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# Social media marketing and its influence on international entrepreneurship

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# Social Media Marketing and its influence on International Entrepreneurship

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**A research report submitted to the Faculty of Commerce, Law and Management, University of the Witwatersrand, in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Management (Entrepreneurs and New Ventures)**

**Johannesburg, 2014 / 2015**

# ABSTRACT

As technology becomes more advanced, large corporate companies have used the social media as their advertising platform. However there is little research done on international entrepreneurs in using social media to promote their business venture across national borders. This research paper examines international entrepreneurs business ventures through social media and looks at how social media users view the social media network.

A survey was used to measure the trust between social media users and the social media brand community, while an interview was conducted on international entrepreneurs. It was found that the brand communities serve as a marketing entry platform firstly for new users but more importantly it serves as a communication platform between the organisation and consumer. However, international entrepreneurs have not been able to grasp the social media concept, at times, delayed announcement on their new product launch. Many international entrepreneurs lack the social media abilities, therefore are constantly not being able to fully utilise social media as a marketing and advertising platform.

# DECLARATION

I, _Wen Hup Kin ____, declare that this research report is my own work except as indicated in the references and acknowledgements. It is submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Business Administration in the University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg. It has not been submitted before for any degree or examination in this or any other university.

---

Signed at …Johannesburg……

On the ……31…….. day of ……March…… 2015…..

# ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

This research paper has given me new insights to my understanding of the workings and the complexity of the social media network. I would like to take this opportunity to thank the following people for their encouragement and assistance during this challenging process:

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Lastly, I would like to thank all my friends and fellow students for their support.

**“We lived on farms, then we lived in cities, and now we’re going to live on the Internet”**

**-Sean Parker in “The Social Network” (2010), a David Fincher film**

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# CHAPTER 1.INTRODUCTION

## 1.1 Purpose of the study

The purpose of this research is to investigate how social media marketing influences international entrepreneurs in their international business venture

## 1.2 Context of the study

With the advancement of information and technology, it has been identified as enablers of international entrepreneurs (Reuber & Fischer, 2011) which are feasible for the resource constrained firm as the quality and speed of communication and transaction increase, their expenses decrease.

With the Internet boom, many large corporate companies have utilized this platform to create their own home page, allowing visitors to browse through their webpage and learn more about the company. Social media has already grown rapidly across the globe and many companies have used it either as an alternative or as a complementary advertising strategy to traditional advertising (Arora, Arora, & Palvia, 2014).

The most important tool for international business venture is the usage of the Internet (Glavas & Matthews, 2014; Loane, McNaughton, & Bell, 2004; Loane, 2006; Matthews & Healy, 2007; Mostafa, Wheeler & Jones, 2006; Peterson, Welch, & Leisch, 2002), as the Internet allows the international firm to improve the efficiency of international market transaction (Gabrielsson & Kirpalania, 2004; Glavas & Matthews, 2014; Loane et al., 2004; Matthews & Healy, 2008; Prasad, Ramamurthy & Naidu, 2001).

Apart from the international firm using the Internet for international market transaction, the usage of the Internet also allows the international firm to strengthen their international business relationship while improving the

collection and exchange of information that is related to the foreign market or environment (Glavas & Matthews, 2014; Peterson et al., 2002)

Brand communities can be either physical or virtual, which allows people to admire a certain brand (McAlexander, Schouten & Koenig, 2002; Muniz & O'Guinn, 2001).

### The social network

Social networking originates from sociology (Michaelidou *et al*., 2011) and within the business context refers to two or more connected business relationships on which there is an exchange between business partners (Anderson, Hokansson & Johanson, 1994; Pitt, Van der Merwe, Berthon, Sakehi-Sangari & Caruana, 2006). Scott, Cooper and Baggio (2007) defined a network as a connection between as either informed or formal and cooperative or competitive relationship. While Wasserman and Faust (1994) added that a network is based on the ties between individuals, groups of people, organizational departments or corporations.

The value of the network lies in the connection to access resources (Jarillo, 1989), underlying trust, reciprocity and in the information channel itself, which is also referred to as "Social Capital" (Coleman, 1988). A variety of network types are used by the entrepreneurs such as the social network, reputational networks, cooperation networks, marketing networks and knowledge innovation and technology network (Lechner, Dowling & Welpo, 2008; Strobl & Peters, 2013).

To gain access to resources, it will depend on the strength of the network ties (Anderson & Jack, 2002; Jack, 2005, Lai, Lin & Leung, 1998; Larsen, 1992) in which Granovetter (1983), Kim & Aldrich (2005) added that it is determined by the number of contact, emotional intensity, trust and reciprocity of a relationship whereas weak ties are referred to as bridging ties (Jenssen & Greve, 2002). Stronger ties allow the entrepreneur to face uncertainty and it gives them the

flexibility to change (Jack, 2005; Jack & Anderson, 2002; Krackhardt, 1992). These strong ties provide financial support and resources whereas weak ties give access to information (Jenssen & Koenig, 2002).

## Online Social Network (OSN) and Social media

Facebook, LinkedIn or Google+ are commonly used, and are referred to as Multiple Online Social Networks (OSN), which they allow people to be connected across the world (Heidemann *et al,* 2012). Therefore social media is a web browser or a mobile based application which will allow users to be able to customize, create, edit, access and link to content and/ or to other individuals. These will include blogs, wiki, RSS feeds, electronic social networks, content aggregator (TripAdvisor) and location based applications (e.g. foursquare) (Cabiddu, De Carlo, & Piccoli, 2014). Mangold and Faulds (2009) found that social media also known as “user-generated communication” has changed how companies communicated with its customers and that it’s the customers who are now controlling the information thus proliferation of social media has changed how the organization communicates with the consumer thus pursuing a variety of strategies to engage with the consumer (Dholakia & Durham, 2010)

The use of OSN was intended to be used for private use (Bughin & Manyika, 2007). A study done by Cone (2008) found that 93% of social media users believed that companies should use social media and that 85% believed that companies should use social media to communicate with its customers. Many companies have included direct links from their WebPages to their social media sites, the use of these tools is to promote their brands as well as support the creation of brand communities (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010; Michaelidou, Siamagka & Christodoulides, 2011).

Mangold and Faulds (2009) found that social media provides online information that is created and used for educational purposes about issues including

products and brands while Van Den Bulte and Wuyts (2007) added that it has the potential to achieve the brand objective.

A social network site which consists of a variety of Internet media is commonly known as social media in which it allows users to build a user profile within the bounded system, allows users to share information with whom they share a connection (Taylor, Lewin & Strutton, 2011) and it allows users to browse other users connection lists (Boyd & Ellison, 2008).

## 1.3 Problem statement

### 1.3.1 *Main problem*

Past researchers (Cavusgil, 1984; Frishammar & Andersson, 2010; Hutchinson, Quinn, & Alexander, 2006, Moreno & Casillas, 2008; Lu & Beamish, 2001; Qureshil, Kamal, & Wolcott, 2009) have recognised the importance of international entrepreneurs especially when they internationalise their firm. There has been a limited number of researches done on international entrepreneurs (Aspelund & Moen, 2004; Loane et al., 2004,; Loane 2006; Mostafa et al., 2006; Reuber & Fisher, 2011), where they create an online presence on the Internet, despite its importance in shaping online interaction (Mislove, Marcon, Gummadi, Drushchel, & Bhattacharjee, 2007) brand support (Christodoulides, 2009) and their Internet capabilities (Glavas, & Mathews; 2014). However, there is little research done on the effect of social media marketing and its influence it has on international entrepreneurs.

There is a lack of study with regards to social media and the impact it has on international entrepreneurial business ventures. According to Reuber & Fischer (2011), there are three fields that need to be examined such as online reputation, online branding community and online technical capabilities in order for the international entrepreneur to be successful in launching their business on the World Wide Web.

Jung, Kim and Kim (2014) found that social and informational benefits had a positive impact on attitude which influenced the consumers to revisit the brand websites as well brand trust. However the study was solely focused on the Nike brand, more empirical research will need to be done with different types of online brands. Another research project (Glavas and Mathews, 2014) focused on the tourism industry and it showed that the lack of understanding of social media functionalities had an effect on the firm's business

Thus, the main problem is to understand factors that will affect international entrepreneur's international business venture through the social media.

### 1.3.2 *Research questions and Hypothesis*

The sub- problems are

Sub- problem 1: Understanding the factors such as emotional and branding messages that international entrepreneurs use when posting onto social media.

Sub- problem 2: Determine if the information posted on social media by the international entrepreneur is beneficial for the consumer.

Sub- problem 3: Evaluate how consumers view social media information and the affect it has on the firm's brand.

## 1.4 Significance of the study

The purpose of this study is to understand how international entrepreneurs use social media to brand their firm and to investigate, from the consumer prospective, how much information they trust that is posted onto the social media network.

Past researchers (Mathews, & Healy, 2007; Mostafa et al., 2006; Reuber, & Fischer, 2011) have found that the link between the international entrepreneurs

characteristics, Internet capabilities as well as the process and outcomes of the organisation is still uncertain, therefore the aim of the study is to fill the knowledge gap between social media marketing and the influence it has on international entrepreneurs business ventures.

Glavas & Matthews (2014) added that past researchers (Davis, Harveston & Nicovich, 2000; Loane & Bell, 2006; Loane et al., 2004; Loane, 2006; Mostafa et al., 2006) found that the Internet acts as a catalyst in driving Internet generated internationalization. They also added that past research have solely showed the positive impact on the firm using the Internet but have neglected the role of international entrepreneurs in exploiting Internet capabilities for their international business venture (Glavas & Matthews, 2014).

