



SAVONIA

Social Media Marketing strategy for Emeteclass, Lda to penetrate into Finland market

Vu PHAN

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Abstract <p>This thesis was commissioned by Emeteclass, Lda - a Portuguese privately held company, which operates in information technology and services section. The main purpose of this thesis was simply to organize and elaborate thoroughly a strategy for the company to potentially enter Finnish market via virtual tools. Accordingly, this dissertation also introduces various concepts and facets of social media and its marketing functions. This project could be considered as a guidance or a recommendation on the method to effectively utilize social media in Finland market for the purpose of marketing.</p> <p>The project is broken down into six chapters which consist of related theories and academic explanations as well as the writer's own professional opinions. Specifically, the first two chapters provide an insight into the dissertation and research methodologies, in addition to an in-depth interview with Mrs. Mirla Ferreira, who is a Project Manager and Business Consultant of the client company of the thesis.</p> <p>Regarding chapter 3, the theories and statistical figures illustrate and explain the social media phenomena; explicitly, the findings demonstrate the true form of social media marketing and its tools. Additionally, content marketing is added as a support instrument in order to clarify the writer's intention. Furthermore, the following chapter provides an analysis of social media environment in Finland and of the company itself. The remaining two chapters express the writer's strategic recommendations as well as personal reflection afterward.</p> <p>The outcome of this study indicates that social media is a developing trend and an effective method of marketing that could support firms in making their existence more visible to potential customers. Moreover, this research also suggests a selection of specific strategies that Emeteclass could apply using social media means, such as social networking sites, blogs, etc. Furthermore, due to the limitation of this research, a further study in the future is needed as social media continues to evolve and all the strategies could be outdated eventually.</p>			
Keywords Social media, Social media marketing, Digital marketing, Marketing communication, Content marketing, Software services, Training industry, Team building, Information Technology.			

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Appendix 1 Interview questions for Mrs. Mirla Ferreira

KEY CONCEPT

B2C (or Business-to-consumer) “is the type of commerce transaction in which businesses sell products or services to consumers” (Saha, Aman, Hossain, Islam, Rodela 2014, 294).

B2B (or Business-to-business) “is a type of commerce transaction that is based on the exchange of products and services from business to business, rather than business to consumer” (Sasha et al. 2014, 294).

Website Referral Traffic (WRT) could be explained as a direct link which guests could access to the company’s site via other websites rather than entering an address on the website’s bar or through a search engine. (Dan Taylor).

Facebook Profile is clarified as “an individual's personal account, where he or she can post updates, upload photos, share videos, maintain a friends list and provide personal information” (Big Commerce).

Rouse (2010) explained that **Facebook Pages** are public profiles distinctively constructed for brands, businesses, organizations, trends, celebrities, and other individuals that seek for a presence in the virtual society. Page works similarly to Facebook profile but instead of letting friends interact with the profile, page gains fan – people who choose the like button on the page, and constantly collaborates and updates with those fans through statuses, links, public events, videos and images; which will be visible online on the page itself and followers’ newsfeed.

According to Facebook Help Center, **Facebook Newsfeed** is interpreted as “the constantly updating list of stories in the middle of your homepage. News Feed includes status updates, photos, videos, links, app activity and likes from people, Pages, and groups that you follow on Facebook.”

Facebook Like Button, which was launched in early 2009, is a special gimmick of Facebook. The Like Button will allow users to express their support attitude towards specific contents on Facebook, including comments, photos, videos, pages, etc. (Rouse, 2010).

Facebook Status, which can simply be defined as a tool for the users to express themselves; allows participants to share their views, ideas, thoughts, or up-to-date stories

with their friends and families. One notable characteristic of status is that it commonly is brief information and short (Rouse, 2010).

Facebook Event “is a calendar-based resource which can be used to notify users of upcoming occasions. Events can be created by anyone and can be open to anyone or private. The creator can invite his friends, members of a group, or fans of a page” (Rouse).

Facebook Group (FG) could be established by any Facebook users and organized by one or collective administrators. Furthermore, FG has an interesting function that users can create a public group where everyone can join by their want and needs or private group in which users need to be invited or accepted to participate (Rouse, 2011).

Brand image, which is a crucial indicator of brand equity, illustrates customers’ overall awareness and attitude towards a brand; in short, how the customers interpret the brand. Therefore, it dictates customer behavior and performance in terms of purchasing process (Zhang Y, 2015).

Lead generation is the result of methods of attraction that commence interests of customers and prospects in companies’ products and/ or services (Kolowich, 2017).

1 INTRODUCTION

Throughout the history of the world, we – as human beings, have observed (or/ and listen, read, etc.) regarding industrial revolutions and breakthroughs; in which **Internet** is one of, if not the most important creations of mankind. According to Gregory Gromov (2012), the Internet was officially implemented by the act of a delivery of an interface message from the University of California at Los Angeles to the Stanford Research Institute around Labor Day in 1969. At that time, the internet was strictly restricted to military and special corporate entities' purposes; therefore, it is mind-boggling to think that up to 2015, more than 40% of the population (approximately 3.2 billion people worldwide) got the access to the commercial network (Davidson, 2015).

From the above history narrative period, this thesis has continuously learned that the Internet would keep on evolving and would produce progressively more incredible achievements; one of it was **The Web 2.0** tools, better known as **social media**. The rise of network-established social media has ultimately changed the way of communication among people; Qualman (2011, 13) once expressed that the “invisible walls” of the internet has been collapsed thanks to the constant progress of social media; and the free-to-use platform has continuously revolutionized the interaction's aspect of mankind. Some well-known sites could be mentioned like Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, Instagram, etc.

With that trait, the internet-based platform also **influenced the business perspective** when it allows participants of the network (or potential customers of companies) to become more “friendly aggressive”; meaning that customers are no longer subject to companies and play a passive role; instead, one member of the online community can raise their voice and spread the words across the globe (either positive or negative) to others regarding the products, services and the companies that provided them (W. Glynn Mangolda and David J. Faulds 2009, 357). In fact, 92% of customers worldwide would rather place their confidence in recommendations from their peers and families, than other advertising's methods (Nielsen, 2012). Likewise, the report from BrightLocal in 2014 told the same story, 72% of consumers claimed a positive review will enhance their faith in the firm. Delicately put, purchasing's process from customers has been altered as Paul May, Founder and CEO of BuzzStream said: “Purchased decisions are now influenced by complex networks of friends, family, and peers...” (Evans 2010).

With a tremendous influence on consumers' minds, it is imperative that social media plays a **primary function** in a company's general **strategy** and ultimately becomes a core of the firm's arsenal. Sean Casey (2017) – the president of Nielsen Social, has stated that if

companies can keep up with the expansion of the social media, they possibly could drive excess revenue through the channel. As reported by Social Media Examiner sixth annual report in 2014, approximately 60% of marketers, who have utilized social media as a tool for 3 years or more, declared that their sales witnessed an upward trend thanks to the exposure of the online platform. Likewise, whether the type of business (B2C or/ and B2B), the company's scale and extent (Global or SME) or its industry, the prosperity of the company will be partially due to the success of the social media itself (Qualman 2011, 13). Petersen (2014) displayed that more than half of B2B-procurement-ers would look up for information on the social media before actually contacting the company. Furthermore, according to the business article publicized by Lidiya in 2016, social media is one of the best tools which generate considerably high returns on investment. Equally, DeMers (2015) declared that social media became the elite in terms of "website referral traffics" - WRT, increased from 22.71% to approximately 31% (the term "WRT" will be explained further in Chapter 1.5).

Business entities, whether giants in the industry or new rising stars have always endeavored to discover a new fashion in order to achieve greater earnings and escalate traffics to their websites (or blogs, etc.); and recently social media has been proved to be the hottest trend in the digital age. The same story applied for Emeteclass and with the aim to invade Finland's market, social media's strategy could facilitate the faith of the company.

1.1 Project objectives

The idea for the project came from an authentic desire from Emeteclass, which wants to expand and spread out their service as well as the brand awareness to Finland's market; and by being provided data by Emeteclass, this thesis also wants to take advantage of the information to execute a research in order to produce an efficient strategy for the company to penetrate into Finland – a promising market - via social media.

The main aim of this result-oriented thesis is to promote Emeteclass through multiple social media channels to new target groups, including business entities (B2B) that are in needs of optimizing company's internal system (business software) and team-building activities, as well as personal training for people who want to pursue a project management certificate (B2C); in a completely and culturally different market – Finland. Therefore, in order to produce a hypothetical framework as well as an empirical strategy for Emeteclass' social media marketing, theoretical knowledge regarding branding and marketing – specifically in relation to social media marketing, and research on the overall

situation of social media scenario in Finland were thoroughly executed with the examination of the information provided concerning Emeteclass' previous social media activities, and an analysis of all the said elements (details will be discussed in section 1.3).

1.2 Project scope and delimitations

In general, the conclusive thesis could be treated as a reference book, which can suggest Emeteclass on how to utilize social media channels to penetrate into the up-and-coming Nordic market. However, some certain challenges arose as regards to languages and information's shortages. As for prior difficulty, a variety of endeavors to overcome the barrier was undertaken thanks to electronic dictionaries, Google translates and the help from local friends. On the subsequent problem, books which are available in the Microkatu campus' library, business journal, online articles, official statistics and information from the interview with Mirla Ferreira could be utilized for the purpose of the project. Nonetheless, after several types of research related to the industry (of Emeteclass) in Finland, it was found that the field is still fresh and hardly any company operates in this respect; hence the difficulty in finding targets for interviewing and researching information within Finland.

On the other note, according to the objectives mentioned above (Chapter 1.1), a focus with the help of applicable approaches on creating a constructive and empirical social media marketing plan for the client partner on the business-daily basis would be the focal point of the project. For instance, some of the channels would be discussed further such as Facebook, Blogger, and LinkedIn. However, the growth and effect of smartphone devices would not be covered; nor the other aspects of digital marketing and selling methods such as e-commerce, e-mail marketing, telephone-marketing, etc. Likewise, any traditional marketing technique other than social media means would similarly not be discussed. However, content marketing would be mentioned in order to clarify the idea of this dissertation. Besides, some of the terms along with conventional marketing would be reported; for instances, B2C and B2B.

On top of the scope, the delimitations were included due to two main reasons. Firstly, the study was designed and conducted solely for an academic purpose (Thesis) and an intended expansion of Emeteclass to the Scandinavia market (Finland); accordingly, the result might not be applicable to other companies and regions (also countries). Secondly, the commissioner informed writer beforehand that the company has limited financial resources as well as knowledge of the market, thus they want to implement the first step

as cost-effective and easy as possible; in this degree, Emeteclass can control all the elements. Hence the limited chosen channels of this dissertation.

Furthermore, project assignments have been divided into seven tasks with two main roles, as a researcher and as an intern. Table 1 demonstrates the stages of the project's plan.

Table 1. Stages of the thesis

	Tasks	Execution
Project stage 1	Studied and revised marketing knowledge	Learned and revised academic study via sources
Project stage 2	Laid out theoretical framework	Designed a hypothetical and theoretical "blueprint"
Project stage 3	Gathered accessible data and information	Conducted an interview with Mirla Ferreira and collected data from sources
Project stage 4	Performed an analysis of both internal and external environment	Used SWOT matrix
Project stage 5	Combined data with analyses to generate a strategy	Set up goals and sketched out specific strategy for the company
Project stage 6	Suggested Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)	Monitored the potential outcomes via KPIs
Project stage 7	Assessed a final thesis and reflected on the author's self	Narrated the journey to the completion of the project

1.3 International aspects

Emeteclass is a Small-Medium Enterprise (SME) located in Portugal and already spread the service throughout the continent, from within Europe (France, Spain, etc.) to Africa (Emeteclass, 2017); therefore, an international expansion is a promising solution for the company's internationalization plan. By the same token, Emeteclass can seize the occasion to take a bite in Finland's market since the field is still fresh and more importantly; the ethnicity of Finland is increasingly varied (Official Statistic of Finland, 2017). According to Official Statistics of Finland, there are 15 leading major foreign countries of citizenships

besides Finnish and the number increased 4.6% from 2015 to 2016. Explicitly, detailed numbers are demonstrated in Table 2.

Notably, the report on the structure of the population describes the locals, including Finnish and foreign citizens, who permanently reside in Finland; therefore, we still have another potential capacity for “temporary residents” (students, part-time workers, au-pairs, etc.). Logically, that said argument would lead to a rise in total population (hypothesis), hence an increase in the market-size; consequently, an escalation in demands for services and products. Furthermore, Hunt, Layton, and Prince (2015) stated that companies which concentrate greatly on the issues of ethnic diversity are proved to be dominant regarding the performance, and are convinced to attain more impressive financial result in comparison with the national industry average.

With all the arguments and citation above, a theory was developed, in which companies could achieve a more profitable outcome. Therefore, they would have more monetary resources to re-invest into the companies themselves; accordingly, they could afford services from Emeteclass; hence the opportunity for Emeteclass to generate profit.

TABLE 2. Foreigners in Finland (Statistics Finland 2017)

Country of citizenship	2015	2016	% of ethnicity other than Finnish (2016)	Annual change, %
Estonia	50,367	51,499	21.1%	2.2%
Russia	30,813	30,813	12.7%	0.5%
Sweden	8,174	8,040	3.3%	1.6%
China	8,042	8,480	3.5%	5.4%
Somalia	7,261	7,018	2.9%	-3.3%
Thailand	7,229	7,487	3.1%	3.6%
Iraq	7,073	9,813	4.0%	38.7%
India	4,992	5,016	2.1%	0.5%
Turkey	4,595	4,654	1.9%	1.3%
Vietnam	4,552	5,253	2.2%	15.4%
United Kingdom	4,427	4,562	1.9%	3.0%
Germany	4,112	4,149	1.7%	0.9%
Poland	3,959	4,192	1.7%	5.9%
Afghanistan	3,741	5,294	2.2%	41.5%
Ukraine	3,392	3,761	1.5%	10.9%
Others	77,036	83,451	34.3%	8.3%
Total	229,765	243,639	100%	6.0%

1.4 Client background and service line

Emeteclass Lda, which is a privately held company, was founded in 2002 by a certain number of the firm's members and operates in both B2C and B2B environment. The company headquarter is located in Aveiro, Portugal and has employed 10 personnel thus far; from that content, one could clearly state that Emeteclass is classified as an SME corporation. In regards with specialties, the firm has established in Information Technology and Services area – specifically, offering Training (Team-building) methods and sessions as well as providing Corporate and Web Solutions (Internal Software Solutions). (LinkedIn, 2017)

For the last 15 years, Emeteclass has constantly tried to develop awareness on the importance of team-work perception within business institutions and lift the concept to the entirely new level. Moreover, innovation has always been a core of the company, which is demonstrated by company's mission "Integrate People and Processes, Transforming the Workplace through Learning, Technology, and Good Habits". Besides, regarding the

company's core values, the company used an abbreviation HPS – which stands for Happiness, People, and Simplicity, to describe their belief. Specifically, the three words have consistently supported each other; People term displays perfectly the Emeteclass' ideology since the company always focuses on their employees and customers to generate Happiness through the Simple course of actions. Apart from the creditability with customers, as a socially responsible corporate, Emeteclass also associates their high awareness regarding Environment. According to the Environmental section, the entity claimed that they “have the responsibility to minimize their environmental footprint” via the commitment of reasonable use of natural resources. (Emeteclass, 2017)

Referring to the customer segmentation, Emeteclass' targets are relatively diverse; ranging from personal customers to corporations. In details, with a B2C status, individuals who are interested in improving their Project Management skills and possessed a desire to achieve a PMP® certification (Project Management Professional), are embraced to take a trial. Whereas, business entities which either has demands for customizing their internal software system or improving employees' team-work are also Emeteclass' aim. (Emeteclass, 2017)

Emeteclass is expanding, from within Europe (France, Portugal, Panama, etc.) to Africa and soon to the remaining continents. Thus, in order to amplify their influence, the company's aim for the coming years is spreading to the Scandinavia countries and Finland is the cornerstone to open the promising gate; particularly via social media means. (Ferreira, 2017)

1.4.1 Software factory

As mentioned above, Emeteclass provides a wide range of services, from practical activities like personal training sessions and team-building program to customized business software.

