channels the emphasis is stressed on the customers' possibilities of having a real face-to-face interaction with a company's representatives and discussing the foremost details that influence their buying decision. Besides, this way of communication is more appropriate when the company needs to advertise the commodity in a specific area. So it is more suitable for the local marketing, where the number of target audience is limited, and mass communication is more effective. What is more, there is still a great number of people who watch TV, listen to the radio, buy magazines and newspapers. The application of traditional marketing communications allows businesses to reach these people as they might also be potential customers. (Souza 2012.)

In comparison to the mass approach of the traditional communications, online media channels are characterized by the more individual and personalized company's treatment toward customers. Moreover, the Internet users are more likely to obtain the information they are interested in with Internet technologies like cookies that memorize the visited website, keyword search of users. (Barker & Angelopulo 2006, 292.)

The communication via Internet channels usually keeps to a more informal style. It also brings customers a feeling of interactivity with the company and creates a unique experience for each user when participating in the dialogue with company's representatives. (Chitty et al. 2011, 224.) Moreover, this type of marketing is thought to be cheaper and easier to apply, as nowadays there is a free access to Internet for both business customer audiences and entities. Thus, online marketing communications are appropriate for companies of various sizes and spheres of operations. (Chaffey & Smith 2008, 23.)

The disadvantages of both online and traditional marketing communication deal with the specific features of their channels of utilization. As Internet is full of information, and its reliability is often questionable company's image might suffer from customers' negative online feedbacks. People are used to believing the word-of-mouth information. In contrast to e-marketing communications channels, traditional media utiliza-

tion is pricier due to the lack of these channels' popularity. (Lilyquist 2013.) Moreover, it is harder to obtain the feedback, to make people engaged in company's operations and to track the real quantitative results of communication channels' effectiveness. This is where the Internet communication in marketing is superior to its traditional ways, as there are plenty of measurement tools to see the tendency of online marketing communication channels' development. (Chitty et al. 2011, 224.)

The frequent question asked by lots of business people and marketers deals with the understanding of what marketing communications are the most effective, and how it is better to structure marketing campaigns. The answer is the same from different specialists in the marketing sphere with an idea that eventually traditional marketing is now losing its significance in comparison to the online advertising, it is still necessary to keep some place in campaigns for such communication channels as leaflets, newspaper ads, and magazine banners. (Eley & Tilley 2009.)

According to the research by Google (2012), the enormous majority of media interactions in 2010s are screen-based, and that is why marketing strategies can longer be considered neither digital, nor traditional. This seems to be a bold statement, and it undoubtedly proves the idea of combining various communication channels in the marketing campaigns. Nowadays 90% of the media consumption occurs in front of a screen. People prefer to use several gadgets, e.g. tablets, smartphones, laptops, simultaneously and, therefore, the message on each screen should reflect the needs of the potential customer and fulfill his/her demands. All in all, it is a new multi-screen world where integrated marketing communications play essential role for company's business success (Lamb et al. 2011, 515).

## **2.5 Digital media and Internet marketing communication channels**

The majority of marketers agree on the idea that digital marketing being a way of commodity, brand or company promotion via different forms of electronic media can be applied through Internet, mobile devices, digital television, and radio channels. It is becoming one of the major costs of marketing campaigns all over the world because of its everyday growing popularity. (Ryan & Jones 2012, 4.) Digital marketing goes beyond the usage of Internet marketing tools and practices, and includes other digital



media channels for communicating with customers, for instance, mobile phones, sms/mms, and display ads (Bird 2007, 153).

In the book by Chaffey et al. (2009, 27) digital media channels are defined as online communication tools that are applied to obtain brand awareness and to impact purchases by the digital media users, who visit websites and get engaged with the marketed brands or commodities. It is important not to mix up digital and Internet marketing communications that include only those communication tools used via Internet.

With accordance to Rapid Learning Life video (2010) there are three primary aims (Figure 3) of Internet marketing as a powerful activity for company's successful operations that are described in detail in the following paragraphs.



**FIGURE 3. Objectives of online marketing (Rapid Learning Life 2010)**

First of all, Internet marketing channels application is aimed at spreading the message of an entity concerning the marketed product, service, or brand. The communication of the message in this case always takes place online and, thus, the company has an overall view on the number of users who got the message and implemented some asked procedures, like visiting a website or registering in social media application.

However, before planning an online marketing campaign and during its maintenance managers need to be aware of the customers' preferences, their needs, demands, some of their background factors that might influence the buying decision. For that reason, Internet marketing also targeted at research conduction which will provide the compa-

ny with the necessary information about its potential and current customers, competitors' offerings and the level of response to marketing message.

The third target of Internet marketing with accordance to Rapid Learning source (2010) is about the overall promotion and selling of company's or brand's commodities via online communication utilization. It can also be a situation when companies advert and provide online spaces on websites and other platforms for rent.

Basically, online media channels and communication tools can be divided into six main types (Figure 4). This categorization promotes the right marketers' approach towards the structure of operations online. It is also to be reviewed when developing digital marketing media plans. (Chaffey et al. 2009, 29.) The parts of offline communications are excluded from the original version, as the stress in the thesis is put on its digital alternatives.



**FIGURE 4. Online communication tools (Chaffey et al. 2009, 29)**

### *Search engine marketing*

The idea of this type of online digital marketing is to position marketing messages on search engines and, thus, to influence potential customers to click-through directly to the website. For this aim marketers may apply different techniques like pay-per-click

and use search engine optimization principles, creating lists of suitable keywords, editing and updating corporate website, developing social media communities and applications.

### ***Online PR***

The main objective of utilization this digital marketing communication tool is to maximize the references and mentions of a promoted company, brand, or product on third-company websites and other online platforms, e.g. social media, forums, blogs, so to be visible for potential customers. Online Public Relations also connected to negotiating with customers and replying to negative recalls.

### ***Online partnerships***

In order to be able to promote the company, its brands and commodities on third-party websites and through e-mail communications, there should be an arranged agreement with the conditions of this cooperation work. That is what online partnerships of various kinds mentioned in the figure 3 are about.

### ***Interactive advertising***

This type of marketing communication involves the utilization of online advertising, such as banner or context ads. They are focused on increasing brand awareness among the target groups of the campaign and encouraging click-through to the company's website.

### ***Opt-in e-mail marketing***

Marketing via e-mails includes either renting e-mail lists, or positioning the ads on the third-company e-newsletters. It also involves the utilization of in-house e-mail lists in order to promote customer activation and retention.

### ***Social media marketing***

SMM can be defined as the application of social media technologies, channels, and software to create, convey, and exchange offerings that have value for an organization's stakeholders, like customers, employees, investors, suppliers. It enables to achieve and raise customer awareness on the promoted commodity or brand, and to impact the audience response towards the leading campaign.

The choice of the most suitable and appropriate Internet communication channel or a mix of channels, first of all, depends on the objectives a company is pursuing. Apart from the described online marketing communication channels, already being in use for several years, there are several Internet techniques (Figure 5) that are in trend for 2010s. Several articles were analyzed (Forbes 2013; Meher 2013; Sharipo 2013; Smith 2013) in order to formulate the list of the widely-used current marketing communication tools, plus to social media, e-mail marketing, and banner advertising.



**FIGURE 5. Popular online marketing communication channels in 2010s**

### ***Gamification***

The basic tenet of gamification in marketing considers the utilization of game play mechanics for non-game applications especially on consumer-oriented web and mobile sites. The objective of this process is to motivate and encourage people to accept the applications and to make them aware of the marketed product or brand. Gamification operates by making communication between the company and its customers more engaging and entertaining, as in people's mind games are associated with some pleasant activities and experiences. (Hunter 2011.)

### ***Online press releases***

The popularity of this marketing communication channel is determined by the customers' want to be aware of selling company's operations, production processes, quality of services and products presented on the market. With the high accessibility of potential clients to the corporate information, online press releases have become of great use for customers' decision-making processes. The language style of online press releases has changed from the original official, as it is made to be better understood by the target audience. They are targeted directly at potential buyers and include

redirections to a company's website, as many Internet marketing communications do. (Scott 2011.)

### ***Video marketing***

Video marketing is able to promote the effectiveness of the commonly used online marketing tools like direct mails, websites, social media community pages. It enables the company to create an emotional connection with its target audience, as it not only provides people with valuable information, but also presents audio and visual effects. The utilization of video marketing element impacts SEO, allows analyzing customer's behavior, and at the same video distribution and measurement is easy and not costly. (Daum et al. 2012.)

### ***Blog marketing***

There are two ways of implementing blog marketing online: creation of the corporate blog and the usage of a third-party blog for promotional and advertising purposes. The main advantages of blogging that make it so popular these days are its capacity to generate traffic to company's website, diversifying its content, influencing SEO and other media channels effectiveness, enhancing brand image, and demonstrating informative expertise to the readers. (Miller 2012.)

### ***Article marketing***

This marketing communication tool is highly significant for online promotion, especially in the combination with several other channels, like social media. It brings the awareness of target groups and contributes to the online visibility of a company. Usually articles are not posted on one social media platform, but are spread all over the Internet - on blogs, forums, websites, via e-mails. They can be introductory, educative, or entertaining, may consist of some elements, e.g. video, images, quotes, links, and references to company's website and other sources. (Taylor & Riklan 2011, 55.)

## **3 E-MARKETING COMMUNICATIONS IN BRANDING**

This chapter involves the description of theoretical concepts, such as brand, branding, and brand awareness. Apart from that, it covers the discussion on three Internet marketing communication channels: social media, website with the application of video, and gamification, e.g. applications and online quizzes, that were chosen due to the

case study. Finalizing the theoretical part of the thesis there is a depiction of measured values in brand awareness campaigns and the most popular online tools utilized for metering the effectiveness of e-marketing communication channels.

### **3.1 Definition of brand concept**

In order to proceed with synthesizing theoretical data on the efficiency of the involvement of e-marketing communications in brand marketing campaigns, it is worth starting the discussion with the depiction of what a brand concept is. It is also useful and applicable for understanding the overall idea of branding. However, J. Kapferer (2008, 9) noticed that there is a tough discussion among experts on the most full and right definition of “brand”, and for that reason several aspects and nuances of “brand” are presented.

The American Marketing Association (2007) linked brand with the name, design, symbol, logo, and any other feature that identifies a seller's good or service among those of other sellers. In fact, a brand can be considered as a visual message implemented via the aforementioned features. This message is not simply conveyed to the target group, but is objected at bringing the salience, intensity, trust, and differentiability of the branded name in customers’ associations (Kapferer 2008, 11). Moreover, these associations being strong, positive, and exclusive should add to the deliberate value of the branded commodity (Keller 1998).

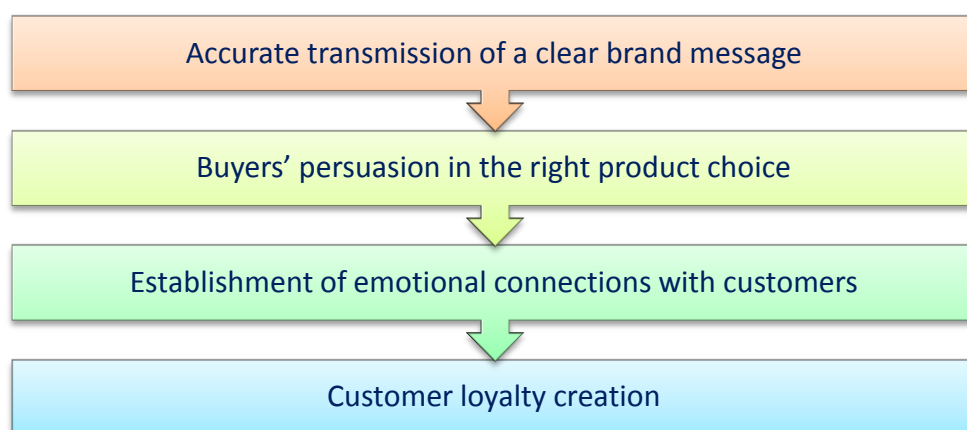
The significance of brands nowadays is thought to be rather huge in comparison to the past times. This idea is at most supported by the fact that the world is becoming online these days. Because of the easier connection around the world, people are getting to know more and more information that respectively is harder to differentiate and analyze. Brands are those to communicate a unified quality, credibility and experience, and they are highly valued by companies and their customers. (Goodson 2012.) In order to create a strong brand, its essence should be explained in more detail, so to make it clear and easy for customers’ understanding, as the true value of a brand lies in the public perception of it (Kumar 2008, 192).

### 3.2 The concept and aims of branding

Branding is a process of adding value to a product with the use of its packaging, brand name, promotion, and position in the minds of consumers. It consists of all the elements of the marketing mix, and therefore, it cannot be simply defined as a tactic tool targeted at differentiating a company's product from those of its competitors. (Blythe 2006.)