There have been a significant small number of studies done by researchers (Aspeland & Moen, 2004; Loane et al., 2004; Laone, 2006; Mostafa et al., 2006; Reuber & Fischer, 2011) but to date, less attention has been paid to understanding the relationship between international entrepreneur's characteristics and Internet capabilities and outcomes for international business ventures (Glavas & Matthews, 2014).

This research paper also attempts to address the knowledge gap by identifying the international entrepreneur's characteristics and Internet capabilities and relating it to the international business process of the organisation.

This research study has both theoretical and practical implications for current and potential international entrepreneurs by adding further knowledge of the usage of social media in this field. It will, particularly, provide key information about the about the usage of social media as a marketing tool to create brand awareness, brand community, product information to increase revenue in international business ventures.

## 1.5 Definition of terms

**Internet traffic:** The transfer of data over the Internet

**Nodes:** A node in this research study refers to the individual actors within the social media network

**Ties:** This represents relationships between the individuals, which includes friendship, kinship, organisational positions as well as sexual relationship.

**Online user:** A person who uses the Internet

**Small to medium sized enterprise (SME):** In this research study, a small to medium enterprise consist of between 50-250 employees, with an annual turnover of approximately R300 million.

Web page: A web document that is displayed on the Internet and contains only a small percentage of all the words ever used on in the web.

Web site: A web page that is published on a certain domain and is accessible to the public

## 1.6 Assumptions

The following assumptions are based on the research study

- All social media respondents are aware of international entrepreneur's business that is on the Online Social Network.
- All social media users and international entrepreneurs are familiar with various types of Online Social Network.
- This study aims to look at a sample population of current international entrepreneur's representation as well as sample population of social media users representation.

- The respondents of social media users are important for this research. Their responses impact the research, negatively or positively.
- Fears that the data collected from respondents will be used for competitive purposes might have an influence on the respondents' attitude during the interview as well as to the online questionnaire.
- The research instrument used is an online questionnaire and the data collected with this technique is a true reflection of the reality.
- The social media user and current international entrepreneurs have an interest in the result of the survey and it is assumed that that the existing relationship would have a good response rate.
- It is assumed that the current international entrepreneurs have sufficient knowledge of the existing online social network site.
- Time and costs would be a constraint in order to finalize the research study within the required time frame.
- Social media users have sufficient knowledge of English in order to complete the online questionnaires.
- Current international entrepreneurs have sufficient knowledge of English to understand English dialects during the interview.

# CHAPTER 2.LITERATURE REVIEW

## 2.1 Introduction

The firm can optimize its international business process when it is internationally market-oriented and entrepreneurial (Bhuian, Menguc, Bell, 2005). Li and Ye (1999) also highlighted that using the Internet as a strategic resource allows international entrepreneurs to operate their internationalised firm more efficiency. With the advancement and innovation of technology, it has changed the nature of social networks; traditional social networks consist of personal human interaction (Kimball & Rheingold, 2000), while contemporary social networks are mediated by computers (Michaelidou *et al*., 2011) and the Internet. The advantage of online social networks is that the various time zones and geographical locations is less significant as members are able to provide support, information and solutions from different locations across the world within a short period of time (Lea, Wu, Maguluru & Nichols, 2006).

Reuber and Fischer (2011) developed a conceptual model of organizational resources that relate to the firm's successful pursuit of international opportunities such as using Internet capabilities to successfully pursue international market opportunities. The model was derived from an extensive literature review which included a variety of fields such as Entrepreneurship, International Business, Management, Management Information System and Marketing.

Proposition 1 (P1): The online visibility of a firm is positively related to the firms' pursuit of international opportunities when products or services are placed on the Internet.

Proposition 2 (P2): The relationship between the valence, volume and consistency of its online reputational signals and the firm's pursuit of

international opportunities, when products or services are placed on the Internet.

Proposition 3 (P3): The back end integration of the firms' online technology is positively related to the firms' pursuit of international opportunities when products or services are placed on the Internet.

Proposition 4 (P4): A firms' website customization capabilities are positively related to the firms' pursuit of international opportunities when products or services are placed on the Internet.

Proposition 5 (P5): The technological opportunism of a firm is positively related to the firms' pursuit of international opportunities when products or services are placed on the Internet.

Proposition 6 (P6): The level of engagement of a firm's online brand community is positively related to the firm's pursuit of international opportunities when products or services are placed on the Internet.

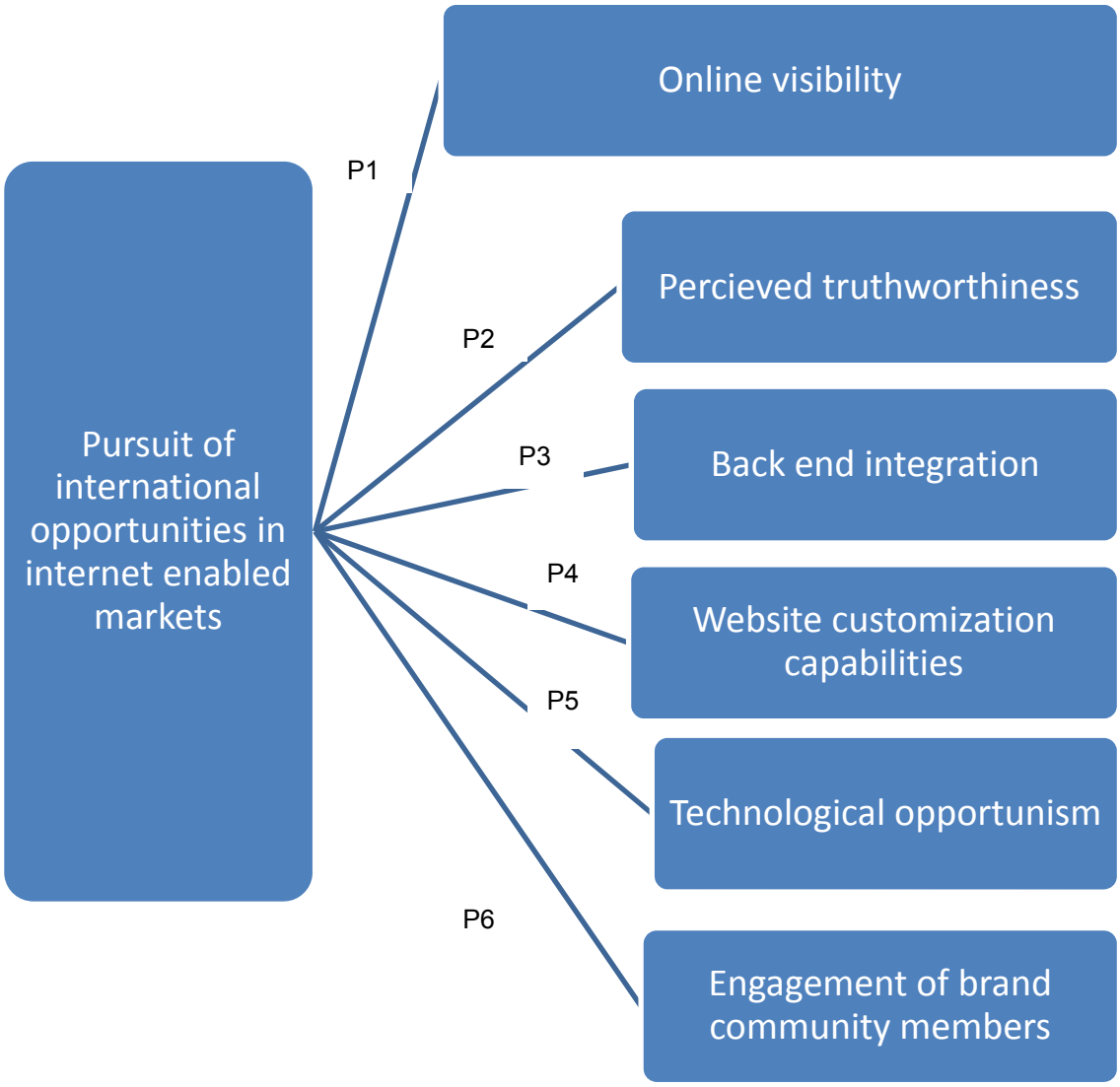



Figure 1: Organizations pursuit of international opportunities in an Internet enabled market (Reuber & Fischer., 2011)

An international entrepreneur needs three resources to successfully pursue international opportunities, namely: Online reputation, Online technological capabilities and Online brand community. A market research report (Breslauer & Smith, 2009; E-marketer, 2010) has found that corporate companies utilize social network sites to build direct relationships with customers, increase the

number of visitors to their website, identification of new business opportunities, and collecting feedback from customers as well as building their brands.