The idea of Emeteclass is to revolutionize the workplace through technology. Distinctively, the firm puts on the market a full-cycle, specially-made application for a specific company, and is also responsible for all “included added value” activities (from product design, quality assurance, and product's assessment to deployment). Unlike others in the market, Emeteclass strictly follows their premium standard while modifying customers' requests to produce an outstanding program. Unsurprisingly, the industry portfolio of Emeteclass is impressive; they have offered lucrative applications and services to entities from the field of IT, Transportation, Constructions, etc. over the years. For instance, one application

naming ALLIGN, which is a dynamic digital business platform, can systematically automate the process of apprehending, controlling, memorizing and analyzing customers' business statistics. (Emeteclass, 2017) IMAGE 1 demonstrates the ALLIGN dashboard.

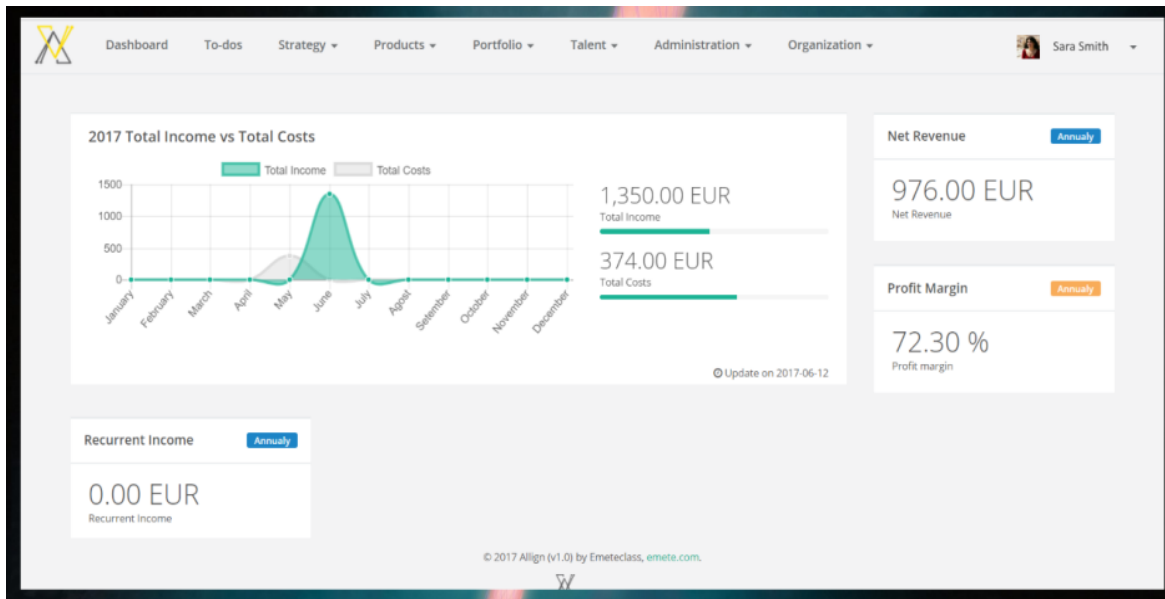


IMAGE 1. ALLIGN dashboard. Photograph September 2017

1.4.2 Training and consulting

Aside from the Software Factory, Emeteclass also implements different training programs. In terms of Project Management, customers can get well-developed courses such as Foundational Masterclasses (for @PMP Exam preparation) and Advanced Masterclasses; and the special deal is that clients can choose the method of learning – via either contact lessons or online. (Emeteclass, 2017)

In relations to Team-building curriculum, of all the services that Emeteclass wants to promote, The 1st Floor Challenge (T1FC) is the most creative and focal point of the company; T1FC is simply a team-building activity, in which clients get to put their knowledge into practice via several steps. According to the company, they “believe learning should be as compelling as a favorite game!” and in “only one day, clients will learn how to manage a team project like a pro, and a chance to fly their own drone”. (The 1st Floor Challenge, 2017) Simply as it put, the participants will gather and divide into teams; then they will plan and execute a project – in this situation: to build a Drone and make it fly. IMAGE 2 displays an activity of T1FC project in Porto with 54 participants. As Jessica Triana from Aalto University, Helsinki – who is a designer and speaker of the project, states “I strongly believe that the practical nature of the T1FC provides the

opportunity for students to learn and develop skills in an integrated way.” (The 1st Floor Challenge, 2017)



IMAGE 2. The team builds a drone. Photographed T1FC March 2016

2 RESEARCH METHODOLOGIES

One can argue that the true meaning of **research** alone can vary based on individuals' concept. According to Redman and Mory, research is a structured method to efficiently gain new knowledge (The Romance of Research 1934, 10); whereas Kothatri (2004, 14), who is a former Principal of University of Rajasthan, demonstrated “research as a scientific and systematic search for pertinent information on a specific topic”. Likewise, Greener, Dr. (2008, 10) determined the term Research as an academic endeavor, which has to possess a critical and definite objective expectation. More specifically, an act of carrying out a research implies for a process in which, this thesis had identified the problem, articulated the draft of hypothesis, compiled and assessed data, then built a conclusive solution and verified the result on whether the puzzle’s resolution successfully coped with the problem. FIGURE 1 could establish a clear-cut view on the **Research Process** via a horizontal chart with a left-right order.

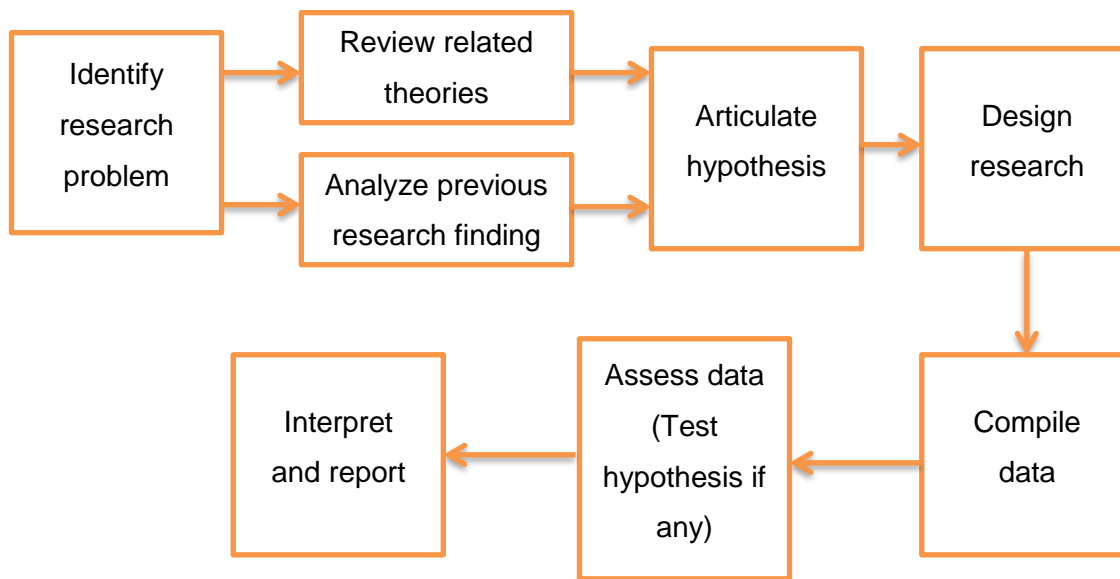


FIGURE 1. Research Process via the flow-chart (Kothari 2004)

Nevertheless, there are differences between **Research Methods** and **Methodology**. Regarding the prior concept, Kothari (2004, 21) states that research techniques that researchers aim to use during the process of performing an academic research on the problem are described as research methods. However, research methodology plays a ground-layer or a very foundational role of the research, which assists us in comprehending the influences as well as the effectiveness of the methods chosen. In short, one can conclude that research methodology comprises of many components; and research methods (or techniques) contribute a position of the research methodology. It is

important to understand distinctively two concepts because when research methodologies were apprehended, the systematical backbone for the study was built, and hence the appropriate approaches for the problem.

The project was executed by applying mainly **Qualitative Method** with two main research techniques: **Library Research** (analysis of data and documents) and **Field Research** (personal interview). Specifically, Qualitative Method – according to Patton and Michael (2002, 2), is determined by its objective, which focuses on obtaining a deep understanding on several facets of life - such as social events, human behaviors, opinions, etc. Conversely, Given (2008, 21) stated that Quantitative research, which is a scientific research, is an empirical study of noticeable and recognizable phenomena through the statistical data based on the mathematical methods. TABLE 3 below will distinguish the main differences between Qualitative Method and the Quantitative one.

TABLE 3. Quantitative Method and Qualitative Method in comparison (Bordens, K. and Abbott, B., 2013)

	Quantitative	Qualitative
General Framework	Seek to confirm hypotheses about phenomena Use highly organized methods such as questionnaires, surveys, and structured observation	Seek to explore phenomena Use semi-organized methods such as in-depth interviews, focus groups, and participant observation
Analytical objectives	To quantify variation To describe characteristics of a population	To describe variation To describe individual experiences
Data format	Numerical (obtained by assigning numerical values to responses)	Textual (obtained from audiotapes, videotapes, and field notes)

In addition to the aforementioned methods above, **Deduction** will also be the author's research approach choice. Wilson (2010) considers deductive approach as “developing a hypothesis based on existing theory, and then designing a research strategy to test the hypothesis”. In another word, deductive application examines the already-established theory, then builds a hypothesis and evaluate if that theory is accurate in determinant circumstances. FIGURE 2 will demonstrate the regime of deduction.

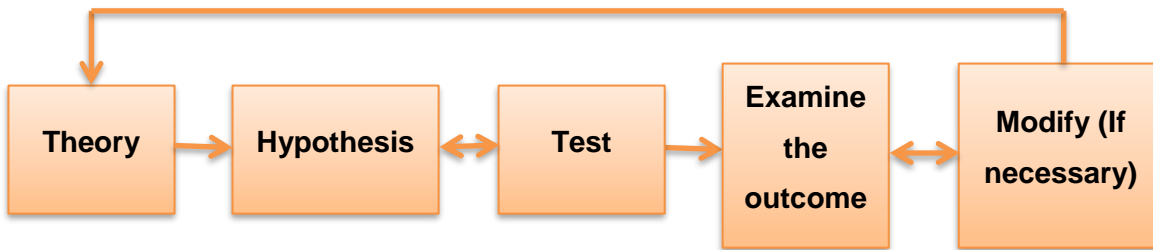


FIGURE 2. Process of deductive reasoning (Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill 2009, 124-125)

After having decided the methodology and techniques using for the research, a contact was implemented to Ms. Mirla Ferreira – who is a Project Manager and Business Consultant and is responsible for the Marketing department Emeteclass. The main purpose to conduct an in-depth interview with Mirla Ferreira was to study profoundly regarding the company and its Social Marketing channels' usage. Moreover, the author wanted to learn Ms. Ferreira's experience in the field and her own point-of-view concerning the effectiveness of the company's social media channels. Additionally, in order to construct an interview form, the author did consult the "General Guidelines for Conducting Interviews" of McNamara (1999), in which he stated that interviews are most suitable for exploiting interviewees' experience and perception – and it fits perfectly the intention of this thesis.

Overall, Mirla stated that Software Factory has been the most used service by business customers, while the team-building/ training came in the second place. Regarding the social media activities of Emeteclass, the company has established their appearance on Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter, and Instagram thus far, in which the first two channels have been prioritized since these two means are vital for the company. As regards to the content of the post, Emeteclass usually updates blogs and company's events in order to educate the potential customers regarding project management field and inform them about the availability of the company's service. More details can be observed from the appendix 1.

3 SOCIAL MEDIA: BASICS AND ITS DYNAMIC COMPONENTS

It has always been recognized in the marketing world that an effective Integrated Marketing Communication (IMC) strategy is a fundamental "tutorial" for companies to adopt, in order to interact effectively with their potential customers. Schultz, Tannenbaum, and Lauterborn (1993) demonstrated IMC as a communication portfolio which seeks to combine, control and assess the communication channels in order to accomplish the objectives of a company. Nevertheless, since an emergence of a new communicational tool – naming social media, the landscape of the communication's war among corporations has been changed forever. As Figure 3 below displays the new communication pattern, not only does the information regarding products and services originate from the business entity, but it also flows from within the marketplace. Accordingly, the information within the social media platform was generated by the experience (by using products and services or gaining from others' experiment as well) of own consumers and was traveled back to organizations in the form of feedback (sometimes as a financial result).