Moreover, branding deals with creating the reputation of an entity which is an incredibly valuable company asset (Kerpen 2011). Branding a commodity signifies imposing a character, personality, and inheritance that eventually are going to influence public perception of the branded product, service, institution, and any other object (Millman 2012, 6). Branding can be viewed as the art of aligning what managers want people to imagine and reckon about the company with what people do actually have in mind, think about this very company (Cohen 2011a).

As a result, branding forms customer perceptions about the product or service of a specific business entity. The primary goal of branding lies in the idea of creating the differentiation of a company's product or service. There are also several important successive sub-objectives that are to be taken into consideration in branding (Figure 6).



**FIGURE 6. Aims of branding (Management Study Guide 2012)**

Successful branding should be objected at raising company's and its employees' prestige and status (Kam 2007). One of the main issues in branding is also the mainte-

nance of product/ service quality, as mostly products of poor quality are not welcomed to be released under the brand name. A real brand is the one that gives and keeps promises. (Vincent 2012, 3.)

In branding companies should be oriented at providing values and benefits of products to customers. Managers ought to concentrate efforts on advertising specific quality, advantages and values of products and services to make people willing to buy the commodity of a particular brand name. So, branding is also about providing credibility, creating the emotional connection between the company and its customers, and eventually establishing their loyalty to brand name products. (Vincent 2012, 17.)

### 3.3 Brand awareness

Brand awareness is the first step of creating brand equity in a marketing campaign. It is an extent to which a brand name is memorized, recognized, and evoked by the target customers. (Shimp 2010, 37.) The process of creating brand awareness (Figure 7) means going from the point where a brand is unknown or just known by the potential customers to a level when a brand is becoming well-known and valued by the audience, so a brand is becoming the “top of mind” (Aaker 1991).



**FIGURE 7. Brand awareness pyramid (Aaker 1991, 62)**

From the pyramid it is visible that brand awareness consists of brand recognition and brand recall. Brand recognition is the ability of consumers to retrieve the past knowledge of a brand when they are enquired about the brand or are shown an image



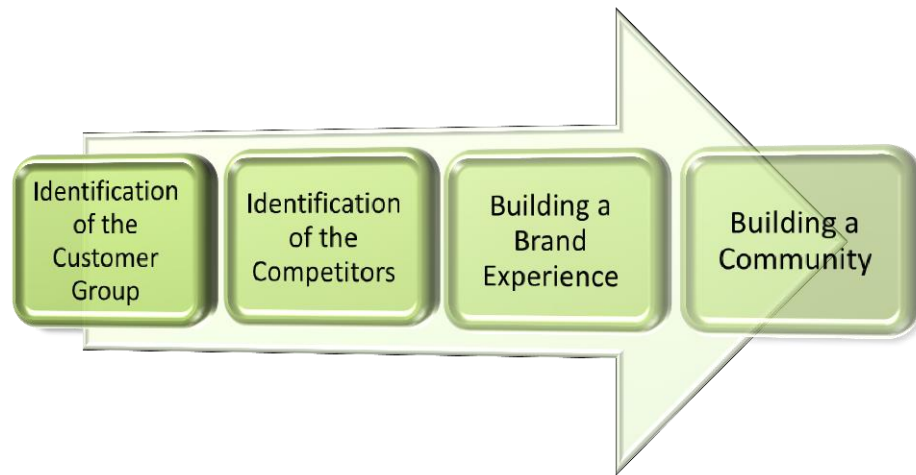
of the brand logo, its slogan. Meantime, brand recall is defined as the ability of consumers to name the brand and recollect it with a reference to the commodity. The “Top of mind” level in the pyramid simply means that a brand is the first brand and the most frequently recalled in a given product category. Evidently, without creating brand awareness, a brand is vacuous and insignificant as consumers are unlikely to recognize it among the competitive brands. (Eagle et al. 2013.)

There are two vivid types of brand awareness that companies might be oriented at achieving. The first one is called an aided awareness. It means that when mentioning a product category, customers recognize one particular brand from the list of brands shown. On the contrary, an unaided brand awareness is measured by brand recall of customers without an aid of an offered list of brands. (Liljenwall 2004, 80.) The second type is a top of mind awareness or immediate brand recall. The idea behind this concept is that in the same situation of mentioning the product category, the first brand which a customer recalls from his mind is the brand of the particular company. (Management Study Guide 2012.)

### **3.4 Increasing brand awareness**

Before considering the expansion of a brand on new markets and choosing the best ways for branding, a deep survey on the target customers, competitors, and the company itself must be done. The main reason for that is that there are numerous brand marketing strategies for attracting public attention that might be suitable not for every business, and the use of methods for creating and increasing brand awareness among the potential customers depends on the type of business. (Brennan 2011.)

Ways of creating brand awareness can be viewed as a set of communications through which customers become acquainted and familiar with a brand, recognize it, and differentiate it from the brands of numerous competitors. In fact, strong brand awareness is more likely to result in a high level of sales and high market share. (Kumar 2008, 192.) If the process of raising and keeping brand awareness is prosperous and the results are considered successful, then it is possible to speak about the likelihood that a brand will be and stay a part of the customers’ consideration set (Hoyer & Macinnis 2008, 200).



**FIGURE 8. Tips to build a brand awareness strategy (Soffront CRM 2011)**

In general, the best and most prosperous brand marketing strategy should include several steps (Figure 8). After the branded product is identified, managers should focus on identifying the potential target group, as the information on customers' preferences, needs and wants influence the overall flow of a brand marketing campaign. Besides, it is necessary to analyze the market and determine possible competitors. These data will promote the development of a company's own brand, will provide the view on how to offer a more attractive and valued good. (Parameswaran 2006, 52.)

After all the surveys are ready, the company can proceed with planning and designing logos, slogans, titles, and all the needed issues to build a unique brand experience of the customers. All in all, being oriented at creating customer loyalty and ultimately increasing profitability, companies should consider building customer communities in order to establish a strong communicative basis for a further brand development. (Pride & Ferrell 2011, 400.)

Brand awareness marketing strategies should include the application of a set of integrated communication channels (Figure 9) that can be aimed at different customer groups, as to increase the effectiveness of promotion campaigns. Moreover, it is substantial to develop memorable and catchy graphics and labeling that will be promoted through marketing communication channels to make their associations with a particular brand automatic over some time. (Brennan 2011.)



**FIGURE 9. Communication channels to raise brand awareness (Brennan 2011)**

### ***Going online***

It is a must for companies in the current business world conditions, as there is a constantly growing number of Internet users who might be a potential customer group for this or that company. Online marketing communications provide a wide range of tools and mechanisms that can be applied to promote branded products or services, and to increase the brand awareness of target customers. Online advertising, for example, supports the distribution of a company's message over the Internet and works as a tool of persuasion for users to visit corporate websites or to make purchases of branded product. It is useful for reminding customers of the brand name and its commodities by staying visible to the public in web. (Botha et al. 2008, 305.)

### ***Google AdWords***

It is a type of context advertising offered by Google, Inc. in order to promote companies, their brands, products, services, events, and other issues. The main idea is to create a small advertisement with a catchy title that will be presented on the side of the Google search engine page. However, it will not appear every time a person looks for something on Google, but only in case of matching the user's keywords with one or several words from the company's keyword list. Thus, this way of increasing brand awareness might be an element of a pull strategy that generates potential customers'

interest in a chosen product category. Rich media and image ads by Google AdWords promote the establishment of a higher brand recall value, associating the brand with a specific product line and educating customers on the commodities. (Geddes 2012, 231.)

### ***Article marketing***

It was already mentioned in the Internet marketing communication part, although its significance for brand promotion is special. In the articles companies can post interesting, cognitive and educative information on the promoted brands, their product lines or events held by the company. The free informal style of writing in an article creates a pleasant atmosphere in communication between a company and its target audience, thus, it stimulates the positive attitude towards the brand and flow of online word-of-mouth on particular branded products or services. (Taylor & Riklan 2011.)

### ***E-mail marketing***

An e-mail application contributes to building the communication between a company and a potential customer group, creating real time interaction. E-mail marketing is regarded as a marketing communication tool that promotes building brand awareness by informing current and potential customers about new products of services. It also supports increasing their loyalty to a company and its brand by sending special offers and providing unique purchasing conditions to each and every e-mail receiver. Therefore, e-mail marketing is considered to be a flexible and forceful form of direct marketing. (Smith & Zook 2011, 383.)

### ***Billboard***

Although the application of billboards in marketing refers to the traditional ways of communication, it is still essential and widely-used in brand awareness campaigns. Billboards possess a catchy and complex message of a marketing campaign that is powerful for creating the right brand image and building brand awareness. Outdoor billboards can create a feeling of mystery among the promoted brand and cause curiosity in public. Eventually it may lead to a flow of customers and high purchases of the branded commodity. (Sugarman 2007.)

### ***Promotional products***

Along with the aforementioned ways, promotional products are applied in order to advertise a brand name, the campaign's message or some special company offer. These products are frequently applied in brand promotion together with some other communication tools, like direct mailing and online contests. They help to create a pleasant impression of a brand on a customer and to form positive associations with a particular branded product. (Carlton & Blaise 2007, 25-30.)

Unconditionally, the proposed list is not full, but it shows the variety of techniques that could be applied in brand awareness promotion. In the following subchapters the emphasis of the theoretical data discussion is put on three primary concepts and their role in the branding marketing campaigns: a website with video marketing element; social media marketing; and gamification (the usage of applications and games). The choice of these e-marketing communication instruments is dictated by the case campaign study.

### **3.4.1 Setting up a website and video marketing**

One of the primary activities each company that decided to go online should think about is creating a website that will be a digital version of a company. It will also make potential customers aware of each essential detail about company's operations, and influence its success online. A website is an interactive tool of persuasion that should be easy and valuable to use. (Worsham 2011.)

Before planning and designing a website, each company should identify its primary goals pursued by the application of this communication tool. It could be advertising or selling products and services online, providing corporate information, or creating company identity and raising brand awareness. (Sweeney 2006, 3.)

Building and increasing brand awareness online can be implemented through different channels, and frequently they are closely connected to a company's website by providing references and links to it. Therefore, after a brand is promoted online via banner ads, social media applications, e-mails and other online tools, customers in search of more detailed and official information address the corporate website. (Botha et al. 208, 305.) That is why it should always have a consecutive feel and look (Sweeney 2006, 5).

When creating a website, managers should, first of all, consider content that would be the most applicable, informative and accessible. The importance of the website content is extremely huge, as it is aimed at attracting and keeping customers' attention. (Wuebben 2011.) However, the possibility to create a website with a rich and interesting content appears only if a company is aware of what its customers want and need. Quite often Internet users face a challenge of choosing a right product option and they have questions towards the details and values of a possible purchase. Thus, customers need the solutions to their problems, demands and desires, they need information. If a company is able to provide the answers and show the values and benefits possibly obtained from choosing the promoted brand products online, the possibility of a client coming back is enlarging. (McGaffin 2009.)

In the current tough website competition, content is what could be a company's competitive advantage. Undoubtedly it is content that provides the higher ranking position of a company's website in search engines, thereby increasing the possibility of Internet users noticing the company and becoming aware of its activities. (Keller 2012.) In order to create customers' awareness of a brand, it is essential to have a memorable name, and an attractive and eye-appealing logo expressed in appropriate graphics and colors on a website. (Sweeney 2006, 5.)

The textual part of a website is also of great significance. The selling text should be convincing and valuable for the customer. Its aim is to show the possible value of a branded product purchase, to create a nice image in a customer's mind, and to promote positive experiences associated with the brand. Reading is the main activity of Internet users, and therefore, in order to get and keep customers' attention to a brand, marketers ought to speak about the most important issues that are estimable by the target audience. (Eisenberg & Eisenberg 2006.)

Another important way of showing the information on a website is images. The most important objective of any image on a website is to ease the process of understanding the necessary information. Pictures help to visualize customers' needs and wishes from buying service or good. Thus, images are to make customers act. (Bullas 2012.)

Generally, by posting information on corporate websites, editing their content, providing interesting images, articles, services, offers to Internet target groups,

companies aim at creating customers' knowledge about their operations, making people act and talk. Online word-of-mouth could be a significant way of raising brand awareness on a large scale, and that is what website building and maintenance can provide the promoted brand with. (Ng 2011, 137.)

To visualize the idea of a brand or a company and its products many marketing companies nowadays propose their clients to use video marketing as part of a promotional campaign. Often videos are posted on a website, as well as on special services as YouTube or on social media. The reason for using video marketing principles is to deploy a promotion of a company's brand by applying short in time, but attractive and educative videos. The main objective is to raise and spread awareness about the company and its commodities to potential customers. A video supports the deeper understanding of the marketing message, and makes it more lucid. (Wood 2009.)