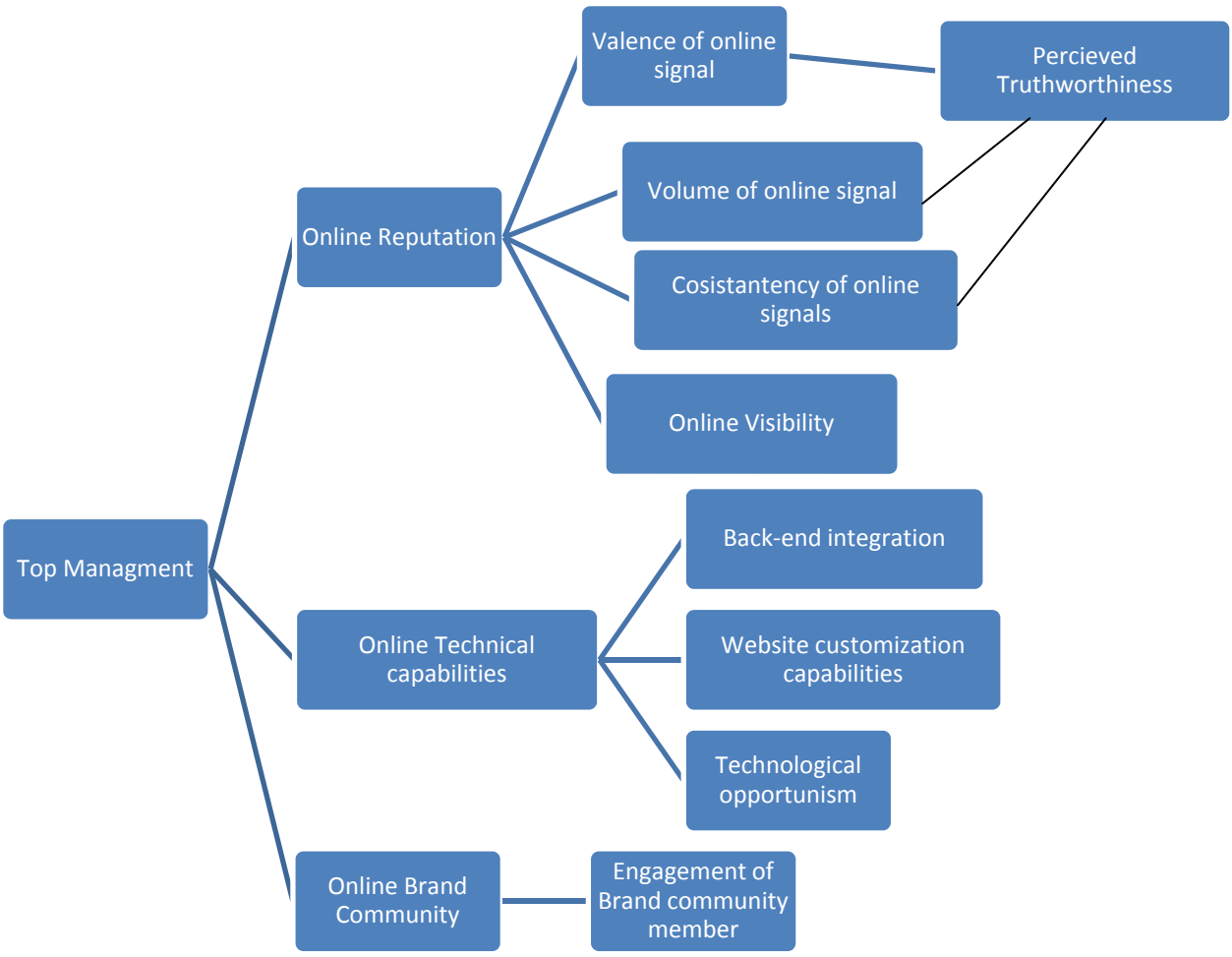



Figure 2: Organizations pursuit of international opportunities in an Internet enabled market (Reuber. & Fischer, 2011)

Previous researchers (Roxane et al., 2012; Gupta, Armstrong & Clayton, 2011) found that Facebook has 800 million users worldwide. Users spend at least over 1 trillion minutes per month on the web page whereas more than 2.5 million websites have integrated with Facebook (as of July 2011). Twitter has seen a record of more than 225 million users in which 34% are used by marketers and

20% have led to companies closing deals. LinkedIn has 135 million users (as of November 2011), up from approximately 85 million in late 2010, some of whom there are Executives from every company that has been featured in the Fortune 500. Youtube has over 490 million unique visitors per month (as of February 2011), and it generates 92 billion page views; users spend a total of 2.9 billion hours per month.

The McKinesey report mentioned that social technologies (Bughin, Byers, & Chui, 2011) showed that 72% of companies have implemented at least one social media technology such as social network sites, video sharing, blogs and microblogging.

Social media provides a platform for consumers to interact with the company, i.e. creating two-way communication as well as developing a relationship with its customers (Enders, Hungenberg, Denker & Mauch, 2008; Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010). Thus, it may create trust through connection with customers. It also plays a vital role in the transmission of information in which social media networks are not based on finance but rather an accumulation of “reputational capital” (Ghosh, 1998). In order to understand social media, several indicators are used.

Proposition 1 (P1): The use of technology in social media is an indicator of measuring social media success.

Proposition 2 (P2): Building trust and relationships with consumers is an indicator of social media success.

Proposition 3 (P3): Return on Investment in the social media is an indicator of social media success.

Proposition 4 (P4): Protecting consumers’ privacy is an ethics indicator of measuring social media success.

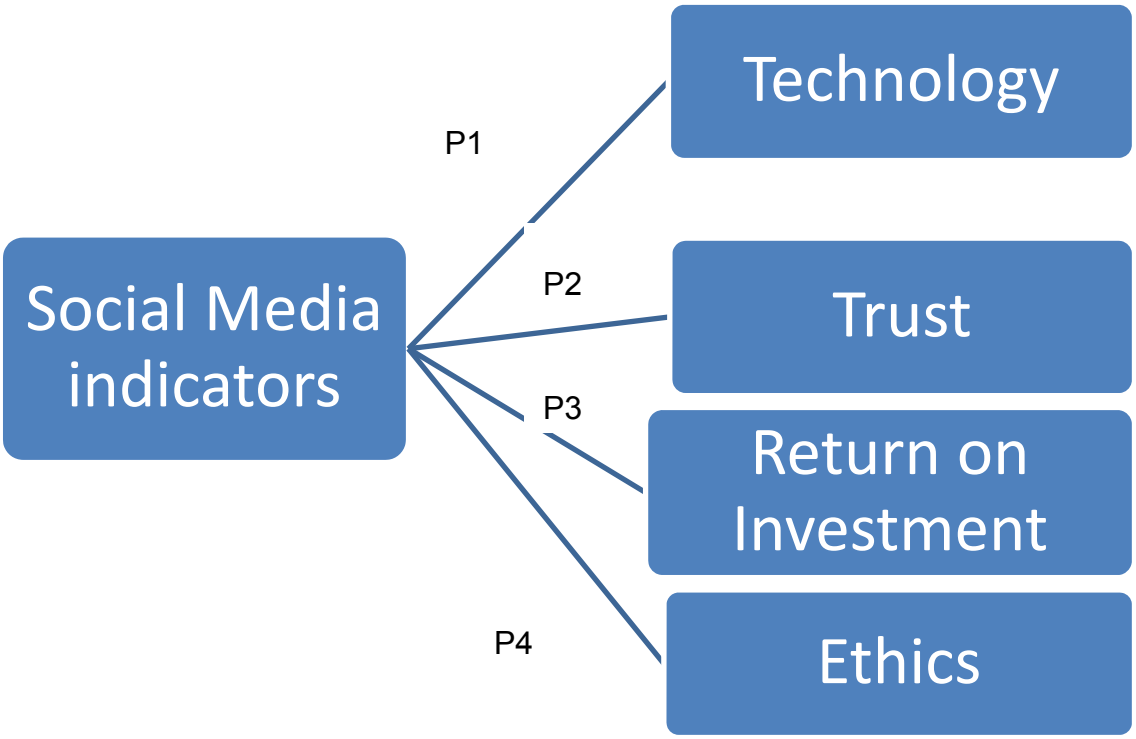



Figure 3: Social media building blocks (Ghosh, 1998)

Social media has utilized mobile and web technologies to create a platform that will allow individuals and communities/social media groups to share and create, discuss, and modify user generated content which would essentially be a more interactive site (Chiu, Hsu, & Wang, 2006; Kietmann, Hermkens, McCarthy, & Silvestre, 2011; Kirtiş& Karahan, 2011).

There is a lack of understanding on how the social media platform functions where many corporate or large organization managers (Kaplan and Haenlein, 2010) have been reluctant or at times, unable to create a social media communication strategy thus they regularly miss or ignore opportunities and threats communicated by their consumers, (Berthon, Pitt, McCarthy, & Kates, 2007; Kietzmann *et al*, 2011) decreasing their organization's growth opportunity.

In order to fill in the knowledge gap, Kietmann *et al.* (2011) formulated a honeycomb framework,that consisted of seven functional building blocks for the

social media platform. The functional building blocks include Groups, Reputation, Relationships, Presence, Sharing, Conversation and Identity (Figure 4 and 5)