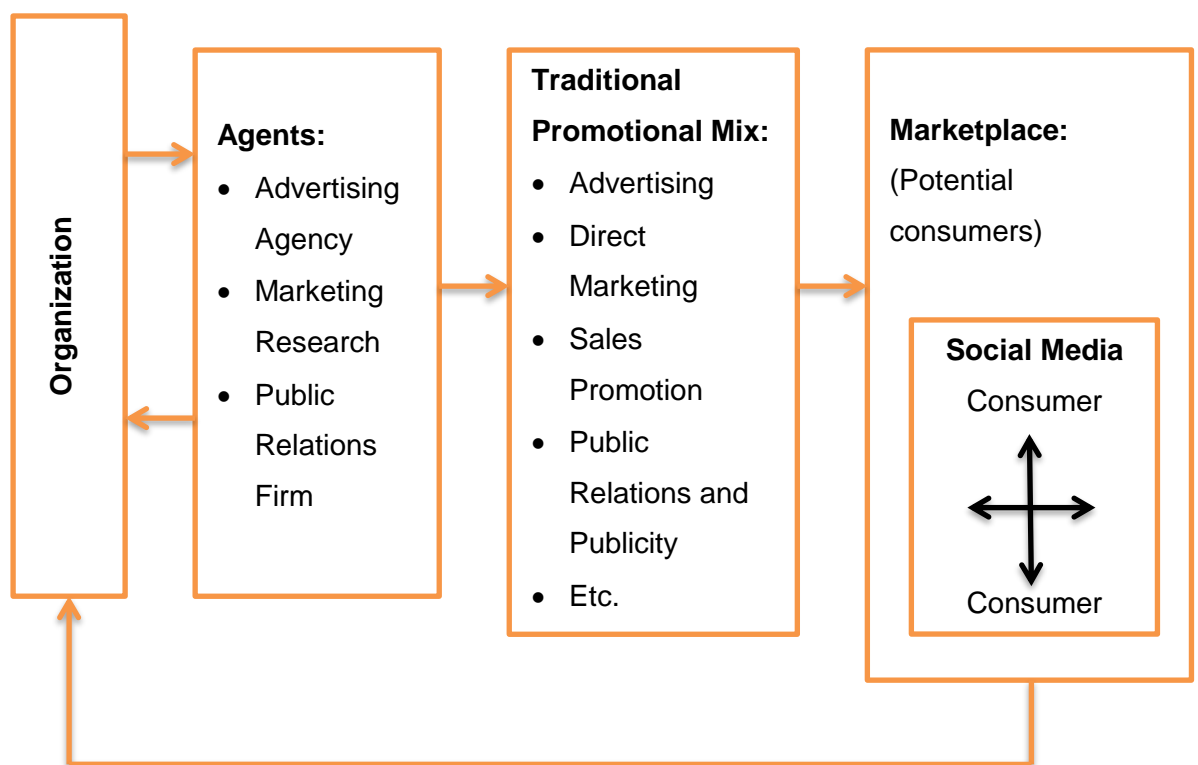


FIGURE 3. The Communication paradigm (Mangolda and Faulds 2009, 360)

Thus, in order to understand deeply the social media term, one could track back to a 2005's edition of a "What Is Web 2.0" article, in which Tim O'Reilly described an

advancement of the second generation of World-Wide-Web regime; which authorizes interactive abilities in an environment presented by participants' control, free-expression, and conversation; as a **Web 2.0**. From that narrative, it is recognizable that Web 2.0 is both a precursor and a foundation of social media that possess – undoubtedly - similar characteristics.

Digging deeper into the issue, Tuten and Solomon (2015, 4) explained the “horizontal revolution” as an information movement that flows across people rather than just originating from the government or company; which was happened thanks to the effect of social media phenomena. Continuously, the authors also illustrated **social media** as an online method of communication and a platform for a group of “interconnected and interdependent networks of people”. In short, McConnell and Huba (2007) described social media as “the sum of total people who create content online, as well as the people who interact with it or another”. More specifically, per Mangold and Faulds (2009), social media comprises of a variety of online and word-of-mouth frameworks such as Social Networking sites (Facebook, Twitter, Google Plus, etc.), Video sharing sites (YouTube), Photo sharing sites (Flickr and Instagram), Business Networking site (LinkedIn), and so forth; thus it is vital to distinguish between social media and **social networking**. As already defined, social media is considered as a consumer-content-generated where users have an administrative role to adjust the content (text, photo, audio, etc.) but don't claim the ownership of the web page, whereas social networking site or social network site “is a tool and a utility for connecting with others”. (Cohen 2009)

One more thing – as a famous quote from Steve Jobs, the behaviors of social media natives are extremely complicated to capture and predict as in normal life, especially when people live in a constantly developing and changing digital age. Nevertheless, Tuten and Solomon (2015) precisely pointed out that all the users who participate in the social media want are a **democracy**, the right to express themselves freely and the ability to connect and share with others. Overall, social media assists participants a platform and empowers those users to communicate, collaborate, create, innovate, learn, etc. as much as they possibly can; that is **the beauty of social media**.

Thus, with all the aforementioned definitions above, it is vital to understand the **reason** businesses need to be present in the virtual society, also to comprehend the mechanism of social media via an analysis of its **zones**. Moreover, a profound study of **social media marketing** with an additional view on content marketing will be included in this part.

3.1 Social media: why companies need to exploit it?

Undoubtedly, social media has placed an impact on our cultural lifestyle; from simple one-to-one connection through an e-mail, phone call, mobile message, etc. to one-to-community mass communication via social media means – which is increasingly expanding. According to the Global Digital Statshot report from We Are Social in August 2017, out of approximately 7.5 billion people on the planet, there were roughly 3.8 billion people who could gain access to the internet (51% of world's population), and 80% of which (3 billion people) are active social media users. Let's compare it to the last quarter, there was an increase of 0.2% in Internet users and of 4% in active social media users, which could be generated into 8 million and 121 million more respectively, since April 2017, which is dramatically remarkable in the span of just 4 months. More impressively, Casey (2017) published a brief information of Nielsen report apropos of social media in 2016 displaying an interesting number regarding the media time people spent for; in particular, adults in general who are over 18 years of age used more than 25 hours weekly to utilize media, and 22% of which (about 5 hours) devoted to social media, which witnessed an increase of 36% in comparison to 4 months ago. Retrieving from the stated-statistics, one could say that **almost all the (potential) customers are present in the social media platform**; therefore, companies could seriously consider this “gold-mine”.

On the other note, as one could say, life has constantly evolved and so has social media; such evolutions have shifted the original intention of social media, from a tool for pure connection and share, to a new purpose - a commercial ambition in the business point-of-view. The numbers never lie, there has been increasing evidence showing that **firms** (especially small and medium size) **have been and will appear on the social media** sites. Specifically, Chaykowski (2015) published her article on Forbes, stated that nearly 50 million businesses used Facebook pages as one of many communication tools; whereas Burson & Marsteller publication (2010) showed that nearly 80% of 100 companies in the top Fortune actively participated in one social media channel minimum. What's more, according to Eurostat, a whopping 39% of EU business entities employed social media in 2015, in which three out of four (79%) use the platform for the purpose of image building and product marketing. Likewise, a survey from Econsultancy in 2010 demonstrated lots of figure regarding social media; notably, 86% of respondents were utilizing Facebook as a marketing means, while Twitter and LinkedIn made up to 77% and 58% respectively. Moreover, Larrumbide of Cone Communication Group has publicized an interesting survey, pointed out that 93% of respondent admits that firms should possess at least one social media channel, while 85% agree that bearing a presence in social media is not enough, companies should also interact and communicate with their

fans and followers. Overall, we could see that companies worldwide – including the competitors, has utilized platform successfully thus far and if there are businesses still puzzling about this, they will definitely late in the marathon. (LaMotte, 2015)

Another reason to notice is the “death” of the traditional marketing, or delicately stated as **“the decline of the interruption marketing”** (Funk, 2011). To be more specific, the old model of advertising indicates the way (potential) customers perceive the marketing messages, in which audiences are obliged to postpone anything they are engaging in order to observe the company’s information; television, radio ads, email or telemarketing calls just to name a few examples (Rouse 2013). In the past, when people usually read information from daily newspaper, marketers simply just loaded their ads on that newspaper, which is a great channel at that time, and by chance, readers would get the message; however, things have changed rapidly and in a bad way for this method. Progressively, people tend to switch to online sources for the news rather than reading the newspaper (O’Dell, 2011). Lieberman (2009) published his research on the USA Today, described the situation in Detroit was awfully bad when both The Detroit News and Detroit Free Press reduced their daily home delivery to just three days a week, whilst encouraging subscribers to read information on the newspapers’ online platform. Similarly, the television channel was also affected by the internet era; according to the U.S News and World Report, viewership of MTV – a famous American cable and satellite television channel, has declined over 60% since 2011. Likewise, Hart and Blumenstein (2016) exhibited alarming figures regarding TV industry; with 60% of people when being asked to prefer to watch live broadcast news via online platform rather than a TV.

As said before, a revolution has been recognized in this digital age and it did transform several aspects of our life, and thus marketing is not an exception. Charlesworth (2009) developed an AIDA model of customer’s decision process with an effect of social media, which is slightly adjusted from the traditional purchasing behavior. In the traditional version, buyers would finish their process by the “Purchase Decision” followed with a “Post Purchase” stage (FIGURE 4); nonetheless, an additional phase was added in the process to complete the concept of an upgrade version of consumer decision behavior: Attention, Interest, Desire, Action, and **Tell** (FIGURE 5).

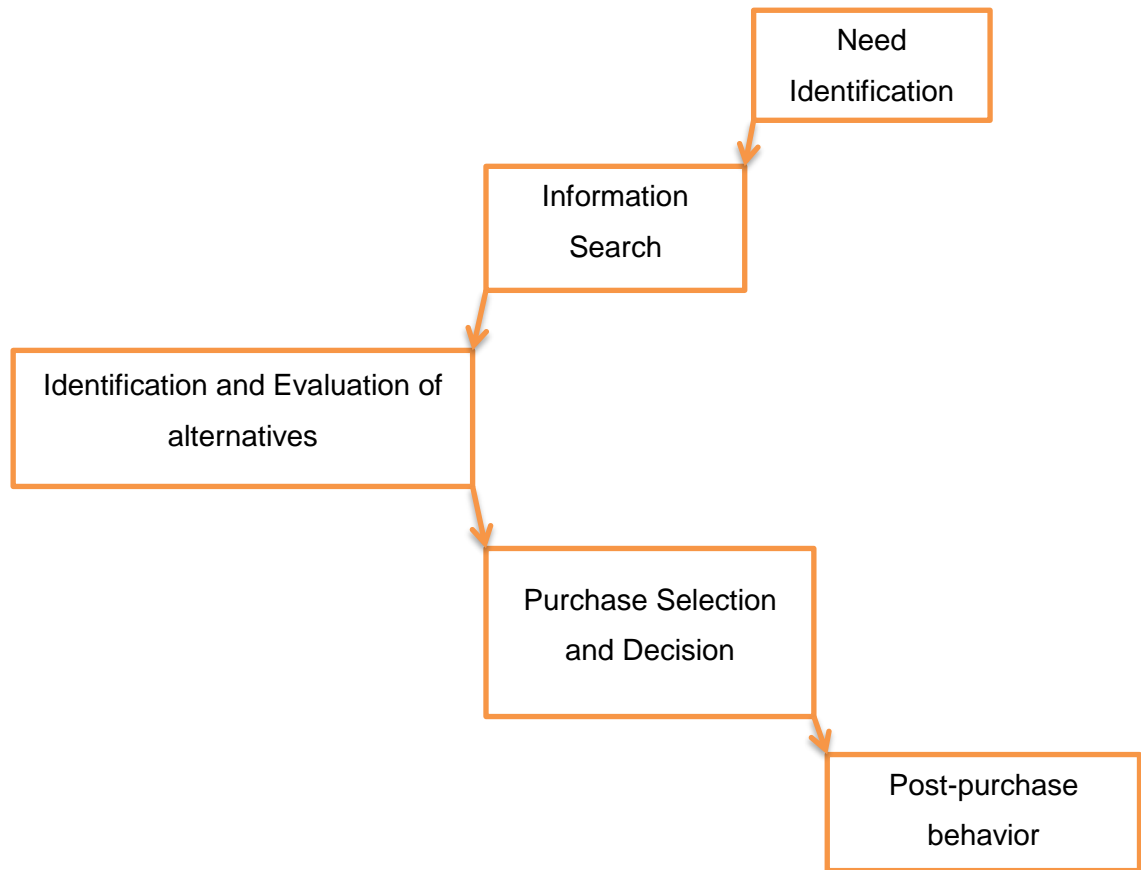


FIGURE 4. Traditional consumer decision process (Burnett 2008, 76)

Apart from selling products and merchandises, the more dominant aim in the social media universe is about interacting with customers, and that is when the part “**listening**” stands out. According to the AIDA model of Charlesworth, buyers will finish their process with an act of sharing their experience on products and services as well as the company that provided them online; so as a nature, that is a threat but simultaneously an opportunity for firms to directly communicate and connect with those customers; listen to them in order to study their experience, understand their expectation, absorb their ideas and strengthen the bond and relationship between the company and them. As follows, all firms have to do is “listen”, and when companies did that part of their job, customers will do the rest: **loyalty and purchases**. (Charlesworth, 2009)

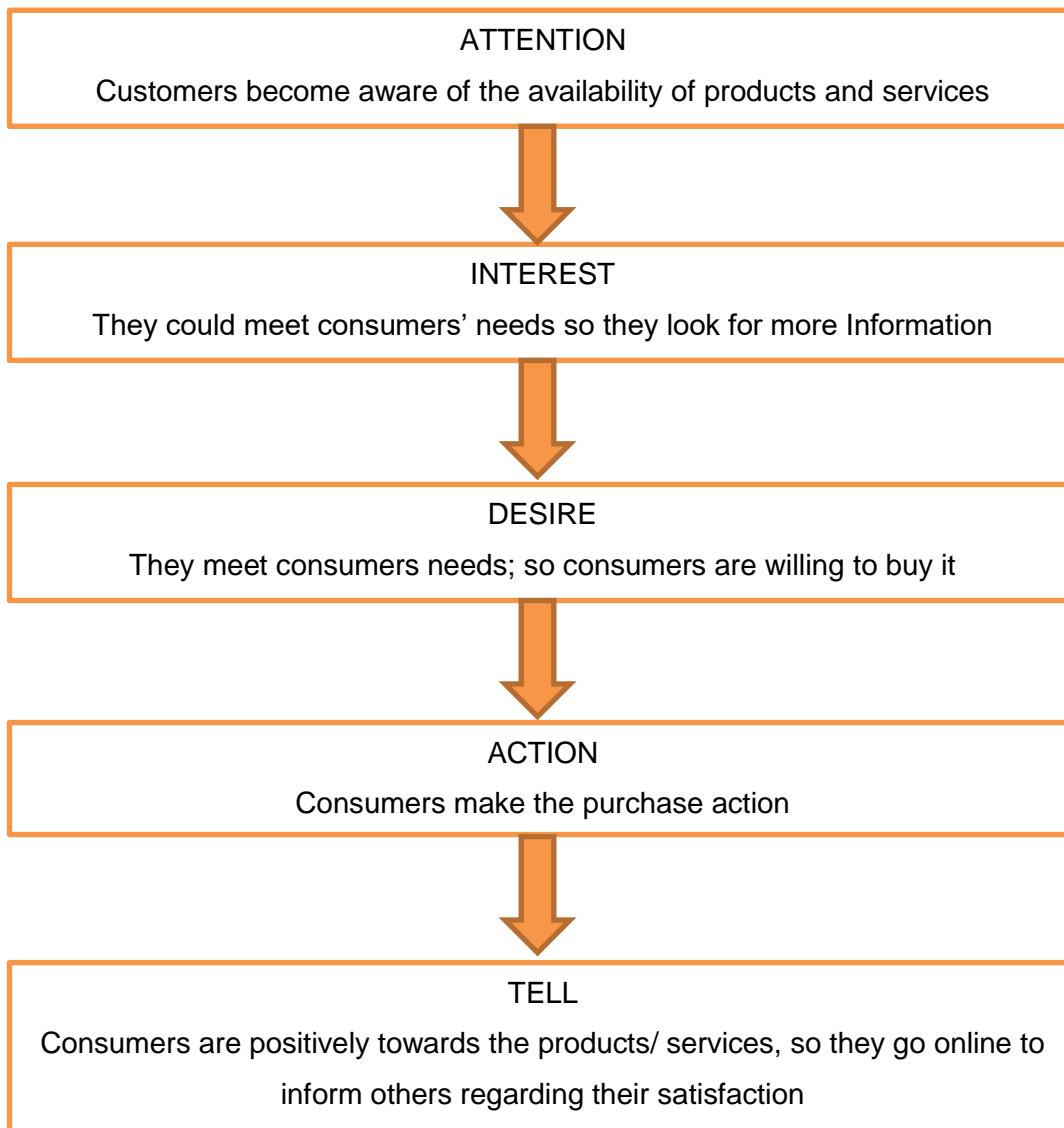


FIGURE 5. AIDA – the new and enhance model of customer purchasing process (Charlesworth 2009, 290)

Throughout the history, there have not been any communications means that can provide companies an economical and instant admission to thousands (even millions) of (potential) customers data like social media; in fact, if one could list a benefit of social media for business entities, a “**low expenditure**” factor would top the list. According to the report from Econsultancy in 2010, approximately 75% of marketers when being asked regarding the money spending on social media responded that they spent less than \$5,000 per year on social media; whilst 32% of the respondents admitted that they spent none of their budgets. As a matter of fact, the advantageous of social media has over other forms of marketing communications is that it costs nothing to create a social account; thus the only real investment firms make is the amount of time-consumption and the resources company will use for their online content. Stelzner (2016) published a tremendously interesting study about the amount of time that marketers commit weekly

for social media; in which a compelling 63% of respondents use the online platform for 6 hours or more and approximately 29% answered that they spent 16 hours plus to engage with social media networks.