Video is a vital marketing communication channel. The majority of audience enjoys videos and is eager to watch them because of their easiness of lodging information – sometimes people just don't have time or patience to read the whole marketing text, no matter how great it is. (Rodriguez 2011.) At the same time, online videos do not play only the entertaining role in brand marketing campaigns, but they also bring the sense of customer's engagement, and this is what makes them more popular compared to TV videos. They can be educative and provide the viewer with interesting and cognitive facts about the company's activities. Online videos usually include an informal and light approach to get memorized and recognizable in future by the viewers. (Miller 2009.)

Creating a video might be essential for raising brand awareness among a potential target group, as videos are supposed to be an integral part of the marketing communication mix. In other words, it can be posted on different marketing communication platforms, such as Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, a website, with providing the same promotional message and idea. Nowadays it is easy to access videos via various Internet techniques, so companies and people use them as a way of messaging and communicating with each other. (Martin 2010, 56.)

All in all, there is a variety of technologies that could be utilized on a website: downloading services, images, weblogs, videos, integrating social media apps, advertising

banners. The information on these different marketing communications should be cognitive and necessary to Internet users, to make them willing to try the offered branded services or products, and to share the information with others. Besides, it is always of great importance to guide and lead the visitors do some special activities, otherwise they could get lost. By following these issues in planning and maintaining a website, company can create an attractive brand image and form nice associations with a branded product line and the brand itself. (Rogers 2009.)

### **3.4.2 Social media marketing**

Over a short period of time social media has become one of the most usable and popular Internet communication platforms, and it is possible to notice the same tendency in marketing – involvement of social media in marketing campaigns has become extremely huge. Due to the evolving principles of social media operations and constantly developing social media channels the definition of this concept has undergone several changes. (Cohen 2011b.)

Social media is a set of online means of communication, broadcasting, cooperation, and cultivation among interconnected and interdependent networks of people, communities, and organizations reinforced by technological development and mobility (Tuten & Solomon 2013). It is the online space where companies, brands, businesses always being in tough competition with each other create news, make updates, communicate with individuals, and build communities (Weinstein 2011).

In general social media in marketing deals with influencing people one-on-one and obtaining peer communication that promotes awareness, adoption, and action. Applying social networks as mighty tools of communication plays an important role in brand-building, maintenance, and protection strategies. It increases customer engagement and enlarges the scale of interaction between groups of people by sharing contents, profiles, views and thoughts, experiences, and conversations. (Evans 2010.)

The fame of social media networks is adorable. For example, Facebook reached a fabulous number of users equaled to 200 million people in less than a year. Every day the impact of social media platforms broadens as more and more people join online com-



munities. People use social media almost everywhere; they can easily access Internet via their phones. (Tuten & Solomon 2013.)

The significance of social media is distinguished by its main advantages. First of all, social media is where companies can utilize a more informal and personal approach towards a customer. Secondly, social media platforms are regarded as the best place for creating and increasing brand awareness, as they provide a wide range of communicating means, such as video, images, news sharing, article postings, communities' creations, context and banner advertising. So, social media assists the company to implement a multidimensional approach to the target customer groups. Thirdly, social media involvement in marketing campaigns is a cost saving communication way for promoting products, services, events, brands, as it helps companies to stay in limelight for a longer time by the appearance of referrals and word-of-mouth. (Hollingsworth 2012.)

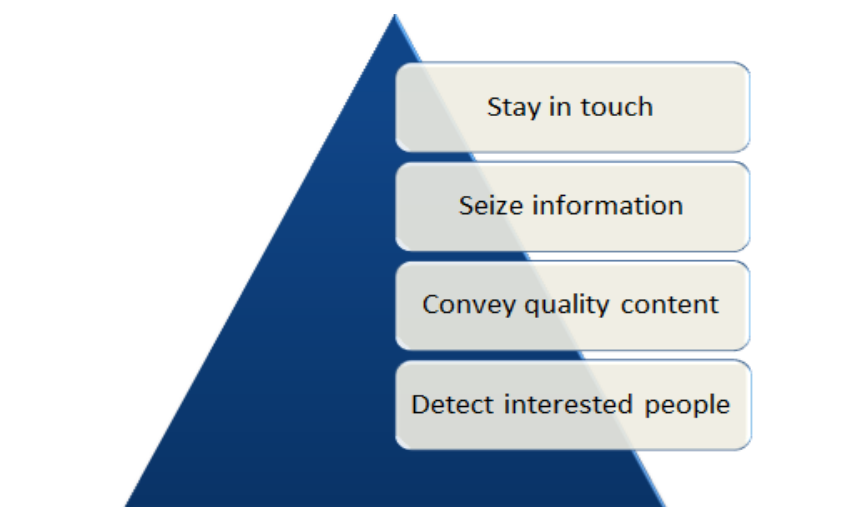
According to the results of the survey published by Erik Qualman (2009), 78% consumers trust peer communications, and only 14% find the information on advertising reliable. Therefore, social media is a very useful and even necessary tool each company should use for the brand, product, service, event promotion. Social media channels application can be aimed at developing relations, not providing the commercial content targeted at potential customer groups.

According to Nichole Kelly (2012), there are two types of brand awareness campaigns applied in social media: brand awareness campaigns and reputation management. Brand awareness campaigns are mostly objected at bringing and raising customers' knowledge on the promoted brand. They should memorize and remember the brand name, and companies utilize various techniques to achieve this goal. Some campaigns try to emotionally inspire customers, others prefer to refer to laughter and, thus, leave a positive attitude towards the brand. Thereby, reputation management operates to make sure that a brand possesses a positive reputation on the market. Negative expressions, reviews and recalls should be minimized, and it is incredibly hard to obtain, as the information flow in Internet is extremely fast and unpredictable.

Nowadays a concept of so called "brand ambassadors" is known in branding. These are the people who can positively and beneficially advocate brands in a social media,

they are also known as brand evangelists. As people are more eager to trust their peers, involving brand ambassadors is a valuable and powerful technique for branding in a social media. They speak not on the behalf of the company, but express their thoughts, ideas and experience concerning the usage of branded products, and provide the reviews that potential customers are looking for. (Weinberg 2009, 26.)

In order to achieve success in an appliance of social media marketing principles, and to obtain visible results in expanding the range of customers, marketers should put a lot of effort on following the latest technological updates on a social media topic, keeping also in mind the basic steps to be taken (Figure 10).



**FIGURE 10. Steps to achieve a social media success (Underhill & Kurit 2009)**

At the basis of planning branding activities in a social media, companies should analyze the market and distinguish the possibly interested target audience. It is necessary in order to have an idea of what people need and want, and to be able to present the information on brand values and benefits in the most applicable way. Thus, company is coming to the next step of conveying high-quality content of a marketing message, not simple commercial ads, that may include the description of a brand, its product lines, advantages in attractive graphics, words, images, video applications. As senders of a brand promotion message companies should also collect the feedback and analyze the customers' perceptions on the brand, their thoughts and ideas. It is to be done to avoid future mistakes and also to change the way of branding in a present and possible future campaign. After the implementation of a campaign it is important to stay in touch with the current customers. Creating social media communities, and making

posts and updates are suitable and necessary ways for keeping customers' attention to permanently remember the brand. (Underhill & Kurit 2009.)

Still the main hazard for the majority of branding campaigns in a social media is the possible lack of success and inability to gain adequate brand awareness compared to their competitive brands due to frequently limited budgets (Eagle et al. 2013). However, social media plays an incredibly huge role in current branding and if applied in a right way, it may boost business operations. It is a radical shift in the way people communicate and companies lead their marketing activities. (Qualman 2009.)

### **3.4.3 Gamification as a marketing communication tool in 2010s**

Everyone knows what the term “game” means; however, there are still those who can hardly understand the link between marketing and gamification. The connection is simple: gamification in branding and marketing means the utilization of game thinking and game mechanics in a non-game context aimed at engaging users and solving problems (Zichermann & Cunningham 2011, xiv). It is used in applications, quizzes, and processes to improve user engagement, return-on-investment, data quality, timeliness, and learning (Herger 2011).

In the given description of gamification, the expression “game mechanics” means formulation of rules and feedback loops designed to provide users with an enjoyable gameplay. These mechanics are viewed as the building blocks that are used and combined to gamify any non-game context. There is a great diversity of game mechanics that might be taken advantage of, such as achievements, bonuses, quests, levels, free lunch, points, lottery, and discovery. (Schonfeld 2010.)

The term “gamification” was invented in 2002 by Nick Pelling, and it was not widely known before 2010. Evidently, there is a rapidly growing popularity of this marketing communication tool, and it has huge prospects of further development. Nowadays more and more businesses prefer to use gamification – the process of involving games into digital technologies – in order to promote brands. The reason is that the application of game thinking makes the process of marketing more interactive and enjoyable, so it creates a nice brand image and promotes pleasant experience associated with the particular brand. (Sappington 2012.)

Gaming can be seen as a part of the mindset of the new purchasing generation. Involving game mechanics in branding and marketing is essential. It helps to position a brand with potential customers, raise their interest, knowledge and demand in branded products, and eventually build brand loyalty, trust and credibility. (Bacon & Pugh 2004, 125.) Current gamification methods strengthen and satisfy people's natural desires for competition, achievement, status, and self-expression (Zhang 2013).

It is necessary to make a game appealing and fun to use. In branding an entertainment factor ought to be presented. Moreover, it is obligatory to give a game or mobile application a special objective. Thus, it will identify a certain purpose for players that should be reached in the game, and it will motivate people to proceed with playing. (Wegert 2012.) The last, but not the least issue to think about is to stay visible as a brand in the game application - to give a user the understanding that there is a corporate entity behind the game. This effect can be reached by placing the game on a website or on a social media page that operates for increasing knowledge and providing details on the particular brand. (Duggan & Shoup 2013, 191.)

There is an idea of Brian Burke (2013) which states that the majority of attempts to implement successful gamification principles in marketing are currently failing its objectives. However, when the companies learn how to make game applications successful and sustainable, it will help to transform customers into fans, routine work into fun, or make learning a pleasure. In the article posted by Burke a reasonable assumption is revealed about the failure of current gamified applications to meet business objectives mainly due to poor design. The design in this sense consists of the right definition of business objectives as well as of the application's objectives, its deployment by marketers, and public adoption.

Overall, gamification is a fairly new communication tool which people are only getting acquainted with. The great advantage of gamification is that it provides an abundance of ways of its utilization. It needs creativity from marketers, fascinating and catchy templates from designers, and the right positioning on the websites and social media pages. In the long run the prospective of gamification branding activities is fabulous, as companies will learn how to engage audiences at a deeper level. (Burke 2013.) Applying game mechanics in marketing will not only increase brand awareness among the possible customers, but also raise their loyalty to the brand. Gaming is

about creating entertainment to people, and meeting their wants and needs in contests, achievements, leadership, and fun. (Duggan & Shoup 2013, 12.)

### **3.5 Brand awareness indicators and measuring tools**

Traditionally brand awareness measurement is accomplished through phone interviews and surveys in order to gather essential data. When marketing is implemented in the Internet, the call to action should be taken into account. Action is linked to customer engagement and is considered as the indicator of a brand marketing effect. (Jeffery 2010, 86.) Leonard D. Hoyle (2002, 96) also suggest the focus group method to measure changes in awareness and attitudes towards the promoted brand. He highlights the necessity of a company to have putative objectives of the brand awareness campaign results, expressed in the percentage or amount increase.

Brand awareness has a great impact on the purchasing activities of the target group. That is why, both brand recall and recognition should be measured, but the results could not be taken as absolute. Mark Jeffery (2010, 86) suggested asking two initial questions from the target customer group that disclose an unaided (without a list of brands offered) reception of the branded product or service. The first one is about naming the first company or product the respondent is thinking of for some special product or service line of the interviewer's interest. The second question is objected at obtaining the information on the other companies or products the customer has heard about, also for a specified product line. This inquiry allows the company to assume the relative ranking of the brand on the market.

The effectiveness of marketing communication channels application can be measured on cognitive, conative, and behavioral levels. On the cognitive level the tests on brand recall, recognition, and association are carried out. The results of these tests help to evaluate the change in the target audiences' awareness and knowledge of the brand. It is possible to obtain the understanding on various aspects: where and how the customers received the marketing message, whether they have tried the branded products, and what recommendations they would give to others. That kind of data supports the assessment of the changes at conative and behavioral levels. (Saxena 2009, 359.)

With accordance to the article by J. Steven (2011), in order to follow the effectiveness of the applied marketing communication channels, and to forecast the most successful and prospective development strategies of brand awareness campaigns, there are several special online measuring technologies that can be used by marketers.