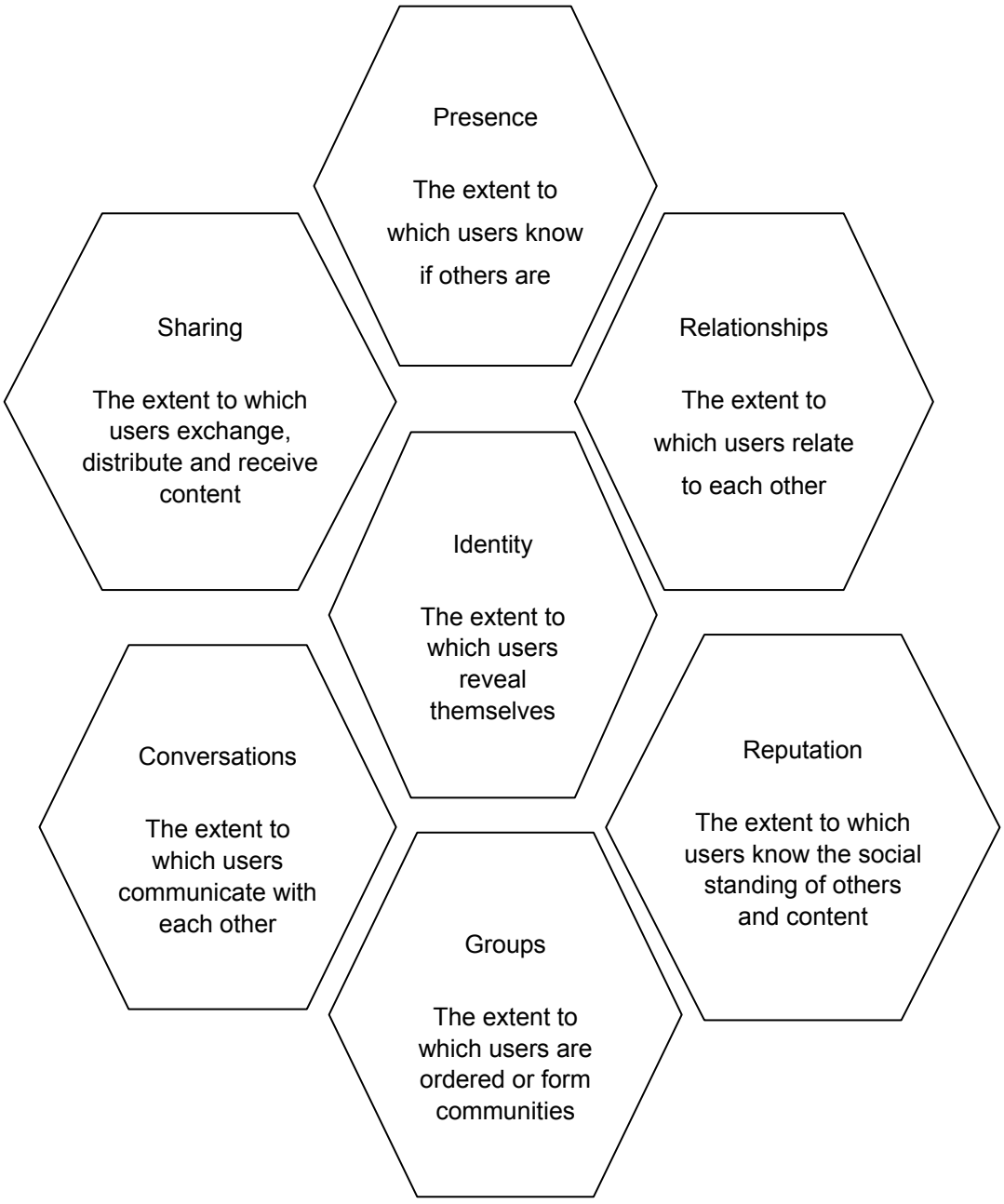



Figure 4: Social Media Functionality (Kietzmann et al., 2011)

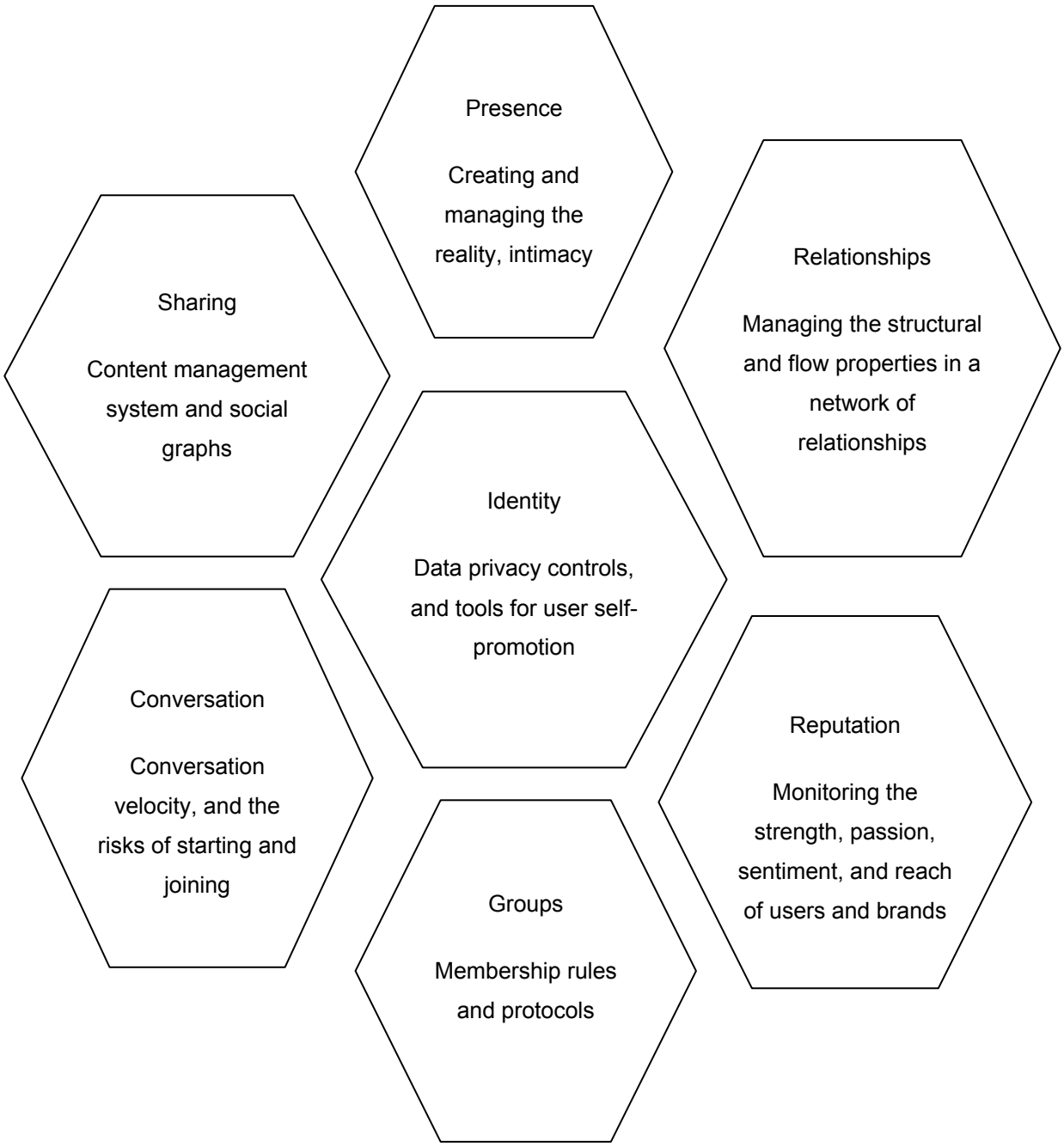



Figure 5: Implications of the functionality (Kietzmann et al., 2011)

Researchers (Lu and Yang, 2011; Weiss *et al*., 2008) also found that when there are some informational uncertainities, social media users tend to use the social media to reduce the uncertainity by satisfing their informational needs.

There is a significant amount of literature that has identified the diferent types of social media (Zűlch, Weber & Muntermann, 2014) that differ in nature as well as functionalities, such types include blogs, microblogs, social network sites, message boards, colloborative projects, virtual social worlds and virtual game worlds. Kaplan and Haenlein (2010) (Table 1) proposed the need for a classification of different social media types based on media richness and social presence wheras Kietzmann *et al*. (2011) identified the different functionality (eg. Identity, conversations, sharing, presence, relationships, reputation, and groups) of social media platforms while Zűlch *et al*. (2014) focused on the social media types that are responsible for generating user content such as microblogs, social network sites and message boards (Boyd and Ellison, 2007; Schmidt, 2007; Stiaglitz and Dang-Xuan, 2013; Im and Chee, 2006).

Table 1: Classification of Social Media by Social presence/media richness and self-presentation/self-disclosure (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010)

| | | Social Presence/ Media richness | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Low | Medium | High |
| Self-Presentation/ Self disclosure | High | Blogs | Social networking sites | Virtual social worlds |
| | Low | Colaborative | Content communities | Virtual game worlds |

*Social Media self-efficacy*

The OSN is a platform that allows people to create and distribute content across a variety of social media networks. With an influx of information being uploaded by the user (Nielson, 2012), a number of social media networks have put into place an online information filter to prevent certain types of information being posted on the network yet there is a substantial variance in the quality of the information being posted on the social media network (Agichtein, Castillo, Donato, Gionis & Mishne, 2008).