Likewise, there have been increasing suggestions on the **positive correlations between social media's engagement and financial performance**. According to Ross, Beath and Sebastian (2015) in an edition of Harvard Business Review article, Nordstrom – an American giant in fashion retailer industry, witnessed a remarkable 50% increase in revenue over the period of 5 years; thanks to the launch of digital engagement. Moreover, Whole Foods which is also an American organic-food provider claimed in their Marketing section that “We generally invest less in paid media and marketing than other supermarkets—approximately 0.4% of our total sales in the fiscal year 2014. We allocate our marketing investments among strategic national and regional programs and our individual stores, and we benefit from valuable earned media, social media and word-of-mouth advocacy” (Annual Report 2014, 8). Last but not least, Funk (2011) pointed out that in 2009, the Georgia Aquarium implemented a campaign on the social media networks – specifically Facebook, MySpace, and Twitter in order to sell tickets for their admission; eventually the aquarium's plan reached its goal with 2,500 tickets sold to followers and fans of their page.

3.2 Social media zones

According to Tuten and Solomon (2015), social media has four main zones, which could be displayed as Figure 6. The four zones comprise of social community, social publishing, social entertainment, and social commerce, in which each zone represents different functions and features.



FIGURE 6. Social media specific zones (Tuten and Solomon 2015, 8)

Social media has been built according to relationships building, technology accessibility, and “shared participations”; therefore, the boundaries among zones are getting blur and some sections could partly cover the others. Digging into the main issues, regarding the first zone of the fourth, **social community (SC)** characterizes mediums of social media that focus essentially on relationship building and variously related exercises. Specifically, those exercises are multi-party communication, verbal exchange, experience sharing, and commercial actions such as selling and buying. As mentioned before, social media cores have been built based on networking and communication, which Social Community embodies best since the dominant mission of SC is relationship building and sustainability. A variety of channels could be list as Facebook, LinkedIn, Google Plus, etc. (Tuten and Solomon 2015)

Social publishing (SP) could be illustrated as a content publishing act with the social audience is the main target; in which firms could put out their content on different types of channels, including blogs, micro-sharing sites, media sites, social bookmarking and news sites (see more specific content in Chapter 3.5). Moreover, as regards to the next zone of social media, **social entertainment (SE)** comprises recreational means for users to relax and enjoy in their spare time. Roughly speaking, social games which allow users to play and interact with other participants in the social community, is one of the most developed vehicles of Social Entertainment and it is increasingly getting a fair share of the third zone. Some typical examples are Angry Birds and Candy Crush. Last but not least, **social commerce** is the instrument mainly used for online commercial activities such as buying and selling products and services. Not only has social commerce approved within the business world, but it also diverse, varying from review and rating sites, social shopping marketplace to social storefronts (online retail stores). (Tuten and Solomon 2015)

3.3 Social media marketing

Some would argue that social media could only be implemented for the purpose of non-commercial use and it is solely for people interaction sake; but not for business function. Nevertheless, in terms of businesswise, social media platforms themselves already launched premium services that businesses can take advantage of if they are willing to pay extra charges; in exchange, they could get valuable data on consumers, more exposure to their targets and certainly further advertising opportunity. Thus, the act of using social media to promote company could be perceived as social media marketing, which Tuten and Solomon (2015) have defined as the appropriate utilization of social media platforms for companies and customers to carry out exchanges through communication, in which marketers could gain an access to patrons' data and simultaneously interact with them at different stages of the purchase cycle. More precisely, Gunelius (2011) claimed that "Social media marketing offers the single largest opportunity for...corporations to build their brands and their businesses". Safko and Brake (2009) also emphasize the characteristics of social media in business, claiming that social media is a proper means of communication if firms choose the right way to manipulate conversations between and among customers; however, businesses could not totally control it. Instead, by applying appropriate strategy and tactics with competent use of basic tools, companies could influence remarkably in that conversation; after all, the one who has better influence holds the key to win over customers.

However, businesses ought to use social media as its original purposes – prioritize customer services and added values, rather than just a mono aim for generating sales.

Funk (2011) listed some examples regarding the social media program that focuses solely on customers' benefits and added-value; these companies are eager to concentrate on sharing with their followers' interests and topics rather than persuade customers to buy anything. Specifically, Wine of the Month Club launched their social network accounts (Facebook, YouTube, etc.) to distribute knowledge regarding wine, food, and entertainment for their customers' curiosity. Meanwhile, Patagonia used YouTube video, Facebook page, and a blog to share their story in adventurous games such as ice climbing, surfing, etc.

Besides, Tuten and Solomon (2015) demonstrate the core of Social Media Chain Value (FIGURE 7) as it illustrates the essentially habitual act of participants in the social media world and elemental factors for that act to be possible. Simple as it is, in social media environment, as a user, participant is encouraged to join any community, connect with friends, surf the web or upload his/her own videos, images, blogs, etc.; and for that to be possible, users need the aforementioned factors which could be categorized as ICSSD: Infrastructure, Channels (Hosts), Software and Services, and Devices.

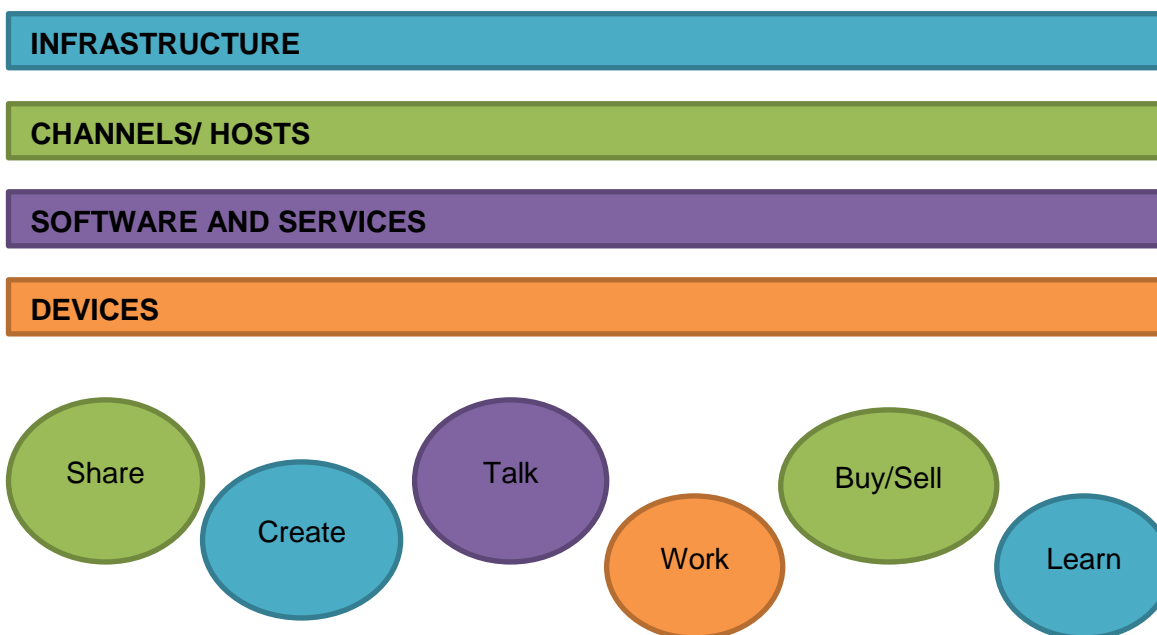


FIGURE 7. The social media chain value (Tuten and Solomon 2015, 17)

Moreover, as mentioned before, social media has changed almost all aspects of this world, and marketing is not an exception. Kotler and Armstrong (2010) describe marketing mix as a bundle of manageable strategic marketing tools – product, promotion, price, and place, which businesses apply in order to accomplish marketing goals. That said marketing mix perception is a foundation for almost every strategy in the world; however,

when social media emerged and its marketing techniques became a centerpiece of companies' arsenal, the additional fifth P came in the scene: participation. In fact, it does not matter what are companies' purposes, whether to enhance customer service, promote a new product/ service or manage customer relationship, firms have to participate in the community; thereby influencing effectively customers. (Andrews, 2016)

3.3.1 How can social media marketing boost a business?

Beyond a shadow of the doubt, social media is unceasingly growing as a marketing channel; LePage (2016) – a contributor of Hootsuite blog – claimed that companies recognized the trend of the market in which they have invested a fortune to develop their own strategy in order to achieve their targets in marketing. Specifically, he published in Hootsuite blog a horrid number regarding the budget spent on social media marketing: the monetary value spent for social media advertising has doubled – from \$16 billion to \$31 billion – just within the span of two years (The Statistics Portal), and it has not stopped there. Marketing specialist and experts from eMarketer agency also forecast that by the end of 2017, global expenses for social media ads will increase approximately 26 percent; contribute to a massive \$35 billion spent solely for the online platform – represent 16% of the entire digital ad section expenditure.

With all the figures above, it is undeniable that the benefits social media (marketing) brings to the table are innumerable; nonetheless, Gunelius (2011) would only mention 5 main appropriate advantageous (in this thesis point of view). First, when we get back to the very fundamental feature of social media, it allows end-users to freely connect and communicate with each other, meaning that the social platform assists participants to construct their relationship – other words **relationship building**. Likewise, in the business world, engagement and influence are the keys to win over customers and thanks to the crucial value from social media; firms could do exactly that by manufacturing and maintaining customer's relationship. (Rampton, 2015)

Secondly, either company tries to sell their products and services or to promote their online network site; **brand building** is the top priority. (Gunelius, 2011) According to the social media marketing industry report from Social Media Examiner in 2016, roughly 90% of marketers claim that social media marketing has helped their companies getting more exposure than before, and a precise of 68% of marketing experts agree that through social media channels, they could build up a loyal fan-base and increase brand recognition. (Stelzner, 2016)

Thirdly, another benefit from social media marketing for business is **publicity**, which is the transmission of newsworthy knowledge via media means; specifically, information which is publicized could be news, facts, products, and services description and promotion. (Burke, 2010) Thus, thanks to social media, businesses could inform their newest and relevant information to those interested as well as adjusting false news and so on. (Lake, 2017)

Fourthly, short-term **promotion** is feasible when companies offer exclusively price-deduction opportunity only to their social media's followers and fans; that act from the firm could make customers psychologically feel appreciated and respect; hence a reinforcement in brand loyalty (Gunelius, 2011). Last but not least, social media could be treated as a source of information – **a customer experience channel**, based on that, businesses could execute their **market research** regarding their target groups' segmentation (demography, geography, and so on), behavior, needs, previous experience (feedback), etc. as well as competitors. (Nelson, 2013)

Overall, social media marketing (as of many other marketing types) ought to be considered as a long-term marketing strategy. However, when applying a "push method", the company could adopt social media as a short-term approach; in fact, many firms witnessed an increase in sales and revenue in the short-term period through social media promotion (Gunelius, 2011). Notwithstanding that, building and maintaining customers' relationships could be argued as the primary priority of social media marketing strategy – after all, social media was invented for the sake of communication and connection. (Schroeder, 2013)

3.3.2 The four pillar of social media marketing (company's perspective)

For the first decade of the 21st century, social media was a brand-new concept for businesses and they are intimidated and skeptical regarding this modern idea – after all, there weren't any exemplary and successful story in this path at that instant. However, the next-ten-year period marks a different story – a blooming era of the social web (Bosari, 2012), companies then did make a step forward and took advantage of the increasingly popular online trend; they realized that the key to success in the virtual world is engagement (Diorio, 2016); yet participation is simply not enough, but they have to sketch out an entire complete and competent plan in order to make influences toward the social media – in other words, a social media marketing strategy; hence the importance of social media marketing strategy (Sousa, 2017). Accordingly, in order to examine the effectiveness of the plan, firms necessitate to willingly testing it in a practical situation,

analyzing the outcome and modifying the strategy correspondingly. Even so, Gunelius (2011) believed that businesses could benefit greatly from the in-depth comprehension of a foundation “tower” or mechanism of social media so that they could make the blueprint perfect, thus he developed a **Four Pillar theory: R.C.S.D – read, create, share, and discuss**. On the whole, Gunelius insisted on the fact that firms need to utilize four pillars of social media marketing efficiently and assign it to the strategy that companies pursue.