1. Facebook Insights. Via this tool a company can get both raw numbers and time-line graphs of the number of “Likes” for the page, post views and page interactions. Besides, marketers can obtain helpful demographic information of people who “Like” the page.
2. Twitter. If the company uses Twitter, then it is easy to view the number of people who follow the page, who made retweets. It is the simplest way of counting how many people got to know about the brand, whether they read it, liked and retweeted. It shows public interest in the posted news and updates of a brand or a company.
3. LinkedIn Analytics. LinkedIn is the business-oriented social media platform. Admins of the company’s LinkedIn profile can see how many page views it is getting per day, week, month, year, and what is the number of unique visitors and followers. So it shows the development of the profile page and the increase/fall in the number of people, viewing it.
4. SocialMention.com. The website helps to obtain a general idea on whether the brand is regarded in a positive or negative way. Such kind of data supports the company’s understanding on whether the campaign is reaching its targets, what image a brand has online.
5. Google Analytics. This tool is based on a powerful, easy-to-use reporting platform, so that a marketer can choose the kind of data he/she wants to view and customize in the reports. It measures the current views of the website and referrals to it, and provides statistical data on the overall effectiveness of applied marketing communication channels.

## **4 METHODOLOGY**

This part of the thesis covers the description of the client – digital marketing agency Nectarin, the case campaign for Lipton brand promotion with the deep analysis of its target audience and the production line. This chapter also involves the depiction of the research methodology and data collection methods chosen for further analysis of materials.

### **4.1 Introduction to Nectarin**

The company that was addressed to assist in the research was the full service digital agency Nectarin. It is situated in Moscow, Russia, and it is ranked in the top 20 among the Russian digital agencies in terms of turnover and client-list. It has seven years of working experience on the marketing arena and a portfolio of over 100 clients with nearly a half of them as permanent charterers.

The name of the agency speaks for itself - not by chance it is consonant with a fruit “nectarine”, that is associated with some pleasant experiences, such as summer, sun, succulence, freshness, and brightness. There are a lot of factors that make the company unique and different from other marketing agencies, which are going to be spoken about in further paragraphs.

Nectarin perceives itself as a medium-sized, but great opportunity agency. The mission of the company is to create and apply the newfangled high-tech opportunities to make their clients beat the competition and conquer the market. Nectarin has a vision of becoming the leader of the international digital industry because of its technological development, well-qualified professionals and products. The agency is also intended to create and incessantly develop marketing technologies making them the best in the world.

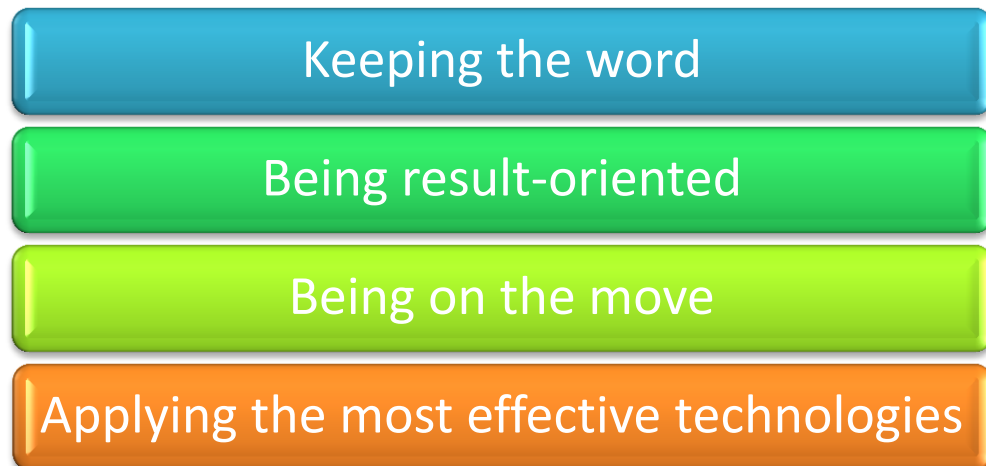
The characteristics of the agency, which it assumes to be its competitive advantages, are tightly connected to its operational principles and had an impact on the Lipton brand promotion campaign. Thus, it is essential to name them, as this information can promote the understanding on an agency’s campaign planning and realization.

First of all, the agency employs more than 80 highly-qualified, well-educated, and experienced professionals. All of them have a special set of responsibilities, and thus, the work is created by a huge team of specialists who perform different ideas and views concerning the planned brand promotion campaigns.

Moreover, all the ideas proposed by the marketers, designers, and managers are creative. What is more, they are entirely focused on the particular client's requirements. That is what stimulates client's loyalty and shows the high level of the agency's working performance.

The unique feature of Nectarin is that it possesses the ownership of proprietary technologies that have been obtained as the results of its experience in particular digital marketing activities. Several of these technologies were implemented over the Lipton campaign planning and maintenance, so it was an interesting case study to base the research on.

The marketing agency regards providing high-quality advertising response as one of its primary tasks. In order to understand the principles of the agency's operations more precisely, here are its core values (Figure 11).



**FIGURE 11. Nectarin's core values**

The company always does what it agreed on with the client, taking into account its interests and preferences in the potential outcomes of the campaign. Nectarin operates in terms of obtaining results, not only enjoying the process of planning, designing, and discussing the marketing activities. In the agency employees believe that it is essential



to act continually, because by only being on the move it is possible to achieve the desired results. As the digital company possesses unique marketing technologies, one of its core values is to apply the most effective technologies, personally chosen for each client.

As an advanced full service digital marketing agency with an ambitious view on its future development and place among the competitors, Nectarin provides the clients with a complex digital marketing (Figure 12) that consists of seven major services. The description of the services is also provided in the figure.

#### Strategic services

- involve planning media, communication, content, and promotion strategies.

#### Analytical services

- consists of competitive, web blog sphere content, search, and post-campaign analyses.

#### Creative services

- deal with the procession of the individual to each client creative strategy planning.

#### Client services

- include project management, through which a client-company representative is actually in project planning and management.

#### Media services

- assume the formulation of a media plan: banners, context, SEO, SMM, mobile, and buying audit. The audit is the analysis of client's current media plan prices.

#### Content services

- are about copywriting, website maintenance, social media groups and communities support, and reputation management.

#### Production

- contains the creation of promo-sites, landing pages, corporate portals, mobile and social media applications, banners, video presentations and viral videos.

**FIGURE 12. Complex digital marketing services**

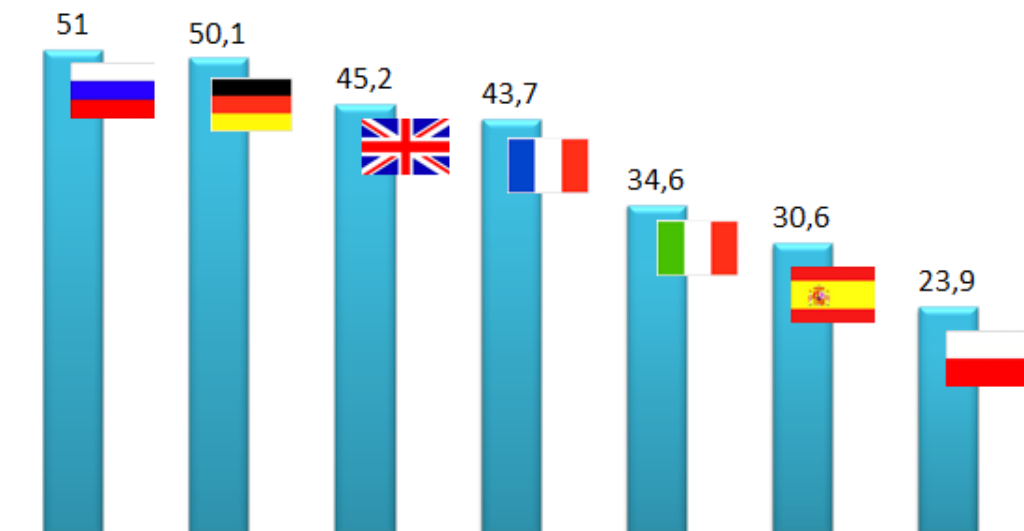
## 4.2 Internet communications in Russia

Before the description and analysis of the online marketing communication tools and techniques of the case campaign, the data on the role of Internet and Internet marketing communication channels in Russia during winter 2011 – 2012 are presented. They will help to create an overall view on the digital communications situation in the coun-

try and promote the analysis of the branding activities chosen by Nectarin. The time period is identified so, as the campaign took place in 2012, and the marketers of the agency used those data to plan and develop it properly.

According to the survey by the Public Opinion Foundation, in the winter 2011 – 2012 the number of the users who referred to the Internet at least once a month reached a peak of 57,8 million people (50 % of interviewed), while for the same period of time in 2010 – 2011 this indicator was equal to 50,3 million (43 %). The proportion of the active audience – using the web networks at least once a day – at the beginning of 2012 was 38 % of the respondents (44,3 million people). Besides, the number of users in towns of more than 100,000 people was 36 million people. It is more than 60 % from the total number of the population.

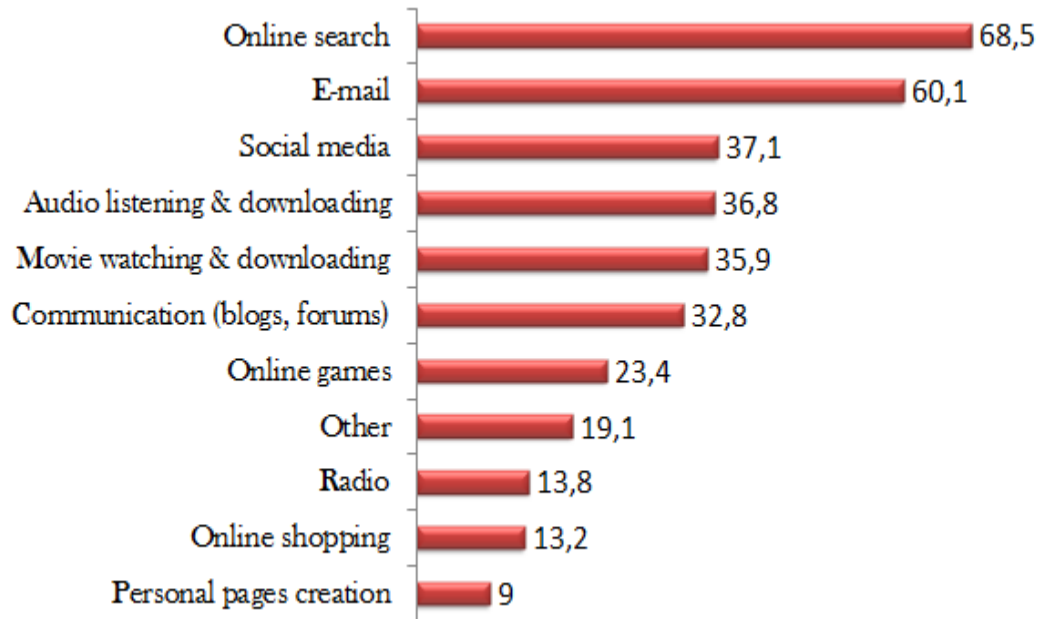
In 2011, Russian Internet market was considered to be the largest in Europe – 51 million users (Figure 13). The increase in the number of Internet users in Russia over the year was possible due to the growth of the adult audience (18+) by 22%, and the penetration of Internet in the regions, particularly in small cities with the population of less than 500,000 people.



**FIGURE 13. The number of Internet users in million (Public Opinion Foundation 2012)**

In the winter 2011, the main interests of the Internet users were concentrated on searching activities (68,5%), e-mail operating (60,1%), and social media interactions (37,1%). In the bar chart below (Figure 14), there is a complete overview on the Inter-

net tools popularity with the percentage of their utilization by the Russian Internet users.



**FIGURE 14. Interests of Russian users on Internet in percentage (TNS web Index 2012)**

### 4.3 Introduction to Lipton

On 20 May 2012, professionals of Nectarin successfully completed the work on a three-month project for the international leader in food production, Unilever. The client was interested in creating a marketing campaign for one of its most successful brands – Lipton tea. Looking ahead, before describing the case campaign, it is worth mentioning that in 2012 Nectarin won the “Rating of the Runet” (Russian-language Internet) by taking the first place in the nomination “Site awards” with the website for the Lipton brand.

The main aim of the campaign was to formulate awareness on the launch of the already known, but modified product line under the Lipton brand with the emphasis on the idea “Lipton – is a high quality product” in Russia. In other words, the task of the agency was to ensure the potential customers’ coverage and to convey the aforementioned key message. Three major services offered to the client were creative strategy implication, promo-site development, and mobile and social media applications design.

The primary value of this campaign to Lipton was to build a durable and solid basis that “Lipton equals quality”. It is worth saying that in the majority of cases any branded commodity is always thought to be of high quality, although there is also a power of stereotypes. For instance, it is not reliable to buy a “made in China” commodity because of its poor quality, or tea bags are obviously not tea, but some “tea dust” bags. Such kinds of thoughts usually have an effect on the choice of the product or service. In other words, the wrong idea on the product like tea or the stereotype about its production process might have negative influence on the customer buying behavior.