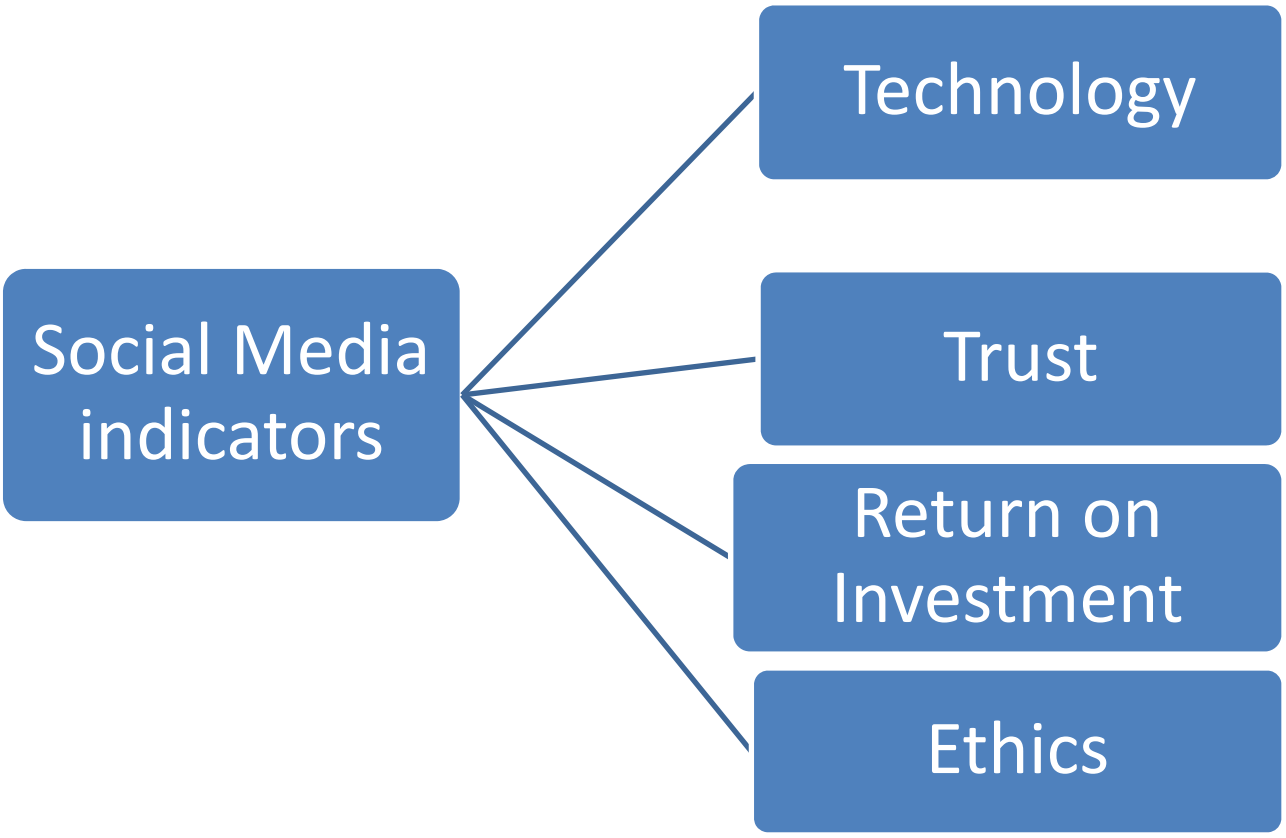



Figure 6: Social media indicators (Ghosh, 1998).

Cox, Burgess, Sellitto, & Buultjens (2009); Schmallegger & Carson (2008) and Xiang & Gretzel (2010) found that social media plays a crucial role in innovation in the tourism industry, not only did it allow the transfer of information between the consumer and company and affect potential tourists' experiences (Tussyadiah & Fesenmaier, 2009) but it also gave the industry the ability to spur further innovation (Hjalager, 2010).

*Social media advertising and marketing*

The uniqueness and popularity of the online social network among the social media users has resulted in a change in the marketing strategy (Hanna, Rohn, & Crittenden, 2011); a strategy aimed at gaining a deeper insight on consumer

behaviour from information acquisition to post purchase behaviour (Mangold and Faulds, 2009; Powers, Advincula, Austin, & Graiko, 2012)

Within marketing literature, an online brand is viewed as a product or service that meets certain customer needs through interaction in a computer-mediated environment such as the Internet (Hoffman and Novak, 1996, 2009). Marketing scholars fore fronted the emotive aspects of brand experience (Morgan-Thomas and Veloutsou, 2013) where the importance of brand personality or brand equity is stressed (Okazaki, 2006; Da Silva and Syed Alwi, 2008a, 2008b; Kwon and Lennon, 2009; Christodoulides, de Chernatomy, Furrer, Shiu, & Abimbola, 2006; Christodoulides and de Chernatomy, 2004).

Males and females tend to react to advertising in a very different manner (Darley and Smith, 1995); there is a difference in attitude towards social network marketing. Previous researchers (Schlosser et al., 1999, Sheehan, 1999; Weiser, 2000; Wolin and Korgaonkar, 2003) suggested that the difference in attitudes towards Internet use is due to behaviour; males tend to use the Internet for entertainment, leisure, and functional purposes whereas females tend to use the Internet for communication and interaction purposes (Weiser, 2000). Social network advertisements that consist of informative, quality of life and entertainment values tend to attract males more easily as opposed to their counterparts. Other results have also shown that peer influences as well as self brand congruity have a bigger influence over males.

Females tend to have a different attitude (Sheehan, 1999) towards online privacy, as they tend to be concerned about perceived invasion of privacy. However, males tend to alter their marketing-related attitudes and behaviour when setting their online privacy after perceiving a privacy threat. Therefore, privacy concerns within social network sites will be stronger from males than females, that is, females generally appear to have stronger attitudes related to invasiveness such as offensiveness, deceptiveness and annoying advertisements (Wolin and Korgaonkar, 2003).

*Branding communities*

The advancement of the Internet and technologies has changed the landscape of global branding (Morgan-Thomas, & Veloutsou, 2013). Online branding has grown in the last 15 years from obscurity to a powerhouse name with a market value attached to it. Examples include the search engine “Google”, which according to the Financial Times (2009) had an estimated $100,039 million.

According to Song, Zhang, Xu and Huang (2010), the key for driving Internet traffic into the company webpage is to have repeated interaction between the online user and the online brand. Therefore, it is critical for the online brand to maintain active engagement with the online user through repeated interaction (Bart, Shanker, Sultan, & Urban, 2005; Bridges and Forsheim, 2008; Christodoulides, 2009; Helm, 2007; Kollmann and Suckow, 2008; Morgan-Thomas and Veloutsou, 2013)

With the rise of the use of social media among consumers, it has been a lot easier for them to join the online brand community. People enjoy joining communities as they would like to obtain more information and (Porter *et al*, 2011), build productive relationships by interaction with other people in the community (Dholakia and Bagozzi, 2004; Hars and Ou, 2002; McKenna and Bargh, 1999; Nambisan and Baron, 2009) and have a feeling of reward through communal acts such as helping others with similar interest (Dholakia and Bagozzi, 2004; porter *et al*., 2011).

The concept of community has been researched in many different fields such as sociological, cultural as well as communication. However it has been commonly been applied to any group of people where the type of bond between them defines the community (Davis et al., 2014). A consumption community is formed where consumers have shared feelings as well as activities in the consumption of the common object (Friedman et al., 1992). Thus Muniz and O’Guinn (2001) defined a human consumption context as members of the community that are

non-geographically bonded but they share a common morality, consciousness, rituals and traditions (Cova, 1997). Therefore, consumers in brand communities are “psychically” connected (Bagozzi and Dholakia, 2002; Murray, 1991).

The nature of online social network sites is to allow like-minded consumers or people to gather into groups and sub-groups with a specific interest (Habibi et al., 2014; Mangold and Faulds, 2009). There are many groups within social media that allow brands, initiated by the brand manager or by consumer, to use its online platform.

Social media has aggressively changed their user interface platform to allow a stronger interaction between brands and their community (Nambisan & Watt, 2011). These interactions remove both the physical and temporal barriers (Davis et al., 2014) in order to increase engagement between the consumers.

Social media is changing the way marketers communicate to their consumers from a marketer led brand to consumer ownership and co-creation of meaning (Ostrom et al., 2010). Thus, social media is changing from a traditional marketing campaign to an online non-tangible marketing campaign by changing consumer behaviour, relationship as well as brand practice (Hennig-Thurau et al., 2010; Kaplan and Haenlein, 2010) which will have an impact on business (Sands et al., 2011; Corstjens and Umblijs, 2012).

Therefore, the brand community serves as an important tool for both the consumer and brand manager (Habibi et al., 2014) seeing as it provides a platform for the brand and marketers to share relevant information and interact with highly devoted consumers (Anderson, 2005), thereby, integrating consumers into the brand community. (Anderson, 2005; Habibi et al., 2014 and McAlexander et al.,2002). As a result, the brand is able to ascertain consumers’ needs, which is then used towards innovation and new product development purposes (Habibi et al., 2014; Von Hippel, 2005), ultimately, creating value with and for the consumer (Schau et al., 2009).

Consumers can now fully engage with their preference brand (Christodoulides et al., 2012; Helm and Jones, 2010) online via the social network sites resulting in an increase in brand access mandate (Davis, Piven and Breazeale, 2014) to a more engaging online platform in the company's branding strategy (Nayloret al., 2012, Verhoef et al., 2010; Van Doorn et al., 2010).

Grönroos (2000), Prahalad and Ramaswamy (2000), and Vargo and Lusch (2004) added that brand value is embedded in co-creation with the consumer, as brands are moving from an old industry model to a value created product and service. This co-creation not only allows the consumer to take part but it strengthens the consumer-brand relationship and builds the consumer experience (Pine and Gilmore, 1999), Csaba and Bengtsson (2006), McAlexander et al., (2002). Muniz and O'Guinn (2001) added that brand identity is co-created with consumers and other stakeholders that are found in brand communities; these consumers become the culture carriers of brands as opposed to followers of the company's vision.

Holt (1995) defined consumption: consuming consists of a structure and a purpose and consumption comprises of two mediums, brand and social media technology. Therefore, the structure of consumption consists of the brand and community whereas the purpose of the consumption for the individual as well as the interpersonal interaction with the community.

Brand consumption is commonly carried out in the social community in which consumption value is an uninterrupted social process of stakeholder's interactions (Vock et al., 2013; Merz et al., 2009). Consumption then leads to the social co-production of shared meanings. (Twominen, 2007; De Chernatomy and Segal-Horn, 2001) found that brand community in social media had a positive impact on the brand such as value creation and service quality (Ellah and Bokhari, 2013).

Recent research (Davis and Sajtos, 2008) found that social media which was traditionally accessed by a fixed physical space of a computer screen is now compatible with mobile phones, most notably smartphones, which has now further increased the consumption, connection as well as the interactivity by the brand and conversation related context from other channel of communication such as a radio and television set.

According to a market research (eMarketer, 2014), it was found that in 2013, one in four consumers (1.73 billion people) globally use social network sites and there is a prediction of 2.55 billion social media users by 2017.

With further advancement in the social media interface and software, it will enhance capability to allow users to easily share their brand experience as well as opinions which will potentially shape the branding offerings as well as impact others users interpretation of the brand (Davis et al., 2014)

*International entrepreneur*

Oviat and McDougall (2005) defined international entrepreneur as “the discovery, enactment, evaluation, and exploitation of opportunities-across borders-to create future good and services” (Kiss, Danis, Cavusgil, 2012) .