Reading is the foundation of absorbing knowledge, it was and still undoubtedly the simplest form of studying new information. Furthermore, reading could be executed by various methods (through internet, TV, book, a business magazine, etc.). Similarly, drafting a marketing plan, especially for the social media one, requires an intensive research in which experts and marketers need to read and read a lot. In fact, not only do marketers have to update their knowledge on the current situation related to their industry on the daily basis in order to communicate with their customers effectively, but promoters also need to be aware of their competitors’ existence. (Gunelius, 2011)

When surfing the internet, one could be attracted by great blogs, ideas, videos, etc. and for companies to achieve that, they get to **create** great content (Gunelius, 2011). By and large, content is the most important section that companies need to invest and dive into specifically and carefully (Ratcliff, 2014); a research in 2016 by Advertising Week claimed that a great social content generates 97% more traffic into links (Mave 2017). Precisely, to be successful in the social media environment, companies need to “indirectly” enable people in the community to start conversations regarding their products, services, and brand, and it is indeed hard to commence those conversations and even keep them around if firms could not offer their audience interesting content (Gunelius, 2011). Therefore, businesses necessitate creating an appealing, useful and informative content for the sake of audience’s added value and interest, rather than trying to sell and promote products/services, or other words – unique selling content is far more important than the unique selling unit. (Jansen, 2016)

Sharing is the unique feature of social media, and content sharing (via network sites) has become an indirect marketing method for businesses in this technology age (Rollins, 2016). Frequently, when marketers and experts address marketing issues, they have always come up with a one-way, big-budget advertising/ promotional campaign (direct marketing) and ignore the benefit of other methods (Gunelius, 2011); however, social media’s content sharing has been proved to be one of the best ways to capture attention from audience and end-user; and storytelling is one of many effective means in companies’ arsenal that has been used for years (Aaserud, 2015). Penenberg (2009) –

who is an assistant director of the Business and Economics Program at NYU, demonstrated the social media “fever” as “the most significant business accelerants to hit Silicon Valley since the Search Engine. It’s like compounding interest on a bank account: one user becomes two, then four, eight, to a million and more”.

Besides, content sharing embodies in two essential patterns. Regarding the first approach, businesses could share informative and beneficial knowledge (and interesting as well) related to their industry, products or services during the course of their research (or reading – the 1st Pillar). For instance, companies found blogs or articles on tips using the products/ services like the one they provide or some recent news that matters to their industry, they could share it via multiple social media channels and instantly strengthen and amplify the presence of them in social media., which – in other words – indirectly marketing their business. More interestingly, firms can post a diversity of contents and adjust the density of which until they find it appropriate for their aims; explicitly, by dictating different categories of content, companies can influence the different type of audience; hence promoting to various segments of the customer. (Gunelius, 2011)

Similar to the first method, the second concept is also about content sharing, but this time firms share the content that they create themselves (Create – the 2nd Pillar). If businesses generate a great blog on topics that audience enjoy, they could share it on Facebook, tweet it on Twitter, and other social networking sites that they feel beneficial for those interested. The aim is to spread the words to a broader audience and create a chance for them to recognize businesses. In other expressions, when followers and fans share firms’ content, it will increase the feasibility of the content to reach a vast number of users flawlessly and effortlessly. (Duncan, 2013)

Continuously from the pillar above, when creating and sharing enjoyable contents on the social media, companies could also gain more followers and fans naturally which then possibly become firms’ loyal fans; and the more effective enterprises communicate with those fans, the more possible they would start conversations regarding that enterprise – the fourth and last pillar of social media marketing: **discussion** (Gunelius, 2011). As could be witnessed in real life, for examples, Youtubers or Vloggers are gaining increasingly more audience from over the world, not only due to their interesting content, but also the commitment and engagement to their fans and followers; specifically, they respond to all the discussion in the comment section, answer personal message, make themselves available and accessible to audience in order to show their appreciation and respect to the fans (Dredge, 2016). Likewise, businesses could value their followers by creating great content, sharing it to those interested, and engaging with them regularly; when they

(the followers) become firms' loyal customers, they could raise their voices and enhance business association's reputation as well as protect the brand from negative information. (Ramaswami, 2017)

3.4 Content marketing

One could claim that marketing is nearly impossible without great content. Indeed, content has progressively played an important role in social media marketing; to the point that experts and academic researchers have to dissect and categorize it into another form of marketing. (Gardner, 2015) Therefore, content marketing would be only researched to a degree that is enough for the purpose of this project (suitable only for Emeteclass), thus one should not use this theoretical part for a guideline or reference without a consultant.

Wainwright (2015) explains content marketing as a form of marketing concentrated in the process of creating, publishing, and sharing appropriate contents for an online audience. Likewise, Kentico – a digital solution company – defined content marketing as the method of communication with the audience without trying to sell anything directly; instead, businesses offer newsworthy and knowledgeable information to the audience in order to attract and convert them into customers. Information could be displayed in various forms: blog, articles, photos, videos, news, Q&A section, etc.

In short, the authentic desire of content marketing is to educate audience by delivering a valuable and informative knowledge related to the industry, products, and services that companies provide, and simultaneously stimulate their potential eagerness to make a purchase in the future (Pulizzi, 2013). Moreover, content marketing also generate healthy relationship between firms and consumers – in other words, brand loyalty; according to Demand Metric, 60% of consumers enjoy reading relevant content from brand, 82% feel more positive about the firm after reading the content and 70% claimed that they feel closer to a company due to great content. And perhaps the most important figure of them all, approximately 60% of consumers admitted that they looked for products and services right after reading a relevant content about that products and services. (Demand Metric)

Regarding the businesses' perspective, when decided to launch a social media marketing campaign with content marketing as its core, companies ought to concentrate on Content Marketing Lifecycle (CML), which comprises a closed-circulation of 6 stages (FIGURE 8), including Planning, Creation, Approval, Publishing, Measurement, Optimization. (Kentico)

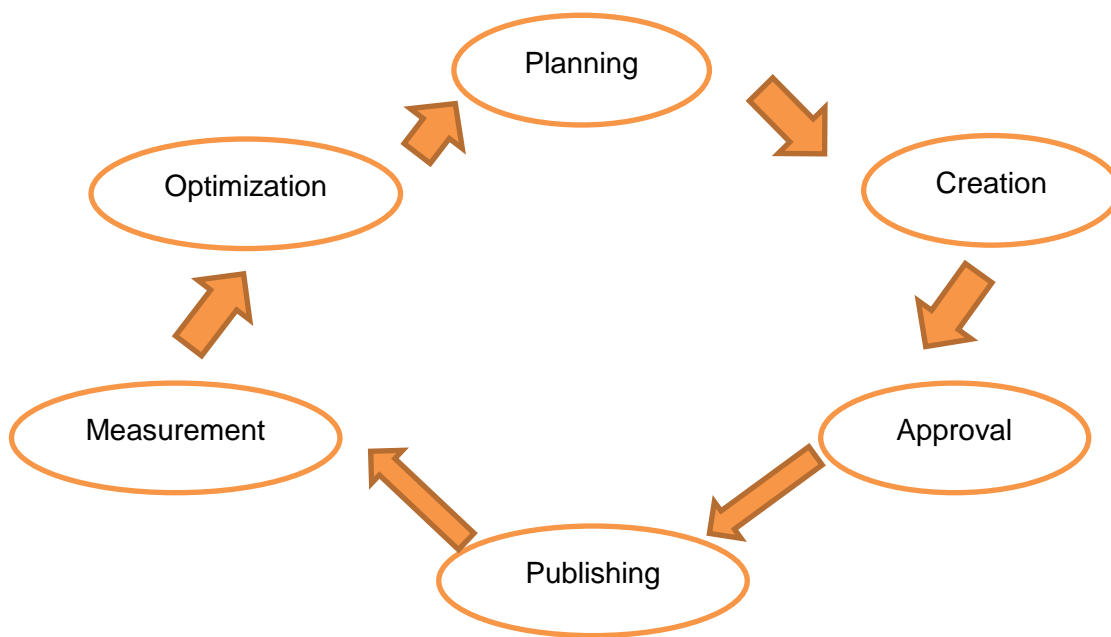


FIGURE 8. Content Marketing Lifecycle (Kentico 2017, 6)

According to the figure above, **planning** is the first step in the strategic circle, which is an act of defining the needs of audience – in other words, the topic that audience interested and care about. Then, firms **create** the content that is suitable for target viewers and getting **approved** by them. Afterward, businesses **publish and share** the content to further audience via feasible and strategic channels of social media, and then they **measure** the performance of the content (For i.e. the reaction from the viewers toward the social content). As a consequence, firms would study the outcome/ feedback and optimize the (future) content for generating a better result. (Kentico)

3.5 Social media marketing tools

For someone who does not know clearly regarding social media tools, there are literally thousands of them at this moment in time. Undoubtedly, there are lots of ways for a person or even businesses to start their journey in the virtual society and by just looking at the number of vehicles available out there, one could not help but feel overwhelming. Table 4 illustrates some well-known social media marketing tools, which were divided into four main sections: content creation, content sharing, connections, and community building. Accordingly, there are exemplary channels to each section respectively (Gunelius 2011)

TABLE 4. Popular Social Media Marketing Tools (Gunelius 2011, 58)

CONTENT CREATION	CONTENT SHARING	CONNECTIONS	COMMUNITY BUILDING
WordPress	Twitter	Facebook	Facebook pages
Blogger	Tumblr	LinkedIn	Facebook groups
YouTube	Reddit	MySpace	LinkedIn groups
Dailymotion	Yahoo! Buzz		Google groups
Vimeo	SlideShare		Forums

Despite the fact that there are loads of channels for marketing purpose, writer will only choose the four following tools for Emeteclass in order to execute the strategy (Chapter 4) for the company: Connection (Social Networks: Facebook, LinkedIn, and messenger app: WhatsApp), Content creation and Content sharing (Blogging), and Community building (Facebook/ LinkedIn pages and groups).

3.5.1 Social networks and messenger app

According to Investopedia, social networking is the Web 2.0 internet-based application of social network which users use to connect and build relationships with other participants; whom could share common interests in various aspects of life such as personal hobbies, academic issues, or even real-life relationship and mutual friends.

Similar to the internet-based concept, (most) social network sites are web-placed platforms and offer users regarding communication solutions. Moreover, social networking is a user-generated content (or user-created content), which is a “stage” for users to create any type of contents they desire and then publish it on the same system, comprises of photos, images, texts, “tagging”, online comments, “diary-style “weblogs” (blogs)”, etc. (Obar and Wildman 2015, 745-750; Kaplan and Haenlein 2010, 61) Undoubtedly, social networks have influenced our lives since its emergence. For example, Boyd (2007) has vocalized his opinion on the impact of social media in the MIT press, claiming that when people add their colleagues on the social media platforms, the boundary between personal and professional life is likely erased. Likewise, Woodman and Wyn (2015) researched that appropriately 63% users of Twitter and Facebook in the USA favor these channels to be the primary sources of news and information.

Regarding business’s social media relevance, Mody (2015) displayed significant numbers regarding purchasing behavior of users affected by social networks; with 85% of participants – ranging from 18 to 34 years of age – admitted that they used social

networking sites for the purchasing decision, and 65% of users aged over 55 have confidence in word of mouth (WOM). Moreover, thanks to social networking tools, companies worldwide have a chance to connect and reach probably millions even billions of people (potential customers) as well as engage and share their commercial intention. Even though social network varies and provides many options, writer would stick to three specific channels for the sake of the project: Facebook and LinkedIn with WhatsApp

3.5.1.1 Facebook

Facebook, whose headquarter located in California, was founded in February 2004 by the famous Mark Zuckerberg when he was still in University. The company has over twenty thousand employees and is considered as the biggest and most popular technology entity in the world. Moreover, there are more than 2 billion monthly active participants and over 1.3 billion daily active users as of the end of June 2017, which is an increase of 17% compared to the previous year. (Facebook, 2017) More specifically, there are roughly 340 million people in Europe enjoying Facebook and nearly 3 million of them are in Finland (Internetworldstats). Facebook allows users connect with acquaintances, friends, family, classmate, colleague, etc. and interact with them on a daily basis. (Levy 2010, 13)

Additionally, aside from normal functions for daily uses, Facebook can be employed in business as well; the social platform could assist businesses in marketing their products, services, or ideas both directly and indirectly. There are handfults of tools in the Facebook environment for companies to exploit in order to enhance their marketing performance, thus several appropriate and practical features would be chosen in order to support Emeteclass with the aim of sharing content and interacting with other users since the main purpose of Emeteclass is to **raise awareness and drive demand** from potential customers. (Baldassarre 2015)

Blog tab is a tool developed by Facebook, which can exhibit companies' own blog and the blog that companies like. Since Emeteclass provides services and events on team-building, **Eventbrite** allows the company to publish their events, possibly sell tickets, and monitor the situation of the events' participants. Likewise, supplement to that app, **Events tab** assist company to promote their event directly on Facebook. Another app to consider on Facebook is **Promotions** which could establish businesses' branded promotion in the form of a small contest, quiz, game, etc. Last but not least, **Memorable Web Addresses for Profile, Page, or Group** is a platform which can aid companies in customizing their URL – which is an address for a World Wide Web page - on their Facebook page, which

allows customers and those interested find businesses' more easily. (Gunelius 2011, 106-107)

Besides apps on the social media platform, Facebook also allows plug-in for companies' websites, meaning that firms can link their websites to their Facebook page in order to associate audience on Facebook to their websites/ blogs more closely. Some apps represent that function are **Like button**, **Comments** and **Recommendations** which allows visitors to interact with companies (like, comment and share to their own Facebook profile). (Gunelius 2011, 108)

Lastly, **Facebook Ads** (FA) is a charged-service presented by Facebook, which allows firms to commence an advertising campaign - via specific ads using their own resources such as photos, content, etc. – and simultaneously decide the segmentation that they want to aim at based on demographic, occupational and interest conditions – in other words ads would only be displayed to whom that meet companies conditions. Moreover, the mechanism of FA is fairly simple, companies will bid for a “space” to show their ads, in which they can construct their payment setting by either pay-per-click (when someone click on the ads) or pay-per-impression (when firms' ads is displayed), and Facebook will use algorithm to calculate the price of companies' ads according to their maximum bid and conditions. Afterwards, Facebook would display businesses' ads to their users. (Lee, 2017)

3.5.1.2 LinkedIn

Surprisingly, LinkedIn was founded in May 2003, a year before its famous “doppelganger” Facebook and it currently employs nearly 9000 personnel. Excessively similar to Facebook, LinkedIn is a social network, but it is specialized for professionals. Accordingly, features on Facebook somehow fit perfectly to categories on LinkedIn; users (or professionals to be exact) have to create relationships with others in order to connect and communicate with them. (Nations, 2017) According to Aslam (2017), there are 467 million users, of which 106 million are monthly active and more than 180 million are daily participants from 200 countries and territories.

Moreover, with all the features of social network embody in a business-like environment, one could claim that LinkedIn is an ideal platform for B2B business. Indeed, compared to other channels, LinkedIn (80.33%) has surpassed incomparably to Twitter (12.73%), Facebook (6.73%), and Google plus (0.21%) in terms of B2B leads (Knyszewski, 2015). Likewise, Chaudhary (2017) publicized a brief report stating that 79% of B2B experts

choose LinkedIn as the most effective channels; while 94% of marketers adopt LinkedIn to allocate their content.