#### **4.3.1 Lipton tea products, positioning and target groups**

As a primary orientation of operations, marketing agency was focused on creating the awareness on two types of products: Lipton Yellow Label and Lipton Pyramids. In fact, the main differences of these packaged tea products are about the packaging, tea bags serving design and flavors. Besides, the form of pyramids for the tea bags was applied by Lipton, as it assumes that the flavor of tea packaged in pyramids is more saturated and rich, so the customer can enjoy the whole palette of flavors.

While discussing the choices of the main marketing communication tools and their potential impact on the results of the overall marketing campaign, there was also an important aspect to be taken into consideration – the online marketing communications had to be interconnected with the positioning of the brand in offline media channels. In order to attract more customers and to make them interested in buying the products, they were positioned through the concentration on three equally important and essential aspects that are:

1. high quality of a product no matter what type of tea the customer prefers to choose;
2. comfortable serving form of leaf tea – usual tea bags and so called “pyramids”;
3. a great variety of tea flavors appropriate to any occasion and mood.

The marketers came to the conclusion of having three different target groups for two products of promotion. This decision was made under the condition that the popularity of tea in Russia is fairly huge. The potential audience could be divided into several segments, each of them having different values and basing their choices on some spe-

cial criteria. Below there is a description of the target segments provided with their unique characteristics.

#### 4.3.1.1 Target groups of Lipton Yellow Label

The promotion of this product was aimed at two different groups, and their descriptions with obvious differences in characteristics are provided in Table 2.

**TABLE 2. Target groups for Lipton Yellow Label promotion**

“Innovators in nutrition”	“Connoisseurs of quality”
Men and women, aged 20-44	Mostly women, aged 25-54
Intended to buy new brands out of curiosity (66%)	Consider buying semi-finished goods as nonsense (70%)
Have a habit to snack on the run (65%)	Ready to pay more for high-tech commodities (69%)
Prefer dishes of foreign cuisines (59%)	Prefer to buy high quality goods (59%)
⇒ They like experiencing something new and are ready to pay for this!	⇒ They buy products of famous brands that meet their high-quality requirements!

#### 4.3.1.2 Target group of Lipton Pyramids

The marketing communication channels applied in the promotional activities of Lipton Pyramids tea were aimed at attracting attention of so called “Young spirit” audience, the main features of which were:

1. Keeping the behavioral attitude of “taking as much as possible from life”.
2. Being optimists who are open to changes and gaining new experiences.
3. Having a hankering for self-expression and self-realization.

Apart from that, the campaign was focused mostly on engaging in communications with women aged 25 – 35. They were characterized as those who seek the optimum in life, i.e. without establishing any limitations – the food should be both healthy and tasty, bringing both pleasure and benefits.

#### 4.4 A case study in theory

A case study is viewed as an action or a sample of analyzing one or more particular cases or case histories with an aim of making generalizations (Collins English Dictionary 2011). It is an intensive detailed investigation that can consist of both qualitative and quantitative evidences, and thus it is extremely important not to confuse a case study with qualitative research (Yin 2009). The main features of the qualitative approach is that the concepts are expressed in meanings, words and definitions rather than in numbers or variables, as it is in the quantitative one. The qualitative collected data are formed in words, images and descriptions. However, the quantitative evidences are to be performed as counts and measures. (Saunders et al. 2009, 151.)

One of the major components of a case study design is the questions behind it – “what”, “how”, “why”. So a case study can be defined as an empirical enquiry in a real-life context. It is objected at capturing all the details of the analyzed situation, person, company, event or other system that might be relevant to the actual aim of the study. That is what identifies a holistic orientation of any case study. (Thomas 2011.) It is suitable for analyzing complex social phenomena and can be explanatory, exploratory, or descriptive, applied as a single- or multiple-case study (Hoque 2006, 365).

When choosing an exploratory design of a case study, the main reason behind this is to explore any phenomenon which is of the researcher’s interest. This work helps to constitute hypotheses for further research. (Marshall & Gretchen 1995, 41.) In an exploratory case study, the collection of data occurs before theories. Meanwhile, the descriptive case study is utilized to describe and document a phenomenon and the real-life situation in which it happened. Thus, it is always guided by the theoretical data. An explanatory case study examines the particular data both on the surface and at a deep level. This design is applied in order to explain a course of events or operations and, thereby, presume casual links to how things took place. (McDonough & McDonough, 1997; Yin 2009).

Basing on the theory of what a case study is thought to be, there is the real-life campaign that was chosen as a good visual evidence of a case study process. The particular case study of the Lipton brand promotion campaign can be defined as such, because it was aimed at examining a phenomenon in its natural conditions via answering

specific research questions that were connected to comprehending and solving the case. It implied the qualitative and interpretative approach to a single-case analysis, and pursued an explanatory objective. The explanatory aim of the research was to explain the choice of the particular online marketing communication channels and their effectiveness in increasing the brand awareness.

#### **4.5 Data collection methods**

In order to conduct qualitative research different methodological frameworks to collect data can be utilized. The choice of data collection methods may vary according to the type of the research, the nature of the research problem, and the availability of data. (Pawar 2004, 3-4.)

Basically there are two main sources of data collection methods: primary and secondary data collection techniques. Primary data is collected via observations, focus group method, in-depth personal interviews, telephone interviews and surveys, questionnaires, instructed stories and diaries. These data collection methods are frequently applied when there is not enough data from the secondary sources. (Kotler & Armstrong 2010, 133.)

Secondary data can be collected with the help of various methods: films, videos or presentations; narratives; historical analysis; published printed sources and documents; websites; unpublished personal records. It is already existing data that might be crucial for the results of the research, and it is considered as a great starting point for research. (Bryman & Bell 2003.)

Considering the case study research in this thesis, in order to obtain the necessary data the principle of “methodological triangulation” was applied. It means that the research implied several data collection methods, both primary and secondary: document, video and website analyses as secondary data collection techniques; and semi-structured interviews and a social media questionnaire as primary. The idea behind the application of some data collection methods was to gain the detailed picture with multiple views on the research objective’s achievement. (Denzin 1989.)

##### **4.5.1 Primary data collection methods**

To implement a deeper research and to create more trustworthiness and credibility in its results, it was indispensable to apply primary data collection methods: semi-structured interviews and the questionnaire through the Russian social media platform VKontakte.

Semi-structured interviews are usually based on a core list of questions. However, their difference from a structured type of interviews is that an interviewer has an opportunity to get deeper in some questions of interest and to ask additional questions, appearing in the course of an interview. The semi-structured interviews consist of open-ended questions and, thus, provide a freedom of expressing views of the respondents. (Mitchell & Jolly 2013, 301-302.)

The objective of the interviews conducted during the case study research was to gain the marketers' opinions on the overall Lipton brand campaign implementation and the prospective marketing communication channels that would be good to use in the case of promoting Lipton in Russia. The interviews were conducted with three different marketing specialists. The primary concept of this process was to obtain several views on the case campaign from the marketing theorist and two successful marketers from different Russian cities.

The choice of the interviewed marketing professionals was based on the idea of expanding the view on the Lipton brand campaign and creating a picture of its success and effectiveness. Relying on the theoretical point of view of the marketing teacher from Samara State Economic University, and the practical advices and suggestions of the digital marketing professionals, this problem was solved. Each of the interviewed persons was informed beforehand on the brand campaign implementation, and the main communication tools utilized through the presentation and website materials. They were also able and welcomed to ask any emerging questions on the topic, either from the interviewer or from the Nectarin representative.

All the interviews were conducted via Skype and the approximate time of the interviewing process was an hour per each of them. The application of the Internet communication platform was chosen because of the distant interviewing and the busyness of the marketing specialists. Despite the fact that the communication was not totally face-to-face, but through the web, the interviews held in a very pleasant atmosphere



and their results had a great positive influence on the research process. On the agreed date and time, the interviewer got in contact with each of the interviewee. As they were already aware of the discussion topic and the rough draft of the questions to be answered, the interviews were very smooth, interesting and full of worthwhile details. The list of questions is presented in Appendix 1.

In order to be able to process the data from the interviews and be capable of analyzing them, Skype broadcastings were tape-recorded, and also several most vivid and interesting thoughts were noted during the actual interviewing process. Such kind of strategy facilitated the comfortable, time-consuming, and effective data collection and interpretation. The data was analyzed with accordance to the plan: after getting the answers, they were transferred to paper, carefully read and considered. The focal points about the interviewees' perceptions on the Lipton brand, their ideas on the most effective communication channels for branding in Russia, and other important issues that should be included in branding were deducted and synthesized as recommendations and additions to the Lipton brand promotion campaign.

Another method that was decided to be applied in the research was the social media questionnaire. In theory, questionnaires are described as a set of fixed questions, either open-ended or close-ended. There are two main types of questionnaires concerning the process of their implementations: interview schedules and self-administered questionnaires. The first means of gathering data happens when a researcher conducts an interview with marketing the respondent's answers, while another way of holding questionnaires is when the respondent answers the questions on his/her own. (Dörnyei & Taguchi 2010, 3-4.)

The questionnaire of the research consisted of three main questions – two close-ended and one open-ended about the Lipton brand and its competitors (Appendix 2). The primary aim was to gather data and create a possible picture of how social media users in Russia perceive the Lipton brand, what they associate it with, and what other tea brands do they know and buy. As the objective of the overall brand campaign was not only about increasing the brand awareness, but also forming an idea that “Lipton equals quality”, the main question of the researcher's interest was about the associations appearing in the customers' minds when mentioning Lipton.

The quiz was published on the personal social media page, and then shared by 5 people from different cities of Russia: Moscow, Saint-Petersburg, Yekaterinburg, Samara, Kazan. All in all, 300 people took part in the quiz. In spite of the limited number of the respondents, the overall opinions on the Lipton brand awareness and positioning among competitors were visible and sufficient to be able to proceed with their analysis. The age of the respondents varied between 18 to 35 years, so it was suitable to the campaign's target audience. The respondents' background information on the city of origin and age were also gathered, but it was not obligatory to answer to these questions, so they were optional.

#### **4.5.2 Secondary data collection methods**

The main sources for collecting secondary data in the case campaign study were documents: reports and power point presentations. Besides, in the research several digital materials were applied, including Lipton's and Nectarin's websites, video materials and e-mails from the representative of the marketing agency responsible for the campaign.

All in all, by utilizing these data collection methods, it was possible to formulate a clear picture on the operations of the company, its ideas and main principles about the process of planning and creating digital marketing campaigns, and especially the Lipton brand promotion campaign. Apart from that, relying on such sources as websites, the description process of the deployment of the online marketing communication channels was easy to do. It also promoted lots of essential details that brought a specific impact on the overall research results.

All the data was collected in the Russian language, as the whole campaign concentrated on the Russian market and was implemented by the Russian-speaking professionals. The communication with the representative of Nectarin was distant and based on personal e-mails that also contributed to the overall process of obtaining the necessary materials on the campaign planning and results.

## **5 RESULTS**

In this chapter the discussion involves the following focal points: the Lipton brand campaign deployment, the marketing communication channels applied, and the results of their effectiveness. The results from the primary data collection methods: social media questionnaire and interviews are also included in this part of the thesis. The primary objective of the chapter is to provide the answers to the research questions stated in the introduction part of the thesis.

## **5.1 Marketing communication channels**

As the target audiences for two products diversified, the processes of approaching customers had to differ from each by the Internet platforms and the settings based on the social-demographical parameters. They also had to differentiate by the tone and mechanism of communication. Therefore, on the campaign's development stage the marketing agency had an aim of diversifying online marketing communication channels. It would expand promotional opportunities and involve several target groups of the Lipton brand.

As a result, a few online communications were chosen: setting up a brand's website with the video marketing element, social media marketing on the Russian platform VKontakte, and online game-thinking mechanisms and tools. Besides to the Internet communication channels, traditional media, TV and radio, were utilized to promote the online parts of Lipton's branding campaign. And as the topic of the thesis deals with online media, the main emphasis of the research is put on the description and analysis of Internet communications channels application.