For the past two decades, international entrepreneurs have grown rapidly due to the increase in globalisation (Hisrich et al, 1996; Keupp and Gassmann, 2009; Knight and Cavusgil, 2006, 2004, 2005; McDougall et al., 1994; Oviat and McDougall, 1994, 2005; Zahra and George, 2002) and the integration into the world economy (Aulakh and Kotabe, 2008).

The growth of the world economy can be related to the reduction of trade barriers as well as the improved international market network (Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development, 2009).

Past researchers (Bruton *et al.*, 2008; Yamakawa, et al, 2008; Zahra and George, 2002) have criticized that most of entrepreneurship and international

entrepreneurship research has been largely focused on advanced economies. However Bruton *et al*. (2008) noted that there is a need to do further research in understanding of international entrepreneurship and the role it plays in facilitating economic growth in emerging economies.

Researchers (Komulainen, Mainela, and Tahtinen, 2006; Sharma and Blomstermo, 2003) have found that one of the most important internationalization processes for the international entrepreneurs business venture is the weak ties within their network relationship, in which social networks provide a platform to maintain weak ties at low cost therefore there will be an increase in formation of weak ties (Donath and Boyd, 2004). This network relationship can be built online in which it provides opportunities for individuals to create a large number of relationships (Ellison, Steinfeld, and Lampe, 2011).

International entrepreneurs are forced to go global at an early stage of their business venture as they will struggle to achieve the economies of scale within their small domestic market (Kutschker, Baurle, and Schmid, 1997), therefore online social networks have become important for international entrepreneurs as there is an increase in web technology development and it will create potential for business relationships to progress (Sigfusson and Chetty, 2013) as well as being able to conduct international trade (Pitt, van der Merwe, and Berthon, 2006) .

When international entrepreneurs enter into a foreign market, they should not focus on the availability of resources that will allow the firm to succeed instead the focus should be on the resources that the firm possesses (Wernerfelt, 1984) in which to start or expand business activities. Several critical resources such as capital, skills and labor are often lacked (Sigfusson and Chetty, 2013) however it was found that they had top management skills such as knowledge and networks when international entrepreneurs started to internationalize (Freeman and Cavusgil, 2007; Oviatt & McDougall, 2005).

International business processes can be optimised when a firm is internationally market orientated and entrepreneurial (Bhuian et al., 2005) as the decision making power within the SMEs and the impetus for firm internationalisation often lies with the international entrepreneurs as opposed to the management team that are commonly found as the decision maker in a larger multi-national firms (Bhuian, Menguc, & Bell, 2005).

Recent research has identified international entrepreneurs as an important potential catalyst in driving Internet generated internationalisation (Davis, Harveston, & Nicovich, 2000; Loane, & Bell, 2006; Loane et al., 2004; Loane, 2006; Mostafa et al., 2006). Past research highlighted the positive advantages and impact on firms, however, it has neglected the significant influence of the decision maker, or in this case, the international entrepreneur's role in exploiting Internet capabilities for the international business processes of the firm (Glavas, & Mathews, 2014).

The role of international entrepreneurs in the internationalisation of firms has been widely acknowledged in international business literature (Cavusgil, 1984,; Frishammar & Andersson, 2010, Hutchinson, Quinn, & Alexander, 2006; Moreno & Casillas, 2008; Lu & Beamish, 2001; Quershiol, Kamal, & Wolcott, 2009). Frishammar and Andersson (2010) argued that there was a positive relationship between international entrepreneurs and international business outcomes, namely, number of international business markets and percentage of total sales as international revenue and profit. Additionally, Lu and Beamish (2001) noted that international business outcomes also include foreign investments and number of customers of the firm.

Entrepreneurship studies have criticised the lack of studies on SME internationalisations especially on how international entrepreneurs perform in an Internet environment (Mostafa et al., 2006; Reuber & Fischer, 2011). This is due to the fact that there has been an increase in the number of businesses and

firms whom are already using the Internet to pursue international business processes and international business ventures (Reuber, & Fischer, 2011).

Scholars (Koth, Rindova, & Rothaermel, 2001; Loane, 2006) have argued that the instant internalisation from a technological perspective is limited; this is due to the fact that there is a restraint in capabilities and functionalities within the organisation when using the Internet. For example, organisations that created a website are not automatically considered an international business. Instead, the organisation needs to survive and grow in a highly competitive Internet business environment thus firms need to outsource their current resource base (Liao, Kickul, & Ma, 2009). Liao et al. (2009) added that past research has also suggested that the Internet environment renders unsustainable competitive advantages and international outcomes obsolete, however, Glavas and Mathews (2014) argued that competitive advantages and successful internationalisation occurs when a firm is able to utilize its capability to rejuvenate and redeploy the firm's Internet capabilities. Despite all this research, there is still a lack of understanding between the international entrepreneurship characteristics, Internet capabilities as well as international business processes of the firm (Mathews & Healy, 2007; Mostafa et al., 2006; Reuber & Fischer, 2011)

There has been a limited number of empirical research papers that have provided some insight into how international entrepreneurs are performing in an Internet environment, however the research is still yet to evolve, warranting greater exploration to reveal the key characteristics of international entrepreneurs' influence on business decisions among SMEs, as the research in the Internet's role in international entrepreneurs is still in its infant stages (Arenius, Sasi, & Gabrielsson, 2006; Etemad, Wilkinson, & Dana, 2010; Loane, 2006; Mostafa et al., 2006; Reuber & Fishcer, 2011; Sinkivics & Bell, 2006). Specifically, there is a need to further understand and identify the international entrepreneurs' characteristic influences on Internet capabilities as well as the

international business process of the organisation within the international entrepreneurs' studies (Mostafa et al., 2006; Reuber & Fischer, 2011).

*International entrepreneurship orientation*

Entrepreneurial orientation has played an important role in entrepreneurship research (Slevin & Terjesen, 2011); this has been referred to as the strategy making processes of firms engaged in entrepreneurial activity (Lumpkin & Dess, 2001). Scholars, (Jantunen, Puumalainen, Saarenketo, & Kylaheiko, 2005; Knight, 2001; Mostafa et al., 2006; Ripollés-Meliá. Menguzzato-Boulard, & Sánchez-Peinado, 2007; Slevin & Terjesen, 2011), have suggested that entrepreneurial orientation can be extended to the field of international entrepreneurship as a way of examining and explaining the cross-border internationalisation of a firm.

For SMEs to survive and being able to be successful in the international market, firms need to approach and engage in international behaviour (Slevin & Terjesen, 2011). A firm's international entrepreneurial orientation can also allow business to identify and exploit internationalisation opportunities. Covin and Slevin (1991) added that international entrepreneurial orientation is a multi-dimensional concept, where it is a reflection of the firms overall proactiveness and aggressiveness in its international business venture (Knight, 2001). International entrepreneurship orientation involves taking advantage of the international market offerings and risks in international environments and being more proactive than its competitors in relation to new international business opportunities (Covin & Slevin, 1991; Jantunen et al., 2005; Wang, 2008).

Miller (1983) noted three dimensions that are incorporated into the international entrepreneurial orientation; these three dimensions are a reflection of the firm's propensity to engage in international innovative, proactive and risk-taking behaviours in order for the firm to achieve its competitiveness and internationally orientated goals (Knight, 2001). The three dimensions include the

firm's tendency to enter into experimentation such as supporting new international ideas and departing from established ideas (Lumpkin & Dess, 1996; Miller, 1983; Wiklund & Shepard, 2005). Secondly, international proactiveness is related to the aggressive positioning of their product to their competitor with an emphasis on the execution and on-going tasks, while the company is in pursuit of their firms international market objectives (Knight, 2001). Lastly, international risk-taking propensity denotes the willingness of the international entrepreneur in making an investment and commitment to projects that have uncertain outcomes or unusually high profits and/or loss (Lee, Kyungmook, & Pennings, 2001; Lumpkin & Dess, 1996; Wiklund & Sheperd, 2005)

*International entrepreneurs and Internet capabilities*

Researchers have suggested that in order for an entrepreneurial SME to be highly successful in the international market, there will need to be a change within the business so that they can adapt to new developments such as Internet capabilities (Buttriss & Wilkinson, 2003; Loane, 2006; Mostafa et al., 2006).

Glavis and Mathews defined Internet capabilities as the leveraging of Internet technology for the international business process of the firm, therefore, improving the transferring of knowledge, creating an efficiency of international market transactions and the development and maintenance of international network relationships.

Exploitation of the Internet capabilities is critical not only for its international business venture for international entrepreneurs, but as the growth and low cost of the Internet, international entrepreneurs SMEs are able to connect with people and locations all over the world thus strengthening international business relationships (Loane, 2006; Ruzzier, Hisrich, & Antoncic, 2006). Therefore, the Internet has the ability and capacity to increase the efficiency of

market transaction as well as enhance the learning process about international operations making it faster and creating more extensive access to relevant information (Mathews & Healy, 2008; Morgan-Thomas & Bridgewater, 2004; Petersen et al., 2002).

Scholars (Aspelund, & Moen, 2004; Hamill & Gregory, 1997; Loane & Bell, 2006; Loane, 2006; Mathews & Healy, 2007, 2008; Prasad, et al., 2001; Samiess, 1998) have argued that there is a new paradigm in international studies due to the Internet's influence and ability to facilitate international market expansion as Internet capabilities are becoming more and more essential and important for international firms, especially firms that are geographically isolated.