By the same token, LinkedIn also possesses Ads service for premium charges as well. LinkedIn Ads displays companies' content to selected segmentation with two options of payment methods for companies: pay-per-click or pay-per-impression. However, due to financial limitation, this method would not be chosen for Emeteclass strategy; instead, this study would focus on LinkedIn Group and Answer features for the B2B plan (specific details in Chapter 3.5.3: Community Building).

3.5.1.3 WhatsApp

According to Statista on ranking the research of the well-received social media services in Finland in 2016, 88% of respondents choose WhatsApp as their favorite channels to communicate with others. Therefore, WhatsApp would be a critical point of the strategic plan for Emeteclass. According to Webwise.ie, WhatsApp is a free-to-use Internet-based application that allows users to communicate with friends, family, colleagues, etc. using texts, images, videos, and audios; some outstanding features of WhatsApp real-time location sharing, group chat and voice messages just to name a few. (Steele, 2014)

Founded in 2009 and was bought by Facebook in 2014, WhatsApp is continuously growing as the biggest social messages service in the worlds (Pirani 2017). Impressively, as of May 2017, there are 1.2 billion people using WhatsApp as their main messenger service (Hindustantime, 2017), of which 175 million are daily active users (Constine, 2017). Moreover, users, which vary from more than 109 countries (Gadget360), sent approximately 100 million voice calls on the daily basis (WhatsApp blogs) and made 55 million video calls daily. (Hindustantime, 2017)

Regarding business uses, Emeteclass could take advantage of WhatsApp as a means of communication with both B2C and B2B customers. Specifically, Emeteclass could use WhatsApp as a tool for customer communication during their experience of company's service; as well as a follow-up act as "after-use" company's service. Likewise, a WhatsApp would be better than an unknown phone call or text message (Bridgewater 2016); therefore, Emeteclass could utilize an app as a customer service channel thanks to an ease of use and a wide range of reach. Moreover, Emeteclass could consider WhatsApp as a direct marketing tool (besides many indirect tools such as content creation and sharing) and use it like an old-fashion SMS, by sending text, videos or images regarding the services of the company to the users. However, by applying that method, WhatsApp

does not equal as spamming to customers' phone; instead, the company could adopt several out-of-box thinking ideas for this platform, details would be discussed more specific in Chapter 4. (Mazereeuw, 2017)

3.5.2 Blogging

Gunelius (2011) clarifies Blog as a content-created platform with various tools such as Blogger, WordPress, etc.; Blog is frequently updated by authors with new posts (or articles) and more importantly, visitors can also interact with the owner of the blog by commenting in the Comment section. For the sake of the project, **Blogger** would be chosen as an application for Emeteclass in order to publish Emeteclass' articles due to its ease of use and free of charge. More specifically, Blogger, which was invented by Pyra Labs, was purchased by Google in 2003. Regarding its feature, Blogger allows users to publish their blog on this platform and share it to other social media channels such as Facebook, LinkedIn and even ... WordPress – another blogging means. (Karch, 2017)

There are various reasons for companies to engage in the blogging world. According to Hubspot, 47% consumers read averagely three to five blogs (contents) before making a purchase; in which trust and information are main purposes for consumers to search for blogs (content-like platform). Likewise, Singer (2009) shared a report in which 346 million people read blogs throughout the world. On the business perspective, 67% of B2B professionals revealed that they include blogs to their marketing plan and it increases leads for the company; likewise, they also claimed that blogging is more cost-effective and less time-consuming than any other old-fashion methods. (State Of Inbound)

Undoubtedly, blog is one of the most underrated and overlooked tools for the business of them all; consider that back in the days when people used a blog just to express their experience, write their own creation, and share a proportion of their life as a digital diary (Gunelius, 2017). Nevertheless, as of modern era, blog is increasingly used for the business-related purposes and operate itself as an important factor of marketing strategy. Specifically, blog could help the company in the area of the **brand building**; a good blog or an excellent content could deliver clear messages to readers and reflect towards the company's products and services. By doing that, companies can construct a strong brand awareness, identity, and loyalty. (DeMers, 2015) Besides, **customer service** is another added-value that blog brings to the table; as mention above, blog could set up a forum for visitors and bloggers to discuss the topic related to the blog and if utilized appropriately, firms could use blog as a platform for sharing information, observing behaviors, responding and receiving feedbacks from customers. Last but not least, when companies

arrange useful and informative knowledge to readers (potential customers), they indirectly create relationships with consumers – in other words, blogging assist firms in **building relationships** and **maintaining** them. (Agrawal, 2016)

3.5.3 LinkedIn groups

Despite the fact that Facebook and other platforms possess the same function as LinkedIn, when it comes to professional purposes, LinkedIn Groups (LG) is undoubtedly the more dominant and effective features of the B2B social networking platform compare to Facebook (Wilkerson, 2017). To put a vital role of LG in perspective, it provides companies a place to distribute their knowledge, share expertise to and communicate with potential customers via interesting and related content. (Newberry, 2016)

LinkedIn Groups assist firms in terms of finding appropriate and applicable customers target, once they join the group that possesses any related characteristics of their products, services or industry. Moreover, by publishing a useful article, companies can acquire more credibility and be recognized by the community – an implication of brand awareness building. Furthermore, by posting and observing reactions and comments from experts in the group, companies can obtain valuable feedbacks regarding their content and even ideas that could generate a complete product or service. Likewise, when gathering feedbacks, businesses could also benefit from the community when they explore customers' insights, which are indeed "priceless" knowledge. However, in order to get those advantages from LinkedIn Groups, companies ought to build and develop a successful content marketing strategy – in other words, constantly exceptional and premium posts/ articles. (Gunelius, 2011) Knyszewski (2015) reported that LinkedIn Groups are the most effective tool to achieve a high percentage of lead generation, out of 96% of posts, there will be 86.3% of them generate leads.

Similar to LinkedIn Groups features that allow companies to share their expertise, LinkedIn Answers also offer a unique function, in which businesses could actively find questions regarding products, services and industry that similar or related to them, and answer to those who wondered. The effects of LinkedIn Answers are somehow identical with LG; it is a tremendous method to collect information from experts and prospects and interact with them. Additionally, when companies answer questions and offer solutions for users who initiate a discussion, they would instantly be considered as experts in the industry and people would place their confidence in them. (Gunelius 2011) However, from 2013 henceforth, LinkedIn officially relinquished the Answers function (Wasserman, 2013), some alternatives have been proposed since. Serdula (2013) suggested various

features of LinkedIn to follow the LinkedIn Answers legacy, naming LinkedIn polls, LinkedIn status updates, ...and LinkedIn groups.

Overall, LinkedIn Groups is extremely useful for corporations whose desire is to share their experience, knowledge, and expertise to the community as well as communicating with them. Eventually, that action would help companies to establish relationships with users and prospects who would possibly become loyal consumers in the foreseeable future. (Gunelius 2011)

4 ANALYSIS OF SOCIAL MEDIA

In this chapter, the current social media situation in Europe generally and in Finland particularly would be discussed. Then, an analysis of the present social media activities of Emeteclass would be carried out in order to clarify the direction of the company. Specifically, social networking channels such as Facebook and LinkedIn; the content that company usually publishes and updates, and also the frequency of content that company employs.

When it comes to the Europe social media situation, We Are Social (2017) reported that there are 839 million people in over Europe with 637 million of them gain the access to the internet; and 65% of internet users are active social media users (412 million people). Moreover, Statista(b) (2017) claims that 52% of social media users participate in the social networks; meanwhile, an approximately 38% of individuals enjoy social networks on the daily basis. The numbers do not lie, a large proportion of EU citizens are increasingly participating into the virtual social, and a considerable number of them favor social networks tools like Facebook and Instagram as the best place to socialize with the world. Statista(a) (2017) pointed out that Europe ranked fourth out of 8 regions of the world in terms of Facebook usage, with 1 person out of every 2 people participate in the most famous network (nearly 50% of the EU population).

Regarding business statistics, Eurostat said that 39% of EU business entities participate in social media in 2015, in which three out of four (79%) use the platform for the purpose of image building and product marketing. In the report of Eurostat in 2016, 2015 witnessed 31% of businesses exploit social media as a tool to enhance an image of companies and to market their products/services. While 20% of firms prefer social media as a platform for interacting with customers; 15% of companies choose it as an HR instrument. Interestingly, the same proportion of business entities (10%) have the same beliefs, utilizing social media as a stage for cooperating with partners, associating with customers and directly involving them in the process of making products and services.

Asides from the Europe statistics, Finland' social media usage knowledge is absolutely delightful. According to Chaffey, 93% of the population (5.13 million people as of January 2017) of Finland gets the access to the internet, in which 2.8 million are active users in social media platform – an impressive 51% of total population. Moreover, regarding the motives of using social networking sites, Valtari (2016) reported that 21% of people - ranging from 16 to 89 years of age - adopt social networks as a platform for professional

and academic purposes; while on the contrary, 34% of the total population sees sites as a place for daily activities such as communication and interaction with others.

On the business-wise aspect, Statistics Finland published a report in 2016 which they claim that roughly 23% of Finns followed their beloved companies, brands, products, and services; while 21% engage in a “buy and sell” community to exchange and share the commodity. Furthermore, 15% of Finns usually use social media to participate in campaigns and other 14% to join the large community/ fan pages/groups.

Regarding the most favorite social media and app-chat services among young people (from 13 to 29 years old), Ebrand Suomi Oy sent out to 5520 volunteers a survey concerning the social services they most use; 88% choose WhatsApp as their regular apps; in which 47% of them use the apps several times a day, while YouTube comes second with 85% with Facebook closes the top 3 with more than 80%. Asking the same sample of the previous survey, Ebrand Suomi Oy study about activities that people do when they are online; 93.9% admit that they look and read at contents while 81.6% interact with others' contents by expressing a positive emotion. Equally important, 48.9% and 38.2% of respondents search for information and share various contents respectively; at the same time, 59.3% says they communicate with others and 44.4% updates their current status and opinion.

With all the aforementioned statistics above, one could claim that content is one of, if not the most important concern since almost all the virtual residences' activities focus on content when they are active online. According to Statistics Finland, 38% of Finnish residences enjoy reading blogs but only 6% of Finns actually create and produce readable materials; that leads to an opportunity for Emeteclass to meet a demand of people who want to enjoy more useful and interesting contents.

As regards to the social media channels of the company; Emeteclass is currently present in 3 main social media platforms: Facebook, LinkedIn, and Twitter. Regarding Facebook, Emeteclass page (@emeteclass) achieves 195 people like the page and 186 people follow the site; Image 3 illustrates the page's content of Emeteclass. Additional to that, Emeteclass also has a smaller “branch” (or a different page that represented other services of the company), namely The 1st floor challenge (@the1stfloorchallenge), which possesses 164 like and 161 follow turns. In regards to LinkedIn, company's professional site receives nearly 60 followers and has eight employees that attend to LinkedIn social network. All the figures are understandable since the company spent most of their online time investing on Facebook. (Ferreira, 2017)

In terms of content, Emeteclass Facebook page posted 9 contents in September, an average of 1 post per 10 days. The contents are usually about company's culture and life, innovation and technology news, project management knowledge, and their own events; according to Mrs. Ferreira's interview, viewers and users mostly enjoy company's culture and life. The same method also applies for LinkedIn; however, the frequency of posting is very low – just an average of 2 to 3 posts per month. Whereas observing from The 1st floor challenge page in Facebook, writer realized that Emeteclass specializes this page solely for posting photos and videos from the T1FC events without any “real” post besides marketing their upcoming events. Lastly, the languages that Emeteclass applies for their content are variable, from English, Portuguese, to Spanish. (Facebook, 2017)

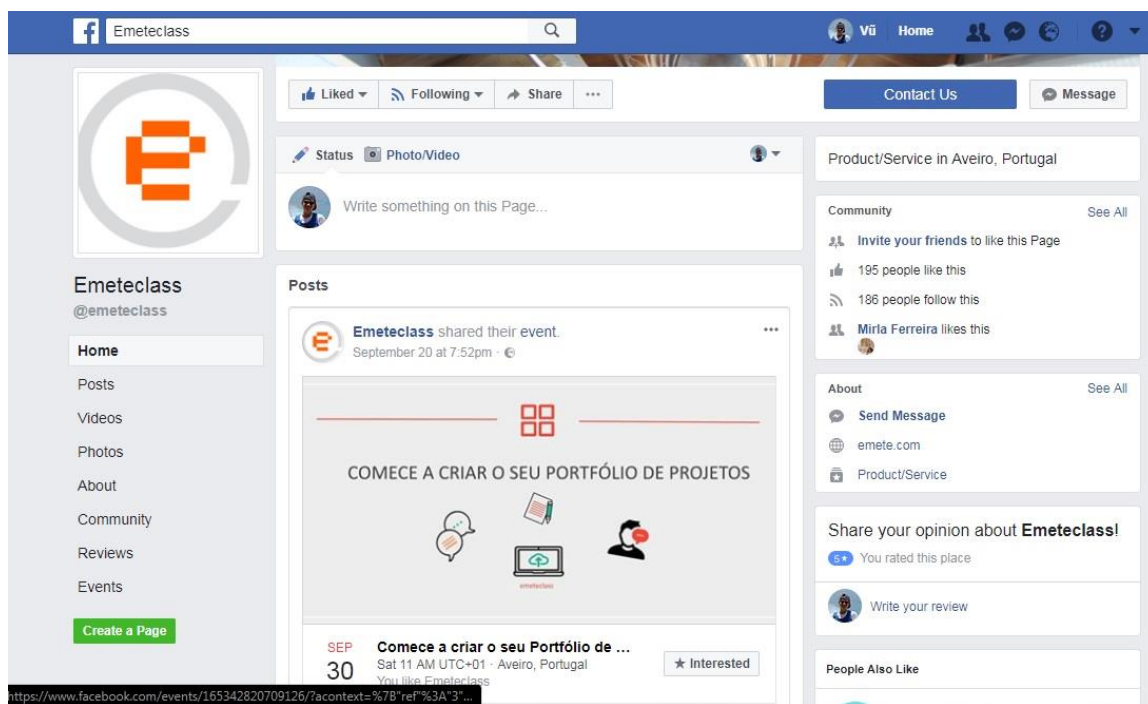


IMAGE 3. Facebook page of Emeteclass. Screenshoted on September 29, 2017.

5 STRATEGY AND RECOMMENDATION FOR EMETECCLASS IN FINLAND

Compared to traditional marketing, social media is still fresh to the marketing community, many experts consider social media marketing (SMM) is not a proper mainstream way to actually market their products; hence an absence of standard strategic framework is unavoidable. Nevertheless, the strategy would be established for each chosen channel for Emeteclass attach with recommendations.

First and foremost, the **objectives** of Emeteclass are variable due to the diversity in their provided services; however, writer discussed with Mirla Ferreira and concluded that the author would **only focus on the team-building service (T1FC) of the company and the methods to get more exposure on social media to Finnish audience**. Figure 9 illustrates the S.W.O.T analysis of the company's service as well as social media in Finland's market.