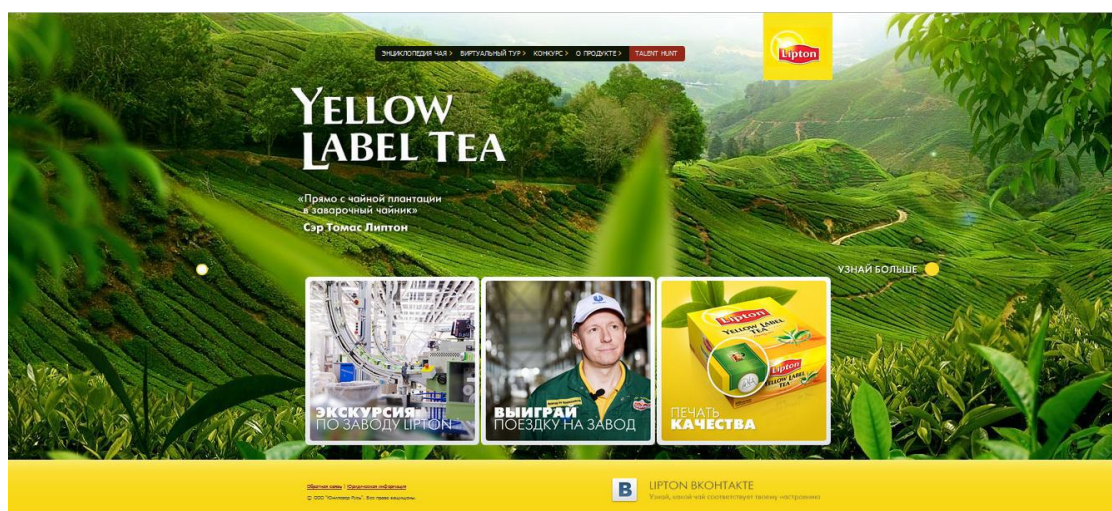
The aims of the campaign were to create and convey the message on the developed branded product line, and to break the barrier of perception that Lipton is a low quality tea, because it is packaged. The agency decided to achieve these objectives by applying different online technologies and methods which are depicted and analyzed in the following subchapters.

### **5.1.1 Brand's website**

When specialists from Nectarin thought about setting a website for the Lipton brand, they had to take into consideration the fact that Lipton had already applied some of-

fine promotional communications. Therefore, for online marketing it was necessary to tie the information on the brand with the already promoted data. The main objective of creating a website for Lipton was to generate a communication platform in the Internet with the message: “Lipton – high quality tea!” The target audience that was likely to reach through this communication channel was adult people, who usually prefer to obtain information from more formal and official sources, like a website is regarded to be.

In order to formulate an effectively working website that also had to be aesthetically attractive to users, the marketers of Nectarin came to the conclusion of creating a whole set of entertaining and cognitive activities with the application of bright and fresh colors, associated with the sun, nature, and life (Picture 1). Thanks to the website, Internet users were able to gain some knowledge on the company, its products and tea culture in general, and to challenge themselves by taking part in a quiz. The quiz was based on the materials from the video and personal experience of the participant.



**PICTURE 1. The front page of the website**

The overall operations that were planned as parts of creating an attractive and informative website for the brand promotion included shooting a video tour on the plant of Lipton, structuring and presenting the history of the brand starting from 1850, and introducing interesting and unusual facts about the Lipton tea, e.g. how many cups of Lipton tea are drunk in a heartbeat.

While analyzing Nectarin’s idea of setting up a website, it became obvious that the involvement of both educative and entertaining elements on the brand’s website sup-

ported possible customers' engagement in the inside operations of the company. They were able to gain knowledge on the company's operations, its product line development and brand's care to design, taste and quality of its products. The website's visitors were interested in the activities proposed by the marketers, and they became more involved in communication with the brand. They commented on the video and quiz questions, and shared the links to the website on their social media profiles and Twitter accounts. Thus, expanding the brand's website with video and gaming elements made the communication between the company and its target groups more interactive, cognitive, and beneficial.

Besides, the creation of the video tour and the quiz positively influenced a search engine positioning of Lipton. It increased the traffic to the website and promoted the distribution of the brand message in Runet. The improved design of the website and its enlarged content facilitated the usage of the website and search for information simpler, clearer and more pleasant. Apart from the formal approval of Nectarin's work on the website, its design, visual, textual and video content and interactive quiz, these aspects were highly evaluated by Russian marketing bloggers and had a positive feedback on forums. Therefore, setting up a website increased the brand awareness and advantageously influenced Lipton's image and reputation.

The Lipton website by Nectarin still provides the Internet users with all the necessary information on the company, its operations, products through pictures, written texts, video application, interactive menus, and navigation. The thought-out, well-structured and designed website helps to create the right brand image in customers' minds and operates as an online business card of Lipton. The description of its elements is presented in the following text.

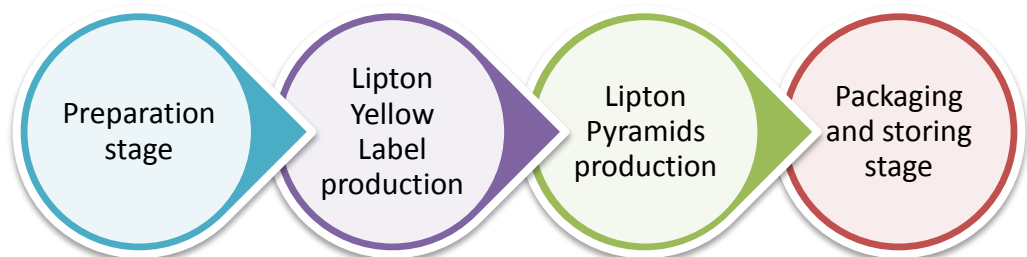
### ***A video tour***

The main concept of the video was concentrated on the detailed description of the process of Lipton tea production. For this purpose, the film crew of the marketing agency traveled from Moscow to Saint-Petersburg and had a tour in the main plant of Lipton in Russia that is correspondingly situated in the northern capital of the country (Picture 2).



**PICTURE 2. Shooting a video in Saint-Petersburg**

From the video tour, the viewer was able to get the explicit information on various aspects of tea production. All in all, it was proposed to the customers as a visual excursion in the plant with visiting all the departments and explaining in detail the main principles of their operations. The mounted video that was presented on public display in Internet consisted of four essential segments (Figure 15).



**FIGURE 15. The stages of Lipton tea production line**

According to the conversation with the marketing manager responsible for this brand promotion campaign, the video tour was the main solving matter of the brand's problems, and its implication on the website allowed the company to promote the knowledge on the actual process of Lipton tea production that also performed its ma-

major advantages - care for the quality of products with the usage of high-tech machinery and knowledge, and the skills of well-educated employees.

The decision of placing the video guide around the Lipton plant on the brand's website was made under the intention to break the stereotype of the bad quality of the packaged tea. It was so called visual evidence of its discrepancy with the reality with a particular emphasis on the Lipton tea high quality and dedication to customers. As a tactic activity, positioning the video on the website impacted the increase of users' traffic to it and the fast conveyance of the branding message.

### *A quest "Become a connoisseur of tea"*

The main idea behind creating this quest was to attract as much attention of the potential audience as possible and to increase its involvement in the promotional campaign. In fact, the quest was based on the video tour and, thus, it was aimed at motivating the Lipton website visitors to have a thoughtful look at the interactive excursion and making them ready to answer the proposed questions as fast as possible. The implementation of the quest increased Lipton's brand awareness, as more people addressed, viewed and shared the video.

The dominant inducement, elaborated by the agency, in order to attract people and promote their participation in the quest was the possibility to win the first prize – a trip to Saint-Petersburg with a visit to the Lipton plant. There was also the consolation prize for the second place - a year's supply of Lipton tea. The main criterion for choosing the winner was based on the results of the contest. In case of a controversial situation when several participants could get the same number of points, the marketers thought to use the random choice mechanism.

The quest included four stages that were offered to take part in. Its content consisted of the questions about the history of the Lipton brand, its production process, and product lines' designing. The participants had also to respond to the questions about the differences between two main branded products: Lipton Pyramids and Lipton Yellow Label. The attention, observation, accuracy and logic were necessary in order to answer the detailed and cunning questions, created by Nectarin's professionals.

The news about the possibility to win the prizes by Lipton was spread with the help of offline marketing channels. Upon the whole, thanks to positioning the quest on a website, the company was able to solve a problem with involving a lot of people in the brand awareness promotion and increasing the number of views of the video. However, judging by the data on the high usability of e-mailing in Russia, the possible way of increasing brand awareness and spreading the news on the quest was e-mail marketing. It could attract more participants of the contest, as being a gaming mechanism it met people's desire for competition, leadership and winning.

### **5.1.2 Social media marketing**

To involve young target audience in the marketing communication activities about the new product line of Lipton, the digital marketing agency decided to develop an application "Share your mood" on the Russian social media platform VKontakte (VK). Moreover, in order to bring awareness on the application, the agency decided to apply several social media advertising techniques which also supported the increase of brand awareness online.

Making a short digression, it would be applicable to give an understanding of why Nectarin had chosen VKontakte as a communication channel. VK is a social network service that is open to everyone registered and is available in 70 languages. However, despite this fact VK is more popular among the Russia-speaking users all over the world. It is the second most visited website in Russia and it is ranked the 25<sup>th</sup> in the global Top 500. In December 2012, VK had an average of 43 million daily users and at least 195 million accounts registered. (Alexa 2013.)

During the review of the brand campaign, the results on the effectiveness of the social media promotion of Lipton brand were pointed as high, mostly because its major element included the gaming mechanism. Besides, thanks to the usage of the social media platform so popular in Russia, the company was able to approach target customers on the informal and individual levels. It presented the uniqueness of the application's participants and created an interactive communication between the brand and its target audience. Gaming characteristics of the social media communication tool influenced the creation of a nice brand image, while the utilization of bright colors promoted memorizing the pleasant experience associated with the Lipton brand.



The advertising on VKontakte pursued several goals simultaneously. First of all, it was oriented at attracting social media users to register in the application and experience the proposed activities. Secondly, both banner advertising and articles were targeted at providing the information on the Lipton tea product line development and the opportunity to win the branded prizes in the quiz, described before. The utilization of these ways of advertising let the company coordinate the communicating and branding objectives, and save time and money.

### *An application “Share your mood”*

The mechanism of the application posted on VK was pretty easy and entertaining at the same time. After the installation of the application, the user faced an introduction page where he or she was offered to take the test. The participant had to answer only three questions by using a multiple-choice system, and after that he got a recommendation concerning the flavor of Lipton tea that was considered to be the most suitable for his current mood.

For instance, if the test showed that the participant was in a very good mood, the tea suggestion would be green tea Mandarin Orange – “Rich taste orange peel and tangerine combined with large leaves of green tea of the highest quality will make you smile even happier!” After that the photo of the participant would be decorated with sunny fruits. The overall number of designs for photos was 20, while the number of status like the one with the rich taste of orange equaled 27 (Picture 3).



**PICTURE 3. Variations of photo design**

Thanks to the popularity of VK and its major information sharing feature, all the users of the social platform in a case of seeing news about the friend's mood, were able to click on the title or a picture of the application, and then were welcomed to participate in the same kind of test. Such opportunities of social networking as sharing news, links, thoughts, and images impacted the growth of the number of people who became aware of the Lipton tea campaign and willing to take part in brand's online operations.

### *Advertising via social media*

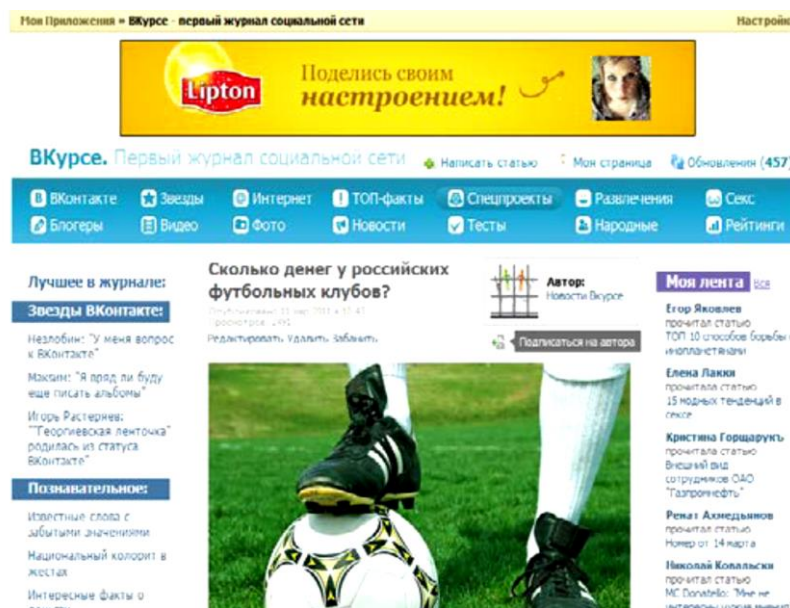
The aim of advertising instruments in a social media is to attract social media users to buy something, to take part in some activities or, for example, to register in the application and become part of a playing community. The last case is what Nectarin as a digital marketing agency was interested in.

As the agency created an application on VK, the managers were also willing to promote it via this social media platform, so to spread the awareness on the application on a small scale and on the brand on a large one. For this purpose, the marketers came to

conclusion of using three different technologies: banner advertising, cost-per-action (CPA) mechanism, and articles.