The Internet acts as a medium for many international activities especially international firms as it allows consumers to connect with them (Mathews & Healy, 2007). Aspelund and Moen (2004) added that the Internet has the ability to reduce communication barriers that often occur for geographically dispersed firms. Thus, the use of the Internet on a long-term basis will create opportunities for cross border information flow and transaction, while evoking foreign market expansion of firms (Aspelund & Moen, 2004; Peterson et al., 2002; Quelch & Klein, 1996). Businesses have been influenced by the evolution of technology of the Internet (Buttriss & Wilkinson, 2003), as the Internet acts as a medium for international trade, which has created a most significant advancement in global strategy (Lynch & Beck, 2001; Melawar & Stead, 2002). Sinkovics & Bell (2006) added that the Internet is a powerful tool; it has allowed firms to overcome physical and managerial barriers to internationalisation especially for SMEs, as they have a limited amount of human and financial resources (Loane, 2006; Loane & Bell, 2006).

Businesses that conduct their business through Internet platforms have been described as the SMEs gateway to global business and markets, however, for entrepreneurial SMEs, the most fundamental and crucial area when using the

technology is the willingness to embrace its business potential and the innovative nature on how the business operates (Ramsey & Ibbotsson, 2006). Loane and Bell (2006) added that entrepreneurial firms who ignore national boundaries are generally influenced by globalisation and the impact of technology as the Internet. Therefore, the Internet in particular has provided a new way for entrepreneurial SMEs to conduct their business, and an exchange of information and communication ideas (Loane, 2006). Sinkovics and Penz (2006) added that the Internet acts as a promoter for international entrepreneurial business ventures, allowing the firm to quicken their internationalisation using the Internet as their sales channel (Arenius et al., 2006). Therefore, the Internet in terms of information processing capabilities can facilitate and improve the firm's market knowledge as well as their international network relationships due to the fact that it allows the firm to have access to valuable information about the different international markets giving the firm a competitive advantage in positioning themselves in the market (Nieto & Fernandez, 2006).

Matthew and Healy (2007) found that the Internet allowed SMEs to have faster access to competitor information when conducting international business, which allows SMEs to compete with other large counterpart in foreign market environment (Glavis & Matthews, 2014; Loane, 2006; Standing and Vasudavan, 2000). The usage of the Internet has reduced international business operating costs, by allowing for flexible responses to new international market opportunities (Glavis & Matthews, 2014; Matthews & Healy, 2007). This is also advantageous for SMEs as they are able to act on international market growth opportunities and increase international consumers by allowing them to purchase merchandise through online sales (Glavis & Matthews, 2014; Matthews, Healy, & Wickramasekera, 2012)

The Internet has been one of the most important tools for international businesses (Loane, McNaughton, & Bell, 2004; Loane, 2006; Mathews & Healy,

2007; Mostafa, Wheeler, & Jones, 2006; Petersen, Welch, & Leisch, 2002). The Internet allows firms whom have business on international platforms to improve the efficiency of international market transactions (Gabrielsson & Manek & Kirpalania, 2004; Loane et al., 2004; Mathews & Healy, 200; Prasad, Ramamurthy, & Naidu, 2001) such as electronic banking as well as payment. These include strengthening business partners and relationships simultaneously, it also significantly improves the collection and exchange of information related to the international market (Peterson et al., 2002).

However, the Internet does not only allow corporate companies to benefit from doing international business with other overseas firms, it also plays a vital role in providing small to medium sized enterprises (SMEs) new ways to conduct international business through faster access to market and competitor information (Mathews & Healy, 2007). Thus, the Internet has been the best instrument that has allowed them to compete with larger counterparts in a foreign market environment (Loane, 2006; Standing & Vasudavan, 2000).

Using the Internet through website applications and user interface platforms, international entrepreneurs are able to reduce international business operating costs, thereby, increasing their ability to respond flexibly to new international market opportunities (Mathews & Healy, 2007). Therefore, international entrepreneurs are now are able to increase their ability to develop their market growth opportunities globally with an increase of international consumer sales due to the Internet (Mathews, Healy, & Wickramasekera, 2012).

The Internet has been noted as a strategic resource that will be able to help firms achieve their operational performance as well as functionality when operating in the international market (Li & Ye, 1999). Reuber and Fischer (2001) found that entrepreneurial resources, such as Internet capabilities are critical for international entrepreneurs in their pursuit of international business opportunities, however, the exact impact of the Internet in contributing to the international business process is unclear.

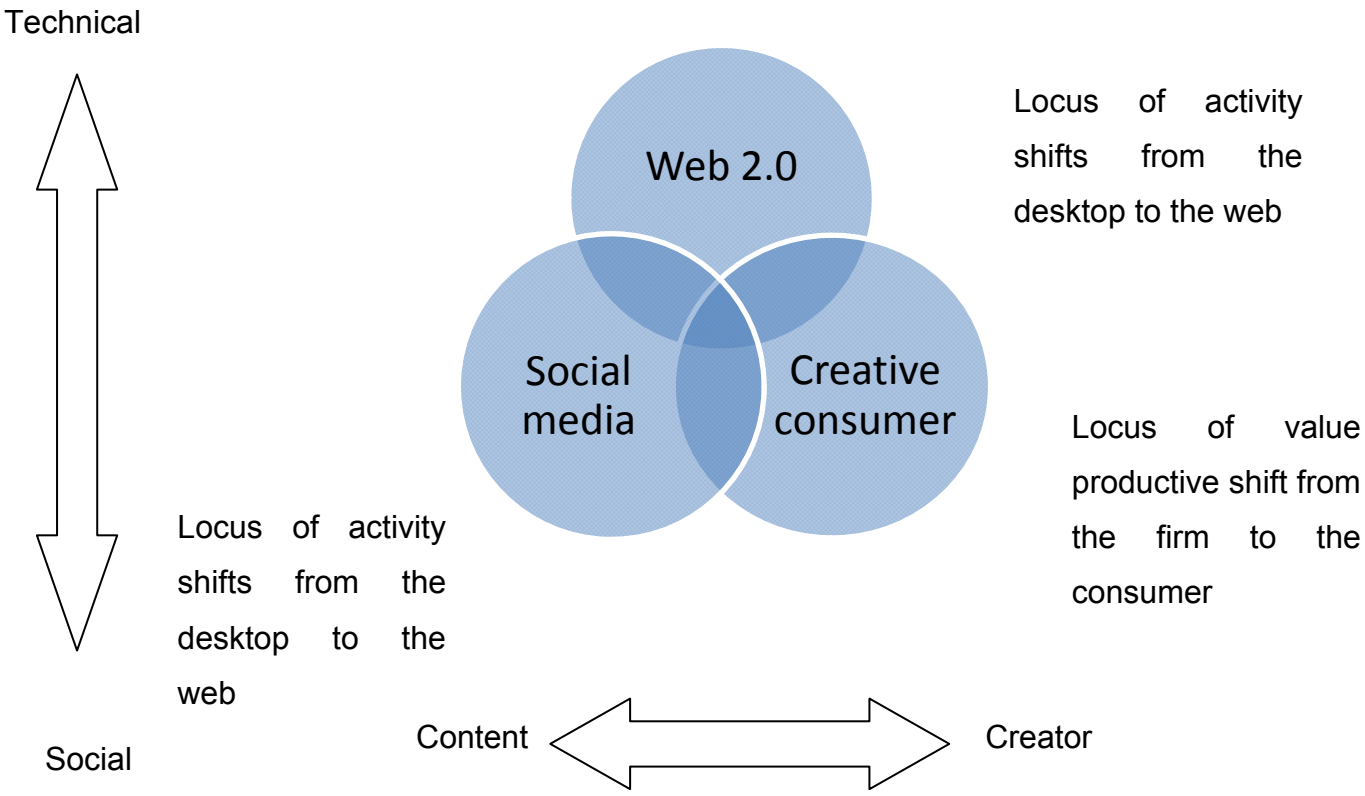



Figure 7: The relationship between Web 2.0, Social media and Creative consumer (Berthon et al., 2012)

*Electronic word of mouth*

In the early 1990s, with the development of the World Wide Web (www) on the Internet, many companies tried to introduce electronic commerce (E-Commerce). The reason for introducing e-commerce is to create a closer relationship with consumers, at the same time, decreasing operating overheads (Park and Lee, 2008). The World Wide Web has a marketing channel for consumers' post-product reviews (Lee and Li, 2006). The online reviews act as electronic word-of-mouth advertising for products and services for corporate (Park and Lee, 2008).

*International entrepreneurs-international innovativeness*

International entrepreneurs often engage in international innovative behaviour in order to gain a competitive advantage as well as achieve competitive and internationally oriented goals (Glavis & Mathews, 2014) such as new product development in an online context as well as the opening of new markets through the Internet. However, different scholars from a conceptual view defined international innovativeness as internationalisation (Knight, 2001; Ripollé-Meliá et al., 2007), successful international outcomes (Jantunen et al., 2005; Mostafa et al., 2006; Wiklund & Shepherd, 2005) and technology (Knight & Causgil, 2004; Wang, 2008). Lumpkin & Dess (1996) suggested that entrepreneurial orientation gives rise to innovative processes and practices that maximise the organisational success in the new market. As more and more firms use the Internet to enter into the international market, the Internet will soon become saturated and it will no longer be able to be sufficient for firms to have a competitive advantage, therefore, firms are often forced to become more innovative with social network when exploring international market opportunities (Glavis & Mathews, 2014). Research has suggested that an increase in levels of technological and/or product market

innovation also allows the firm to pursue new opportunities (Wiklund & Sheperd, 2005).

Entrepreneurship innovation and internationalisation are becoming increasingly intertwined, where innovation is very crucial for flexibility and proactive management of business activities in a complex and dynamic international market (Onetti, Zucchella, Jones, & McDougall-Covin, 2012). This results in international entrepreneurs developing new international innovations when operating in an online environment to remain competitive in the international market (Glavas amd Mathews, 2014).