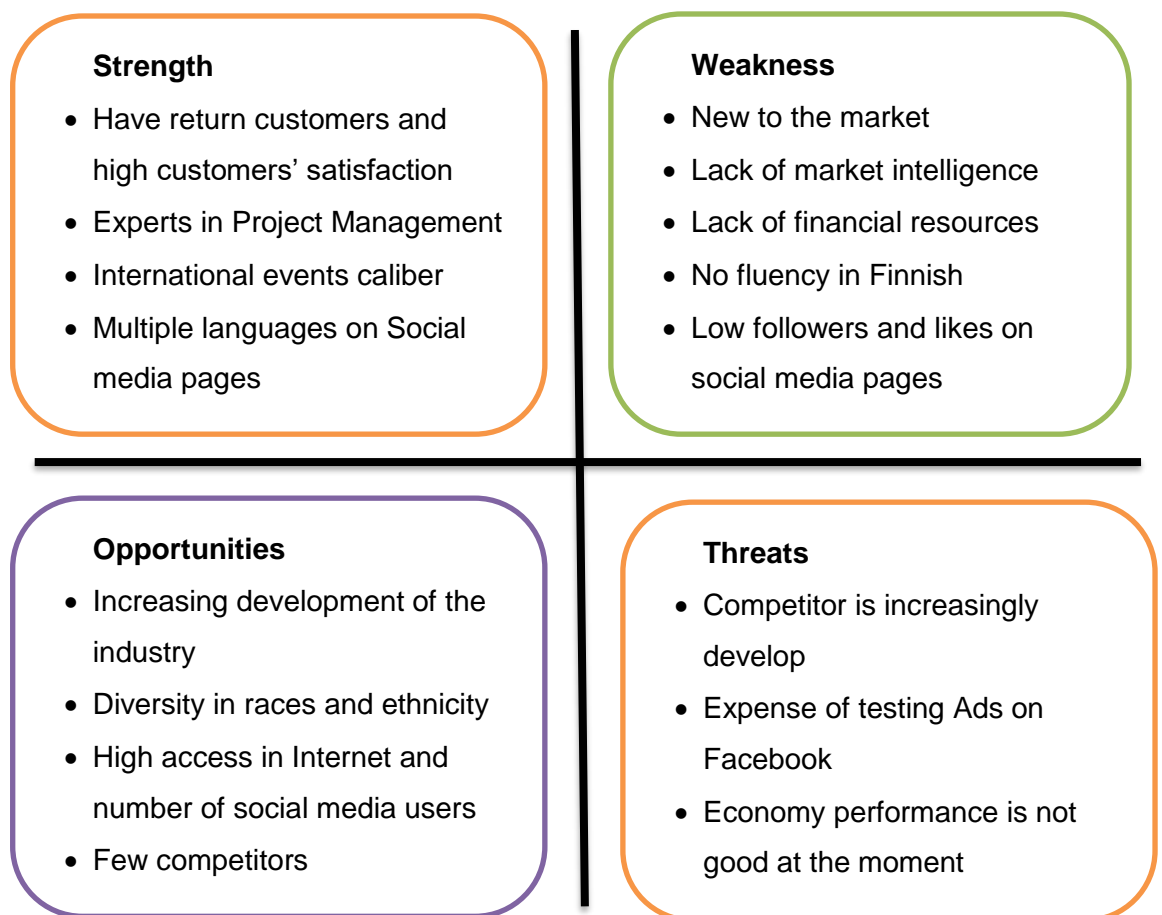


FIGURE 9. S.W.O.T analysis of Emeteclass in Finland market

Once finished defining objectives and analysis of the company, **the competitor and (potential) customers** of the company would be classified. Figure 10 demonstrates the stages of writer plan. As mentioned before, social media tools could assist businesses on the issue of gaining information intelligence. Through social webs, companies could achieve valuable insights of users in general and even competitors; and that is the main purpose of the planning stage, to accumulate as much knowledge and information regarding related information of companies' industry and transform that knowledge into the strategic plan.

Digging into reality, there is no doubt that the team-building service in Finland is developing; nonetheless, **the only main competitor** could be found that operates as closely as Emeteclass is **catalyst Finland**. More specifically, catalyst Finland, which locates in Espoo, is organized by Seikkailu Oy – which means “The Adventure” in English. They are in charge of creating and organizing events, adventure activities, and team-building campaigns. Regarding their team-building service portfolio, some outstanding examples could be listed: Been Around the world, Beat the Box, BeatsWork, etc.; and their team-building category is varied, from creative team challenges, interactive business game to innovation and invention. (Catalyst Finland, 2017)

In relation to their social media channels, the company has established in four networks sites: Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, and Google Plus. Regarding their Facebook page, even though their like and follow turns are high (844 and 830 people respectively), the interaction between them and customers are rather low (with an average of 6 likes per post). Additionally, their content is relatively similar to Emeteclass, mostly about team-building knowledge, facts, and lessons as well as their own upcoming events and company's working environment and styles photos. In regards to their LinkedIn page, when writer navigated the link from their home page, the page showed the Seikkailu Oy, and when writer searched for catalyst Finland in the “searching bar”, there was no result. That made writer come to the conclusion that catalyst Finland did not have a LinkedIn page; instead their licensor Seikkailu Oy would be their contact in the business-to-business contact since LinkedIn specialize for a professional environment. (Catalyst, 2017)

Regarding **companies' segmentation**, the main targets of Emeteclass are **business and organizations which are in needs of team-building event** and project management training (**B2B**). According to the interview with Mirla, the customers' portfolio of the company is varied, from universities to companies ranging from information technology, transportation, banking, food and beverages, constructions to even tourism field.



FIGURE 10. Stages of the strategic plan for Emeteclass

5.1 Facebook

As mentioned above, Emeteclass' Facebook page has nearly 200 likes and follows, and it is progressively increasing. Nevertheless, in order to achieve sustainable development, Emeteclass ought to commit to content marketing. First thing comes first, in order to execute perfectly content marketing on Facebook, Emeteclass could build a stronger class of **audience**; it is one thing to have lots of followers, but it is another thing to actually interact with them. Therefore, this research would suggest one idea that could boost real "interactive audience". Specifically, Emeteclass could attach Facebook page's URL (Uniform Resource Locator) in the company as well as professional's email and website – other words adding social network sites button to email so whenever the company sends email to businesses, they could look click to access to company's Facebook page. For example https://www.facebook.com/emeteclass/?ref=br_rs. Moreover, as mentioned above in the chapter 3.5.1.1, Emeteclass could take advantage of **Memorable Web Addresses for Profile, Page, or Group** app which could change their URL into a short and simple version so that viewers could recognize the URL easier.

After building a regime for acquiring more followers, this thesis could suggest other concepts that can make an exposure to Finnish users as the followings:

- Link Blog, website, Twitter, LinkedIn, and Instagram of the company to Facebook Description
- Boost the content's interest by adding more images and photos
- Organize a Facebook small contest for followers exclusively. For examples, Emeteclass could publish a quiz or a fun game (related to team-building or project management) with small prize such as a ticket to one random event of the company in one year
- Send "invitations to like" Facebook page to potential customers. For example, searching for a list of companies in Finland that Emeteclass think that they might need the team-building service, and then send the invitation to the site to them; that way, the company can present their identity to other potentials and simultaneously get the exposure to businesses.

Above are some suggestions for the purpose of enhancing the publicity of the company; nonetheless, **content marketing** would be focused and relied on as a foundation in order to recommend the company's approach. Moreover, an example of the **timetable of publishing** and the "**observation**"/ **monitor** phase would be displayed.

There is no secret that appealing content benefits greatly to companies, from generating more leads and impressions into conversion, to enhancing a relationship status between companies and customers (Menezes, 2017). However, a good post means nothing if there is no user around, hence the importance of timing. In the market at this moment, there are lots of commercial programs that could support Emeteclass regarding this issue, Buffer – a product from Klipfolio, is an example (Klipfolio, 2017).

Nonetheless, Emeteclass could exploit the "**most effective hours**", which has been proved scientifically to effectively publish their content on their wall. According to Garin (2015), Wednesday, Saturday, and Sunday are the three prime days to post on Facebook for companies due to two reasons; other pages would not likely post on weekends and users have more free time to surf the sites so there would be a higher probability that they could come across the Emeteclass page. Accordingly, the **most effective time frame** to publish content is from 10 A.M to 11 A.M and from 7 P.M to 8 P.M. Moreover, Garin (2015) visualized **the frequency of post** that maximizes the effect of the content; more specifically, if a company post from 1 to 10 posts every 3 days, that frequency could help the company to acquire more followers. Furthermore, the length of the post is also a major

factor that affects the efficiency of content, the main point is to keep it short (from 1 to 3 lines). Regarding **the type of post**, Garin (2015) claim that content comprises of pictures, galleries, and surveys could boost the virality; meanwhile, videos (take longer to watch and hard to share) and links are the two that could lure viewers away from the content. Last but not least, **informative**, **concise** and **emotional** content would highly attract viewers. Table 5 is an example of the **timetable of publishing** that writer would suggest for Emeteclass.

TABLE 5. Timetable of Publishing (Weekly) for Emeteclass

	Content	Number of posts	Language	Type
Monday	Q and A sessions, reviews on company's services.	1-2 posts	English and Finnish	
Tuesday	Blog about team-building and project management	1-2 post	English and Finnish	Photos and Images
Wednesday	Training events, quiz, and small contest.	3 posts	English and Finnish	Photo and Images, Surveys
Thursday	Company culture and life, knowledge about project management	2-3 posts	English and Finnish	Photos and Images
Friday	Blog about Team-building and Project Management	1-2 posts	English and Finnish	
Saturday	Customers' reviews and company's events	3 posts	English and Finnish	Photos and Images
Sunday	Customers' reviews and company's events	3 posts	English and Finnish	Photos and Images

Above is just an example of weekly publishing content, this trial timetable suggests Emeteclass tests and adjusts it based on the condition of the company. Moreover, the method to analyze the outcome (**observation phase**) could also be suggested; firstly, after 2 to 3 weeks, the company would get the information of the content on which posts/blogs get most like and reactions, and which posts receive least interactions. Then Emeteclass could decide to stick to the plan further or adjust according to the audiences.

Last but not least, the Key Performance Indicator (KPI) specifically for Facebook platform. In short, KPI is a metric system that could demonstrate the effectiveness and successfulness of the performance of Emeteclass on the given platform (In this case, Facebook) and reflect the company's goals. The author examined carefully and came up with **four main KPIs: Page Like (PL), Engagement and Impression Rate (EIR), Followers, and Traffic data.**

Practically, Emeteclass could observe their page's "Like" and "Follower" statistical figures for an overview, even though it does not show the whole picture as engagement and reach. Accordingly, the firm could sink deeper into the issue by analyzing the EIR, which allows the company's expert to assess the "true" number of people who reach the company's posts (**Page Reach**) and actually interact with it via Facebook features such as Like, Comment, and Share button (**Page Engagement**); thus the "Like" and "Follower" numbers mean nothing with low PE.

Specifically, Page Engagement is specifically focused; Leander (2017) has published an article, stating that there are three main "benchmarks" ranging from 0% to 1% and any rates that are above 1% are a good rate. Concluding from the situation of Emeteclass, the company should aim for a range from 0.5% - 0.99%, which is an average rate and a good start for the company. However, Engagement expresses none of the promising future if it does not convince users to execute any kind of actions, such as visiting Emeteclass' website or newsletter registration (Klipfolio, 2017); therefore, the conversion rate and lead generation from Facebook are recommended for Emeteclass to track also.

Moreover, Page Impression, which is a display of the number of times that company's posts appear on users' newsfeed, is not as important as an actual reach of the post. Because the post could emerge on users' timeline, there is no guarantee that they would read it or even give a glance to it. (Schulze, 2015) Therefore, a reach evidence is an actual metric component that Emeteclass should monitor.

Lastly, Traffic data illustrates different sources that users retrieve from to gain an access to the company website. (Fabre, 2012) Accordingly, Emeteclass could employ this measurement to study the percentage of sources coming from Facebook so that they could adjust the effectiveness of the content on the page.

5.2 LinkedIn

In this section, a tactical strategy would be sketched out for Emeteclass to exploit the features of this social network; which emphasizes the Group's benefit of LinkedIn. Note that the main target of the company is businesses (B2B); therefore, the LinkedIn channel is superbly appropriate for their strategy in Finland market since LinkedIn is the most appropriate application for B2B contact. (Golden, 2016) Indeed, compared to other channels, LinkedIn (80.33%) has surpassed incomparably to Twitter (12.73%), Facebook (6.73%), and Google plus (0.21%) in terms of B2B leads (Knyszewski, 2015). Likewise, Chaudhary (2017) publicized a brief report stating that 79% of B2B experts choose LinkedIn as the most effective channels; while 94% of marketers adopt LinkedIn to allocate their content.

Similar to Facebook, Emeteclass could update daily posts regarding various topics in order to make company's page visible to viewers. Additionally, there are tools that could assist the company on the issue of content update; for instances, Jog suggests that DrumUp, which is a "social media management tool" could search for content relevant to Emeteclass' industry and simultaneously automatically schedule posts for the company on the weekly basis.

Furthermore, the hashtag has been officially supported on the LinkedIn platform again. Specifically, from the end of 2016 henceforth, the hashtag is "tappable" and it actually allows users to gain access to other posts that contain the same hashtag. (Hutchinson, 2016) Besides, it is undeniable that hashtag could bring various professional benefits to the businesses, from accelerating the search process to easing the navigation's method; in addition to growing connection base (fans and followers), it also increases engagement rate for the company page. (Parachuk, 2017) Therefore, hashtag could be integrated into Emeteclass strategy; specifically, hashtag distinguishes Emeteclass' photos, videos, images, and blogs, etc. from others, which could help followers and users to locate them easier. Furthermore, hashtag is undoubtedly a good method to communicate premium offers, special events, discounts, quizzes, etc. to those concerned. Due to that reasons, Emeteclass could use hashtag as a vehicle to reach customers efficiently; for example, #T1FC, #Emeteclass, #HelFun.

Besides, Emeteclass' employees could also play a big role in the strategy of the company; by actively engaging with each other and with the company on LinkedIn. Eventually, they would gain more attention to the company's page and that could generate more visitors to the site. What's more, Emeteclass could practically insert a follow button on their

websites as well as their Facebook page so that customers could get access to their LinkedIn pages from other sites.

Most importantly, the **Group's feature** of LinkedIn is the focal point of the plan. Emeteclass could create a forum or a discussion mansion for their employees, customers, and followers to exchange views regarding topics that related to company's field. Moreover, a group is also a platform for customers to raise their opinions and recommendations; and it is an opportunity for the company to listen to their customers and reflect their services. Nevertheless, Emeteclass ought to participate and take initiative to open a discussion in order to maximize this method.