The principle of banner advertising is simple. Typically it is a graphical web advertising unit on the rectangular or square shape that appears on companies' websites. In practice, it is a widely-spread idea of the inefficiency of banners for marketing, although it is possible to gain success via this tool by designing it properly and placing on the suitable and noticeable place. (Wilson 2009.)

The banner ads on a social media like VK are thought to be fairly popular to be used for promoting some applications, games, or communities that are also situated on this platform. Therefore, Nectarin applied this tool in its promotional campaign and used banner advertising (Picture 4) on the thematic pages in order to attract the targeted young audience. The main pages for this way of promotion were such applications as “The Translator”, the first social media magazine “VKurse” (literal translation from Russian “Being aware”), and the entertaining game “Cocktail to a friend”.



PICTURE 4. Banner ad on Vkontakte

While the company usually has to pay per click in banner advertising, when applying cost-per-action mechanism the main principle of payment is based on the real actions that a user can do, so that these activities could directly be converted into sales. In other words, the customers are asked to do some specific activity, for instance, to register in the application, community, or game; to fill in the online form with the contact

information. Thus, this technology helps to save companies' budgets, as there are fewer people who click on the banner lightly and more who by clicking on the advertisement respond to the company's direct-action call. (Cihlar 2011.)

Nectarin, being aware of the high popularity of cost-per-action advertising on a social media, decided to utilize this tool (Picture 5) in order to establish a strong association between the promoted brand and the satisfaction obtained from the application. This advertising tactic was promoted in the VK application "Top faces" which was dedicated to those who consider him/herself as a "locally popular" personality. So the target audience there was also young, active people, as in the banner advertising.



**PICTURE 5. Cost-Per-Action on Vkontakte**

The last advertising method applied by Nectarin in a social media was creative, well-written articles (Picture 6). They were posted as a part of "VKurse" application that is considered as a online social media magazine with up-to-date information on the interesting and cognitive aspects of social online and offline life. All in all, this type of advertising was regarded as a PR-support from VKontakte.



PICTURE 6. The article on VKontakte

### 5.1.3 Gamification

Evidently, Nectarin put a lot emphasis on gamification in the marketing campaign. First of all, it applied a several-leveled quest with the customers having a possibility to win pleasant and exciting prizes. Secondly, the agency designed and launched a social media application with its promotion on VK via different marketing tools. What is more, the marketers proposed an idea of creating a flash game that was an additional section of the popular game on the Russian social media – “Happy Farmer”.

This flash game was an integral communication technique of the brand marketing campaign. It was projected and designed in order to formulate the awareness and knowledge about the high manufacturability and technological production of Lipton, as a consequence to create in customers’ minds the image of the Lipton tea production process and its high quality. The efficiency of this communication tool was expressed in high engagement of potential customers and the enlarged knowledge on the Lipton operations. The game was defined as both educative and amusing interaction between the company and its customer audience, showing the values and benefits of the Lipton products in the brand-associated colors.

The original idea of the game was that the player had a task to grow and cultivate tea. Only after finishing these activities, he/she had to send tea to packaging and warehousing. Therefore, by implementing all the operations, visiting the virtual excursion around the tea factory (Picture 7), a player was able to get new knowledge and experiences, and then apply them so to increase the personal rating in the game.



**PICTURE 7. The flash game template**

Apart from the interactive and cognitive features of the game, the marketers also tried to visual the production process in bright and pleasant colors, so to make the game more attractive and enjoyable to play. The usage of such colors as yellow, green, blue can be considered as a marketing trick there, as, first of all, they brought some positive emotions and feelings in players' minds, and secondly, they were directly associated with the Lipton brand.

The company had chosen three different social media platforms popular in Russia in order to spread the game: VKontakte, Odnoklassniki and MyWorld. All of them are originally used by several groups with different ages, but with the same interests of gaining entertainment, which is provided by the main game “Happy Farmer”.

All in all, the idea of applying a game-thinking mechanism and nice colors helped to promote the brand and created the right image of the brand in the customers’ minds. This technique might be applicable and suitable not only for this brand case, but for many others, as it is based mostly on the psychological aspects of humans’ perceptions. It also includes such game techniques as bonuses, tactics, and rewards that are interesting to players.

## **5.2 Measurement of results**

Effectiveness of the promotional communication channels can be measured by several special counting statistics tools. To provide the visual numerical data on the results of applied marketing communication channels’ effectiveness, Nectarin utilized Google Analytics and the measuring instruments on VKontakte.

Google Analytics helped to follow the changes in the number of people who visited the website, viewed the video, and participated in the quest. It was possible due to the installment of a special counter code on the website. It showed the detailed statistics on each marketing resource and provided the data on the average number of website’s pages viewed. Thereby, analyzing the results the agency was able to understand the general behavior of the website visitors and their interest in the offered communications.

The metric tool on the social media platform basically operated under the same principle as Google Analytics. The main and only difference is that it presented the results on the social media channels’ effectiveness: the number of application users, those who answered the test questions, and those who published the news of the test on their “what is new” page.

### 5.3 Numerical results on gaming mechanics' effectiveness

The significance and outcomes of the marketing communication channels were analyzed and discussed in the previous subchapters. However, as the quiz and the social media application were considered the core communications of the campaign, the results on their effectiveness are presented and processed below.

**TABLE 3. Results of the quest utilization**

The quest “Become a connoisseur of tea”	3130 people participated in the actual quest
	491 people took all the 4 levels
	19 of them spend 6 hours for all the levels

Overall, the results of the quest popularity are not poor (Table 3). Although keeping in mind the fact that its promotion took place not only in the Internet, but also via the offline channels, like radio and TV, the number of people seems to be smaller than it was planned. Only 15% of the participants were able to complete all the levels proposed. Presumably this outcome deals with the great amount of time needed to cope with the tasks. Therefore, it might be a drawback of the quest that it was not well-thought-out by the marketing agency.

However, despite the fairly low level of responses, the quest had some positive consequences. From the point of the brand awareness promotion, the main advantage of this way of communication with potential customers was motivating people to act and to interact with the brand. The appearance of the video and the quest on the brand’s website also influenced its ranking position among competitors.

**TABLE 4. Results of the social media application utilization**

The application “Share your mood”	165800 users install the application (plan 163000)
	373988 users passed the test
	94482 of them set designed branding photos
	60400+ posted the results on their walls

In comparison to the quest results, the participation in the application “Share your mood” on VKontakte was more intensive (Table 4). The primary reasons for this phenomenon are connected to the age of its target audience (young and active people), the



truly entertainment orientation of its implementation, and customers' involvement. Apart from that, the test and the photo designing were totally personalized, i.e. people were individually approached by giving the recommendations of the tea flavor according to their current mood.

The number of users that was planned to install the application equaled 163000 people, although the results were even better. Obviously the communicative, interactive and informal features of communication in the social media played their role: as people shared their test results with their friends, the number of users who passed the test was higher than those who just installed it.

The results on the flash-game utility were not accessible in figures, as it was only a small segment of a huge game set on the social media. Albeit, judging by the feedbacks and comments that were published on the main menu of the "Happy Farmer" application, the promotion of Lipton there was also a success. People were fascinated by the design and representation of the Lipton tea levels, and they enjoyed the process of implementing the tasks. The flash-game was full of nice colors; it had a pleasant audio background and challenging, interesting stages to complete. Thus, it involved the visual, aural and textual aspects on influencing the users' decision on a game and on a brand, as a whole.

#### **5.4 Results of the questionnaire**

The main objective of the brand marketing campaign was to raise brand awareness on the developed product line, and to formulate the association of Lipton as high quality tea. For that purpose, the questionnaire (Appendix 2) included three main questions on the Lipton brand recognition and recall. The answers analyzed helped to create a picture on the Lipton brand awareness in the social media and its positioning among competitors, and eventually to understand whether the brand campaign achieved its objectives or not.

The total number of the respondents was 300 people. The first issue of researcher's interest was about the real associations of potential customers at the mention of the Lipton tea brand name. Three possible answers were given:

1. Packaged low-quality tea. Try not to buy it. (34%)
2. High-quality tea of plethora of flavors. Nice packaging design. Buy frequently. (52%)
3. Other, comments. (14%)

According to the results, it is obvious that a bit more than a half of the respondents gave a satisfactory feedback for the Lipton tea brand. Generally, during the survey the percentage had rarely changed, and the proportions of respondents were almost the same, as they were presented in the overall result. The respondents stressed nice tastes of the flavor pyramid tea by Lipton, and emphasized a good packaging design and fresh colors that resemble a pleasant sunny mood.

14 % of the respondents, 42 people, had chosen “Other” as an answer to the given question. As it was necessary to understand what people exactly memorize and associate when speaking about the Lipton tea, the comments were collected for this purpose. Interestingly, 15 people out of 42 (35%) who answered “Other” associated the Lipton tea brand with the offline TV advertising with Hugh Jackman as a guest celebrity. They kept in mind that Lipton is always active in its marketing campaigns: it usually participates as a sponsor of various contests and involves well-known people who promote tasteful English tea.

From 42 people who had chosen the “other” option, only one mentioned the association of Lipton with black tea, highlighting its average quality and high prices. However, 30% of 42 respondents mentioned a variety of fruit tastes tea by Lipton which is always interesting to try. Therefore, with accordance to the collected answers the brand campaign almost achieved its objective about promoting the awareness on the two main product lines, but the most evident accent was made on the Lipton Pyramids, rather than on Lipton Yellow Label.

Two other questions of the questionnaire were about the tea brands memorized and recognized by the respondents and Lipton Tea positioning among those mentioned brands. There were no given answers, so the respondents had to remember tea brand names on their own and decide whether Lipton could be considered or not when buying tea.

Fortunately to the brand and the marketing campaign, all of the questionnaire's participants had placed Lipton in Top 5 of the tea brands. Along with Lipton, the respondents favored Greenfield (40%), Ahmad Tea (25%), Dilmah (9%), Twinings (6%). There were also three Russian tea brands mentioned, although the percentage was around 2 % per each. Based on the results obtained, it is possible to define Lipton as a fairly popular tea brand in Russia. It is not an unfounded claim of Unilever that Lipton is one of its most successful and prospective brands.

## **5.5 Results of the interviews**

All the interviewed marketing specialists distinguished a high level of the actual brand promotion campaign deployment, starting with its planning and designing to the implementation and maintenance. There is always something that could be improved or edited; and this is what the talk in this section is about. In the following paragraphs there are several ideas for the improvement and development of the campaigns proposed by the marketing specialists that were interviewed. There is also a description of the potential impact of the possible improvements on the brand promotion provided as a result of the interviews.

The chosen marketing communication channels – a website and the social media – were of the main importance for the brand promotion. The interviewees agreed on these ways of marketing, because they are currently considered to be effective and suitable in branding. The application of gamification principles for increasing brand awareness were also thought to be important and positively affecting the overall results of the campaign. That is why, the utilization of other marketing communications was not proposed by any of the professionals interviewed as a necessity, but more as a possibility. Apart from that, some corrections and additions were assumed to take place.

First of all, the theorist considered peer communication as a driving force of Internet brand marketing. For that reason, the idea of creating a blog on a website was expressed. Therefore, the company would be able to increase its ranking point in SEO. Apart from that, it would bring more knowledge and awareness to customers on the company's activities in an interactive and informal way.

Peer communication via blog maintenance in this sense also meant that Internet users would be able to follow the updated posts, and leave and share comments on the articles and news. The impact of this marketing communication channel utilization in the campaign would be about expanding and enlarging the potential customer audience, and creating a sense of integration between the company and its clients. Besides, a weblog would provide information in closer touch with its operations – promotional productions, innovations – and upcoming events, contests.

Secondly, the involvement of a celebrity person in the online campaign was thought to be a solution to increasing brand awareness, as it was done in the offline media. People do not believe so much to what specialists say, as there is actually no evidence that they are real professionals. However, people believe their peers and adore the well-known and popular celebrities. They listen to what is said by them, and consider it as personal advice. That is what was stated by the theorist of marketing.

The reason for that lies at the basis of people's psychology: the idea of being the same as or closer to the celebrities by consuming and buying the same commodities as they do. Therefore, inviting a popular person to the online marketing communication would make people more interested in the company itself. It would also become a rendered proof that a product is good, so celebrities who are well-known and beloved by millions of fans are eager to try and buy branded tea. This tactic could be applied in a video marketing on YouTube or on a corporate website. Thereby, it would increase the online traffic to the website or to the online community where the video was posted. It would have influence on people's perception of a brand's product, depending on the aim of the campaign that was named to achieve.

The digital marketers from two different agencies stated in one voice mobile application designing as an additional communication for brand promotion. Although it is not an Internet communication channel, but a digital one, the idea was very interesting and timely. As Nectarin shot a video and had a quiz based on it, it was also appropriate to create a mobile application with the same specialization. Thus, people who could find the quest on the website were able to try it on a mobile application set.