Apart from establishing a new group, Emeteclass could seek for an existing one that is relevant to their field and industry. For example, Nordic countries, Scandinavian Networking Scandinavia Group with nearly 19,000 members, Finnish Hi-tech Start-up Community with nearly 14,000 members, etc. By applying this approach, Emeteclass could identify problems that people usually concern with and could approach them with applicable solutions that company can provide; not to mention that company could also publish their own content in the group, so they could get more exposure to members.

Overall, inspired by Rynne – an Associate Content Marketing Manager, LinkedIn Marketing Solutions – writer would establish a **timetable/ schedule** for exploiting all aspects of LinkedIn, Table 6 illustrates just that.

TABLE 6. Plan for publishing on LinkedIn

Platform	Content	Target	Measurement	Actions
Emeteclass' page	Team-building, Project management updates/news/articles, company's own upcoming events and services	Brand awareness, Lead generation, Service inquiries, and event registration	Page followers, Post clicks, Post likes, Engagements, Inquiries and event registrations	Post 2-3 times per day, interact with customers, answers inquiries and alternate the appearance of the page every 3 months
SlideShare	Webinars	Brand awareness, Inquiries, and Lead generation	Views and Engagements	Refresh weekly topic of Webinars.
Group and Answer	Questions and Answers, Solutions provision	Brand awareness and Lead generation (possibly)	Engagements, Group members, Number of company's profile/page view and new connections	Create own Emeteclass group or actively seek for and participate in other related groups, Promote Group on social media, and inquire for opinions and suggestions

5.3 WhatsApp and Blogger

Before digging deeper into issues, writer would identify 3 main functions of WhatsApp: One-to-one conversation, Broadcast lists (send a message to all contacts in the list and the one who has the number of the company will receive the message), and Group chat (allow company to exchange conversations with maximum 256 people at once). According to that, this study would suggest that Emeteclass utilize **WhatsApp** as an “**added-value**” and “**after-service**” channel. Specifically, Emeteclass could publish their number (managed by Customer Service department) on their websites, Facebook pages and LinkedIn pages for an easiness to access for customers – this would create intimate feelings for customers because WhatsApp is meant for personal contact. Then once Emeteclass has customers’ list of numbers in their archive, they could follow the two following suggestions:

- **Provide free interesting content daily:** Emeteclass could create a group, naming creative and innovation lab – for instances – and invite all of their customers to the group, and then the company could start sharing useful tips, facts, or even their blogs in order to educate their customers and simultaneously stimulate customers’ inquiries for their services (Added-value aspect).
- **Customer Service:** WhatsApp would be the main channel/ platform for the company to assist customers consistently. For example, customers can use this messaging app to ask questions regarding the related industry, inquiry for information and price, or ask for the problems and concerns after they have used the service from the company.

Regarding blogging method, this research would recommend Emeteclass to use **Blogger** – a free-to-use app owned by a giant Google. In details, additional to the daily post from Facebook and LinkedIn, the company could also share their in-depth knowledge of the industry from the blog they create from Blogger to Facebook and LinkedIn in case viewers and customers want to access the full version of the article since the blog version is more professional and organized. Moreover, by applying this method, the company could bring customers from social networks to the blog environment, in which they could contribute 80% of their blog content for specialized knowledge and information with the remaining 20% for their self-promotion – meaning their project management and team-building services. Conversely, promoting company’s blog could also bring bloggers to the company’s social network sites, which is the main aim of the company as well. Figure 11 would demonstrate clearly the intentional use of WhatsApp and Blogger for the project.

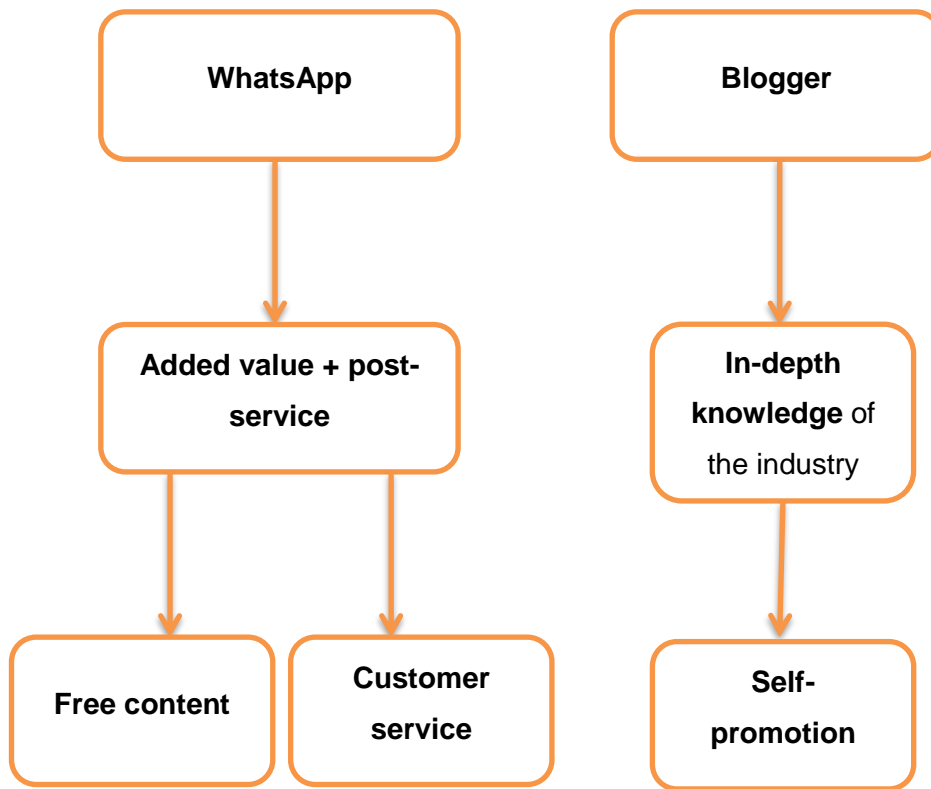


FIGURE 11. WhatsApp and Blogger strategy for Emeteclass

6 CONCLUSIONS AND SELF-REFLECTION

The world today is different than the one we know a decade ago. Social platform with the aid of internet has taken over the world of technology and evolved to an extent that never has any phenomena possessed in the history. People create relationships and interact with others through social networks, news are being released constantly on a daily basis via websites, and even politics make a way to influence people with all ages in the virtual community; all of the aforementioned facts show the incredible effect on the society of social media. With all that claims, business world, specifically marketing art has witnessed changes in its heart ever since. (Benioff, 2012)

Social media proved to all critics that it has become an essential tool for commercial purposes; accessible social media instruments would provide businesses information and data regarding their targets and the methods to reach them, which they are primarily free of charge. Specifically, the social platform supports companies in gaining insights of potential customers as well as information intelligence regarding their competitors, enhancing the brand value, generating progressively better conversion rate, and especially offering users great experiments and educations. Besides, as it ought to do, social media accelerates the act of sharing contents of users and facilitates firms to build relationships with their customers (high responsiveness), which could result in more traffic, better ranking and superior brand image. (Copp, 2016)

All in all, this study generalized all the related concepts of social media marketing, summarized them, then selected and applied appropriate ones to Emeteclass strategy. Precisely, this research studied about the true self of social media, including different types of social media platforms with distinctive functions and advantages that could be applied to the different type of businesses. Furthermore, this research also clarified the theory of social media marketing as well as its tools with carefully chosen approaches, namely social network (Facebook and LinkedIn), blog (Blogger), and message app (WhatsApp). Besides, content marketing which is a centerpiece and the soul of the strategy was also integrated into the plan of this thesis. This dissertation also analyzed the current situation of social media in Europe generally and of Emeteclass in specific.

Most importantly, this study suggested various ways to combine great content with social media marketing and the method to exploit those mentioned vehicles above. Explicitly, this research analyzed both the internal and external environment of the company via SWOT metric and accordingly recommend the target segmentation, which is businesses (B2B) for Emeteclass. Furthermore, this research proposed a strategy in which

Emeteclass could utilize four main platforms, including Facebook, LinkedIn, WhatsApp, and Blogger; for which this proposition recommend the timetable of publishing and several applicable Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) in order to evaluate the performance and assess the effectiveness of the strategy.

6.1 Further research

This research has summarized and generated several topics and ideas respectively regarding social media, and how it could be utilized in the business environment – especially for Emeteclass. Nevertheless, internet and social media are the ever-changing phenomena and thus further research for the purpose of expanding to Finland for Emeteclass are well needed. Overall, for the future researcher, further studies could aim at **the optimization of mobile use** and **commercial opportunity** of social media platform for Emeteclass in Finland market.

As mentioned before in the project scope and delimitations section (Chapter 1.2), the **mobile factor** is not acknowledged in this research; however, as smartphones are increasingly becoming popular, Emeteclass or any researchers who would work on this subject might need to pay a great deal of attention in the future. The world has shifted from the then-desktop-first approach to the current mobile-first path, meaning that the content and User Interface (UI) should be prioritized for the mobile environment. Accordingly, companies should attract more traffics and retain them by designing approachable web design or even design the separate landing page (company website) for the mobile version. Furthermore, content's optimization for social media channels is not enough, the speed of page's access also contributes a vital role as users are always looking for quick answers in the mobile environment; there are several tools that could aid businesses in this issue. For example, PageSpeed Insights tool from Google could actually monitor the speed of the page and allow firms to increase the speed based on its recommendations. All of the aforementioned components will produce an astonishing user experience. (Miller, 2016)

Moreover, throughout this dissertation, the project aims at customer's acquisition as well as retention via great contents and customer service; hence the tremendous opportunity for **commercial purposes** remains in the future. Social media is a great means for companies to do a market research in order to explore users' needs and communicate accordingly to generate sales. By other words, with the freedom to search for and reach to any brands in the world from customers, firms could exploit that mechanism to **encourage sales** by offering the right products and services at the right time based on

potential customers' social media habits. (Smith, 2016) For example, firms could accommodate an easier interface on the social platform to ease the process of purchase (Facebook buy button, etc.). (Orendorff, 2016)

What's more, the validity which is demonstrated as the sincerity or solidity of the research, and the reliability which refers to the quality of assessment used to assemble data from the sample would also be discussed. (Blumberg et al., 2005) The theories of marketing in general and social media specifically, with facts and official data, are well selected accordingly for the purpose of this dissertation based on official sites, dictionaries, traditional magazines and newspapers, business e-article and books. Likewise, the suggestions and recommendations from the author also consulted from the aforementioned sources. Lastly, the questions asked in the interview with Mirla Ferreira were tailored specifically for this dissertation and solely used for the support of this project.

6.2 Self-reflection

To begin with, the project came up when the writer had a chance to work with Mrs. Ferreira at Emeteclass. Before the period of internship, writer realized that the services provided by Emeteclass are indeed interesting and helpful for businesses; in addition, there are lots of opportunities for the company to grow since the industry situation in Finland is still in the bubble of water; therefore, writer decided to sketch out a hypothesis and plans to bring Emeteclass to Finland.

Fortunately, this topic happened to assist writer on the academic journey due to writer passion and interest for marketing (especially social media and content) and service industry. During the "thesis adventure", the writer had opportunities to learn new academic knowledge regarding social media, Team-building services, etc. and at the same time life's experience from Mirla – writer's supervisor and mentor during the period of internship. In details, the writer got to learn lots of new knowledge and to access to information that is surprisingly amazing and unbelievable. Furthermore, thanks to the thesis, the writer could understand truly the form of social media. Formerly, writer was and still are present on several platforms such as Facebook, LinkedIn, and Instagram but never comprehend all the functions of them; however, after making countless research and reading lots of articles, writer realized some facets of social media that could boost the performance of companies

Moreover, after having finished the project, the writer feels utterly confident and proud – the feelings that writer has never had before despite the fact that writer has accomplished

several achievements beforehand – because not only did writer make use of knowledge from school, the writer also learned to adapt and alternate the situation based on what writer had. For instances, the writer had to surpass the situation, in which writer had lack of sources for the purpose of research and consulting, by going to another library from another city or actively searching on the internet, which was what author did. Furthermore, Independent and Decision-making are the two soft skills that thesis process has taught writer; during the process of writing the thesis, the writer also had to distribute time and effort for internship/ work and writer is thankful for the pressure because the writer could feel maturity grow inside of writer.

On the whole, writer prepared the plan and strategy for Emeteclass and the company could perceive it as a reference book or a guideline/ suggestion for future expansion. Even though writer adores the process of the thesis and thinks of it as an extra “course”, the writer feels nothing as a burden. Conversely, writer experienced the process as useful and informative sessions of life; once writer accomplished the outcome – the complete draft of the project, author would more than happy to move on and discover other aspects of life, since our life could be considered as a long novel – one chapter closed; another will open and wait for us.

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APPENDIX ONE

Interview questions for Mrs. Mirla Ferreira

Q1: Can you introduce yourself briefly?

I am a Certified Project Management Professional (PMP) by the PMI; I also have a Master in Business Administration, and I am a Computer Engineer. I have extensive experience in management and consultancy to multinational companies in a wide variety of industries including information technology, transportation, banking, food and industrial products in both manufacturing and service sectors. I'm a dedicated professional with a high ability to take initiative applying educational background, work and life to think beyond my own areas of expertise.

Q2: Can you introduce your company briefly?

We are a technology company with a mission: integrate people and processes, transforming the workplace through learning, technology, and good habits. In order to achieve our mission, and serve our clients, we created three business units: Software Factory, Training and Project Management Implementation.

- Software Factory: We offer a full-cycle custom software development, from requirements elicitation to product design and development, quality assurance testing and deployment. We follow an offshore development team paradigm while adapting to customer's own working standards.
- Training: We teach, in an integrated way, international methodologies of Innovation, Strategic Management, Project Management and Sustainability of Project Management. Using Gamification and Team Building techniques, participants apply knowledge to real projects.
- Project Management Implementation: We implement a consistent process in companies using best practices of Project Management. Project management and PMO practices improve business performance.

Q3: From the introduction of the company, can you list some of your customer target (company's segmentation) and who regularly use your service?

- Software Factory: We are building tech solutions for construction industry and hospitality.
- Training: Universities Companies and Individuals interesting in training with a high practical component.
- Project Management Implementation: SMEs who want to organize their company using a software platform that helps them implement project management best practices within the organization.

Q4: Which services your customers choose the most?

In order: Software Factory, Training, Project Management Implementation.

Q5: Regarding Social Media, which channels of Social Media have your company established?

Our company has launched and used Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter, and Instagram so far.

Q6: In that selected channels, which channels you spend most of the time to post and interact with followers?

In order: Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter, and Instagram.

Q7: What kind of content do you usually post?

We usually update our Facebook page and LinkedIn page topics about Project Management Blog (practices and theory also), Software Factory Blog, Training Events, Culture & Company life, Emeteclass Book Club, Things about our culture and company life.

Q8: What type of content do your customers react the most?

Our followers and fans usually interact with us in the blog of Culture & Company Life when we post it on social network sites.