What was mentioned by all the interviewees was that Nectarin put an emphasis on the entertainment aspect, rather than on the educative one. The aim was to promote Lipton as high quality tea, so in some way the campaign was thought to be more formal what

it was in reality. The flash game was a good entertaining part, but it did not speak about the ingredients that are included in the tea production. What people should be aware of, in order to believe in high quality, is what the product consists of. The video tour had an educative role in this campaign, but its positioning on the website was not enough to attract attention from a large customer audience. Thus, it could be useful to convey the video also on YouTube and other social media platforms, e.g. on the community page on VKontakte.

## **6 CONCLUSIONS**

Summarizing the accurately researched and analyzed theoretical and empirical data, it is time to make some conclusions, and this is what this chapter is about. The overall purpose of the thesis was to identify effective and prospective e-marketing communication channels and the significance of their implication in increasing brand awareness. According to the obtained results and theoretical background on digital marketing communications and their role in branding, the objective defined was achieved. In the following subchapters, the answers to the research questions and the limitations of the case study research are presented.

### **6.1 Efficient marketing communications in branding and their significance**

With accordance to the campaign's analysis and the results of the interviews, it is possible to conclude that social media is the significant online communication channel in branding. The social media platforms provide a wide range of techniques that can be easily utilized by marketers: articles, communities' and applications' development, news and links sharing, different types of advertising, and measuring tools (Hollingsworth 2012). The usage of these technologies makes a brand vivid and memorable, they increase the frequency of the brand appearing in social media and attract possible customers' attention. Social media measuring tools help to follow the update data on social media channels' efficiency and usability by target audience (Steven 2011). In the case campaign, there was a great involvement of online advertising methods in the social media, and as a result it helped to raise awareness not only on the brand's social media application, but on the Lipton brand as a whole.

Social media networking promotes communication not only between people, but between companies and the target customers. With a more personal approach and informal communication style, social media users are more willing to interact with a company – give feedback, share the brand’s news with their subscribers, register in applications, and communities. (Evans 2010.) These activities represent the word-of-mouth technology in real life, and their utilization by Nectarin provided a positive image of the brand promoted. The results about social media application popularity exceed the planned number of its users, thanks to its interactive form and individual orientation. Thus, people were glad to share the link to Lipton’s social media game with their friends, and gave positive feedback to it.

Setting up a website is another important activity that promotes communication between a brand and its customers. By planning the informative context, utilizing attractive and suitable colors, structuring the pages’ layout, it is possible to attract more people to the website, and to increase their interest in the brand promoted. A brand’s website is its online business reflection; it is an integrated part of all Internet marketing communications. (Wuebben 2011.)

An effective website should include the information on the values and benefits of branded products, some background corporate data and, of course, the entertaining and communicating elements. It could be a weblog on which the company can post the news and Internet users can comment to them, or the video application as an amusing and educative source of obtaining brand information. (Rogers 2009.) By placing a video tour and a contest-quiz on Lipton’s website marketers provided high traffic to it, spread the corporate marketing message, and stimulated visitors’ engagement in Lipton’s activities. The measuring tool that Nectarin used to gather and follow data about communication channels’ effectiveness was Google Analytics, which showed the number of website’s visitors, video viewers, and their online behavior.

Along with other communication channels, gamification is the opening of the current decade. Its application for marketing and branding purposes is going to be more and more indispensable over time. To make people aware of a brand, and what is more important to convey the available, easy to understand and process promotional message, involving game-thinking mechanisms in brand campaigns is a strong recommendation. People are more open to information if it is transferred through informal

and attractive ways. (Duggan & Shoup 2013.) Having a look at the results of the gaming mechanics' popularity in the Lipton campaign, it is possible to conclude that these tools increased brand recognition, by transferring the message on its quality products and careful attitude towards the potential customers. Online applications and games by Lipton were educative and amusing elements of branding.

The current e-marketing communication activity is visualizing the values that a customer can obtain by purchasing a specific branded product or service. It could be entertaining or educational videos (video tour around the Lipton plant), creative and attractive images (social media application), exciting and challenging online games on corporate websites or other Internet pages. These marketing channels provide more knowledge on the brand, make it better recognizable by possible customers, and support the interaction between the brand and its target audience by the possibility of following profile pages, open discussions and an informal style of communication.

All in all, Internet is what lots of people from the industrialized world can hardly live without. If not going online and not following the technological development, a company can easily lose its position on the fierce competitive market. (Botha et al. 2008.) Online marketing communications development is really fast nowadays, and new technologies for engaging customers and interacting with them are created by marketers. Their significance is crucial for marketing and branding purposes, but the most effective communications can be distinguished only in each particular case, as there is no stated template for applying online communication tools.

One important issue to emphasize for successful branding is that people are more open to information if it is transferred through informal, personal and attractive ways – they like images, videos, games. (Pride & Ferrell 2011.) Customers appreciate quality and search for values and benefits that might be brought by a company or brand. These are the features that were numerously pointed out in promoting the Lipton brand awareness and building the strong positive brand image.

## **6.2 Recommendations to Nectarin**

Since the company employer of this research work was the full service digital marketing agency Nectarin, apart from the conclusions on the effective current marketing

communication channels and their input to brand awareness promotion, there are several important points to consider for the agency solely. The brand campaign aimed at increasing awareness on Lipton in Russia via e-marketing communications as a whole can be defined successful. However, some recommendations on its future development and improvement are assumed in the following paragraphs, as the answers to the second and third research questions from the introduction part.

First of all, according to the numerical results of the quiz application on the corporate website, its popularity was not very high. The reason behind it was the lack of awareness of the target audience in this activity. The agency decided to utilize traditional media: TV and radio for advertising purposes, which is great for spreading the message on the Lipton's quiz. But the agency didn't use some online media that could attract target customers on web. Therefore, the diversification of online advertising tools is the suggestion for conveying the marketing message in Internet. The quiz could be promoted via banner and context advertising on the Russian search engine – Yandex. It would increase the SEO traffic to the website and enlarge customers' involvement in the brand's activities.

One of the greatest short-comings of the campaign was the absence of e-mail marketing elements. The easy way to approach a possible client is sending him/her an e-mail, not as spam, but as a formal letter with accurate and reliable information. Taking into account the popularity of e-mail usage in Russia (TNS web Index 2012), this communication channel could facilitate the expansion of quiz participants and video viewers. A direct approach to each e-mail receiver would create a pleasant experience of the customer's communication with the company, and support the brand's image and reputation. As there are several e-mail marketing tactics (Chaffey et al. 2009), the agency could choose one of them: rent a list of customers in case of not having a common database, or put a note about the contests and games in third-party e-mails.

Secondly, in order to raise awareness on the branding campaign of Nectarin, the agency could post the news on its personal webpage, social media accounts, and create a Twitter account for Lipton Tea in Russia. There is already an account for Lipton International, and it is hosted in the English language. As the target audience of the campaign was Russian people, it is thought to be a worthwhile idea to create the Russian alternative of Lipton's Twitter account.



This communication platform, as Youtube and Flickr, helps people to share interesting ideas, news, and links with subscribers from all over the world. Measuring the effectiveness of this communication channel is also easy (Steven 2011), as it is possible to gain data on the number of subscribers, retweets, likes, and replies online without applying any special tools. Moreover, the application of Twitter is free of charge, and thus, it is one hundred percent cost effective tool for branding on Internet.

Thirdly, there is a suggestion to expand the application on the social media and design something like “Lipton tea going mobile”. It is an illustration of using game mechanics on the mobile. Although it is not Internet communication, but a digital one, it is still thought to be extremely useful for branding purposes. The users who installed it could be the ones to get the news on the entertaining and educational events held by Lipton and its partners. This activity would make the potential audience more integrated in what is happening in the company.

Albeit designing and thinking out a mobile application is both time and money consuming, this idea, nevertheless, could be taken into consideration for further digital promotional activities, as Nectarin is advanced in creating entertaining marketing. The application could be developed by integrating online and offline marketing – for example, by having some quizzes by Lipton, where the winner could get a free cup of tea in some coffee shop. The technique is simple, once answering the questions correctly online, the contestant can ask for free Lipton tea in a café. However, the list of cafes should be stipulated beforehand.

### **6.3 Limitations of the case study research**

Each research might have some limitations that should be considered in identifying the trustworthiness, credibility, dependability, confirmability, and transferability of its results. (Merriam 2009, 211.) These concepts are claimed to characterize qualitative research, and they are thought to be equivalent to internal and external validity, reliability and objectivity in quantitative research. Trustworthiness deals with the reader’s attitude towards the outcomes of the research, and identifies whether the research results are worth using and paying attention to. Trustworthiness is what persuades others in research findings being credible, dependable, confirmable, and transferable. It is

about the honesty of the collected data about the most important issues of the research. 2011, 153.)

Credibility is connected to the appropriateness, usefulness, and meaningfulness of the research methods applied and data materials collected. It depends on rigorous methods, philosophical belief in the value of the research, and the credibility of the researcher, his/her experience and training credentials. (Cottrell & McKenzie 2011, 241.) Referring to the actual case study research, it can be stated that the results are credible, as there were several data collection methods utilized with their specific objectives, and the results totally match them. Secondary data collection methods helped to present the campaign's structure, and provided an inside look of its planning and maintenance. The social media quiz was oriented at understanding customers' perceptions towards the Lipton brand, and its results promoted the overall idea on the Lipton brand recognition and positioning among the competitors. In turn, the interviews supported the analysis of the overall campaign's implementation.

Dependability refers to the research process to be clear and suitable. It can be obtained by an external audit whereby details on defining research objective and questions, gathering and analyzing data, and structuring the report are made accessible to the audience. (Pitney & Parker 2009, 68.) Confirmability identifies the coherence and repeatability of data collection and analysis, and it is equaled to the effort of maintaining objectivity in research. Transferability means the extent to which the results of a particular research can be applicable to a different group. The orientation is made on confirming that what is meaningful to one situation will be also significant and precise to different settings. (Macnee & McCabe 2008, 170-172.)

The data collection methods applied in the case study research granted a lot of necessary information that helped to answer the research questions and obtain the main aim of the study. However, interviews could not be counted as a 100 per cent confirmable data collection technique, as there is always a sense of subjectivity, no matter whether the people who participated in the interviews were well-educated and highly-experienced marketing specialists. Another short-coming of the research is the involvement of a limited number of people in the social media questionnaire. Although it showed the picture of Lipton's reputation and image among its target customers, its results still cannot be considered totally sterling.

The research's outcomes can be partly transferable to other situations. No matter that the case study was based on one brand campaign and followed its specific characteristics, from the theoretical analysis it is possible to catch the effective marketing communication activities applicable to companies of various sizes. The results and conclusions based on the survey are cognitive for further discussion on the role of Internet marketing communication channels in branding, but they were based on one case campaign study. Besides, online marketing today is a rapidly developing and evolving sphere, and it is always necessary to follow its upcoming tendencies. Therefore, a research on this theme should probably be implemented in future with a deeper look at several brand promotional campaigns.

## **7 CONCLUDING REMARKS**

I tried to put as much effort as I could in writing this bachelor's thesis, as the topic of digital and Internet marketing communications was and still is very interesting to me. Although sometimes it was challenging, the research process inevitably promoted myself as an ambitious and hard-working student. Facing the task of implementing the research on my own, I learnt how to overcome some scientific and personal difficulties.

During the research I got lots of new knowledge that hopefully will be in great use for my working life. Apart from that, I got to learn additional theoretical information on marketing, its digital variation, and the e-marketing communication world. Obviously this research work influenced my overall idea of the current conditions in branding and increasing brand awareness mechanisms. Writing the thesis, I also realized the actual significance of studies that were held in the university and the practical implementation of the skills obtained over the study process. I enlarged my data collection, communication and reporting skills by participating in surveys and interviews. Interestingly I met various amusing marketing specialists that were interested in the topic of my thesis, and I got great support and guidance from them – that is an incredible experience of real-life business operations and communications.

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Interview questions

1. How do you understand the term “branding”?
2. What, from your point of view, is to be considered when creating a brand promotion campaign?
3. How do you assess the significance of digital marketing communications, especially Internet media channels, in the current situation in marketing?
4. What do you know about Lipton brand?
5. What are your associations when Lipton brand is mentioned?
6. Should marketers apply traditional marketing communication channels apart from the new media in order to attract customers?
7. What kind of marketing communications are better to be applied in the brand Lipton promotion (in Russia)?
8. What would you also put the accent on (color, design, content, images, video etc.)?
9. What could be edited or changed in the actual campaign?



Social media questionnaire

City of origin:

Gender:

Age:

1. What associations do you have at the mention of Lipton?
  - a) Packaged low-quality tea. Try not to buy it.
  - b) High-quality tea of plethora of flavors. Nice packaging design. Buy frequently.
  - c) Other, comments.

2. What other tea brands do you know and keep in mind?

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3. Would you place Lipton in the consideration set among other tea brands?

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