*International entrepreneurs-international proactiveness*

International proactiveness relates to aggressive positioning relative to competitors (Glavis & Mathews, 2014) where it mainly focuses on the execution of tasks in achieving the firm's international objectives (Knight, 2001; Wiklund & Shepherd, 2005). Some literature (Loane, 2006) suggested that international entrepreneurs who proactively engage their firm in international business activities through online platforms will be more likely to achieve a competitive advantage such as fist-mover advantages in anticipation of future demand in order to create change and shape the environment (Lumpkin & Dess, 1996; Mostafa et al., 2006). Jantunen et al. (2005), Knight and Cavusgil (2004), Wiklund added that firms taking an international proactive approach allows the international entrepreneurs the ability to anticipate future needs of the firm and gain a competitive advantage by pursuing new international market prospects. Wiklund and Shepherd (2005) pointed out that forward-looking perspective, proactive firms wanting to become pioneers in their field will exploit emerging international market opportunities, therefore, international proactiveness within the Internet environment is referred to an opportunity-seeking, forward-looking perspective where firms look for new international market opportunities, while anticipating

in future international market and technological needs (Glavas and Mathews, 2014).

*International entrepreneurs in Africa*

Kiss *et al* (2012) found that factors which facilitate SME internationalization from Africa appear to be similar to those of advanced economies. Past business experiences, foreign contacts and an international orientation were found to facilitate the export venture creation process (Ibeh, 2003), which will lead to a higher export propensity (Obben and Magagula, 2003). Calof and Vivers (1995) stressed that the two major obstacles SME internationalization in Africa face, lie in an inward looking managerial mentality as well as relatively low export breadth. This was found to be accurate by Robson *et al* (2009), in which export was slightly related to the firm's innovation and growth in Ghana, on the other hand, South African entrepreneurs synchronize their cycle of activities with their international consumers, therefore, they were able to implement better international goals more effectively (Khavul *et al*., 2010)

In Kenya and Ghana, it was found that it is very difficult to start a business venture and those businesses are created out of necessity (Chu *et al*, 2007). Success in these countries is seen as a result of hard work and quality of customer services offered by the business (Chu *et al*, 2007; Kiss et al, 2012)

*International entrepreneurs in Asia*

Past researchers (Cheng and Yu, 2008; Dana et al, 2009; Lu et al., 2010) have used a variety of criteria such as different industry settings and theoretical lenses to explore International Entrepreneurs within the Asian context, such as mode, strategy and the extent of internationalization (Kiss et al., 2012)

A majority of Asian firms are involved in direct export (Naudé & Rossouw, 2010), however, some countries such as Indonesia and Vietnam have to

overcome a variety of barriers thus forcing them to pursue less in conventional internationalization strategies such as subcontracting or clustering which is also known as group internationalization (Berry et al., 2002; Kiss et al, 2012)

### 2.1.1 Are international entrepreneurs content driven, creating informational and social content to create a stronger relationship quality with the online brand community

Previous researchers have found that online brand communities allow people to find emotional support, have a sense of belonging as well as encouragement (Furlong, 1989, Hiltz and Wellman, 1997). However, a social relationship, reported by Ridings and Gefen (2004) provides friendship and social support. It also creates trust and increases credibility. In addition, they concluded that consumers who perceive these social benefits are more likely to share content and engage in interaction than those who participate in an online brand corporate.

Brand personality is emphasized on social media networks where the brand community allows individuals to associate themselves with the brand, thus resulting in consumer identity (Avis, 2012; Seimiene, 2012; Aaker, 1997; Davis et al., 2014).

Brands that create a more interactive platform on social network sites, tend to create a more valued experience for consumers as the interaction between the consumer and brand becomes more tangible in the mind of the consumer; it will enhance the subjective experience in which brand consumption revolves around the co-creation of their constantly changing actual, ideal, social and virtual selves (Davis et al., 2014). Social media brand consumption focuses on the interaction experience between the consumer and the brand (Yoo et al., 2010; Downes and McMillan, 2000, Rafaeli, 1988).

However, with brand personality based consumption, consumers participating in the online community are more likely to increase the diversity of the community members (Davis et al., 2014) additionally, researchers (Bagozzi and Dholakia, 2002; Cova and Pace, 2006) found that the online community tends to lower the importance of members' social and physical appearance as well as nonverbal expressions but enhances online content and freedom of expression.

Consumption is a two-way communication - social media assumes the role between consumer, brand and community coalescence (David and Sajtos, 2008). As they co-create the experience, they seek personalization (Yoon et al., 2008; Vlasic and Kesic, 2007; McMillan and Hwang, 2002) and immediate interactivity (Haeckel, 1998; Hoffman and Novak, 1996). It is a contingent process of the co-creation of mediated conversation, fuelled by both the consumer and the advertiser's need for the benefits that arise from the interactivity (Yoo et al., 2010; Park and Park, 2009; Trappey and Arch, 2005).

This type of interactivity moves beyond the creation of monologue content. Cui et al. (2010) argue that this responsiveness mediates other factors such as social presence cues, which has an important impact on word-of-mouth and social media communities (Chan and Li, 2010),

**Research hypothesis 1:** Experiential benefit will have a positive effect on BSN Relationship Quality.

**Research hypothesis 2:** Functional benefit will have a positive effect on BSN Relationship Quality.

**Research hypothesis 3:** Consumer's relationships with the brand, product, company and other consumers on the social media have a positive influence on the brand trust

**Research hypothesis 4:** International entrepreneur's informational and social content drive will have a positive effect on the BSN Relationship Quality

### 2.1.2 Research Question 2: Do international entrepreneurs create a product that will have an impression in the consumer memory?

**Research hypothesis 5:** Brand social network relationship quality will have a positive effect on Brand Relationship Quality.

**Research hypothesis 6:** Brand social network relationship quality will have a positive effect on international entrepreneur's creativity content drive.

**Research hypothesis 7:** International entrepreneur's high innovation and high proactiveness have a positive effect on the online brand community.

### 2.1.3 Research Question 3: Does potential consumer and online brand community rely on word-of-mouth in order to purchase a product?

**Research hypothesis 8:** Brand Relationship quality will have a positive effect on Brand Social network word-of-mouth

**Research hypothesis 9:** Brand Relationship quality will have a positive effect on the consumers who are willing to pay the premium price.

**Research hypothesis 10:** Brand Social Network Relationship Quality will have an influence on the Brand Social Network Word-of-Mouth

**Research hypothesis 11:** Brand Social Network word of mouth has a positive effect on the consumers who are willing to pay the premium price

**Research hypothesis 12:** International entrepreneur's continuous engagement on the social media will have a positive effect on online product reviews**.**

Consumers would only join an online brand community when they need some information about products or services (Dholakia and Bagozzi, 2004; Wang and Fesenmaier, 2004). Consumers may be enthusiastic users who participate in the online community, i.e. they may be less interested in the brand and want other benefits from their participation. Moral responsibilities and social ties that often characterise face-to-face communities may decrease in the online community (Bagozzi and Dholakia, 2002).

Social media brand consumption may only be devoted to specific commercial or informational objectives rather than social responsibilities and mutual support.

## 2.2 Conceptual Research Model

This research study integrates two existing frameworks from Park and Kim (2014) and Habibi *et al*. (2014). Park and Kim (2014) argued about the consumer-brand relationship social network websites, whereas Habibi et al., (2014) argued the roles of brand community and community engagement in building a brand trust within the social media.

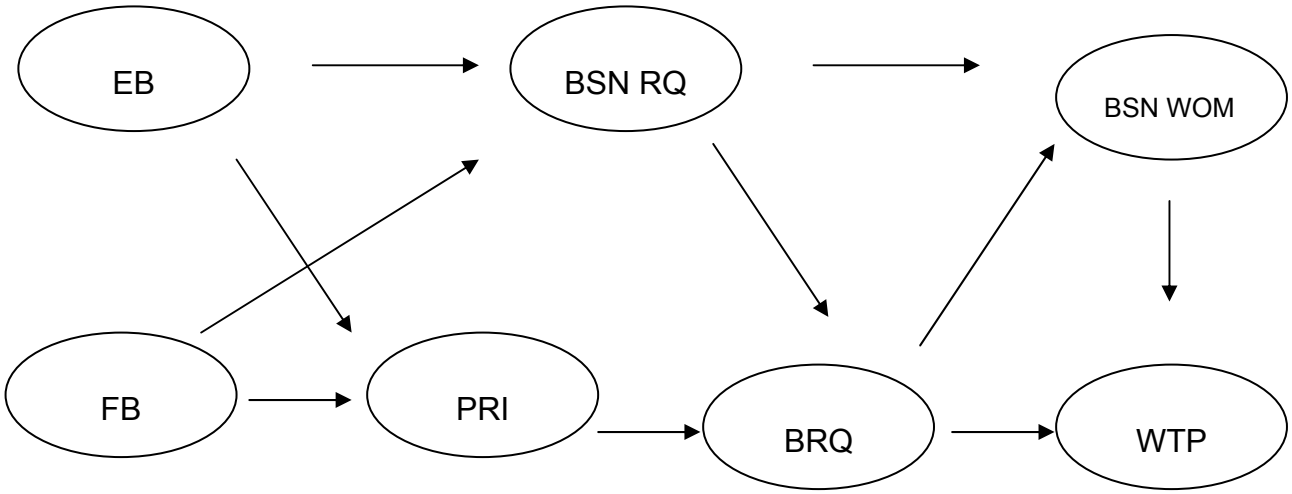



Figure 8: The role of social network website in the Consumer-brand relationship (Park and Kim, 2014)

Legend: EB=Experiential benefit, FB= Functional benefit, BSN RQ= Brand Social Network relationship quality, PRI=Perceived relationship investment, BSN WOM= Brand Social Network word of mouth, BRQ= Brand Relationship Quality, WTP= Willingness to Pay.

Habibi et al. (2014) pointed out that brand communities and social media tend to overlap, thus social media is the ideal environment for building an online community.

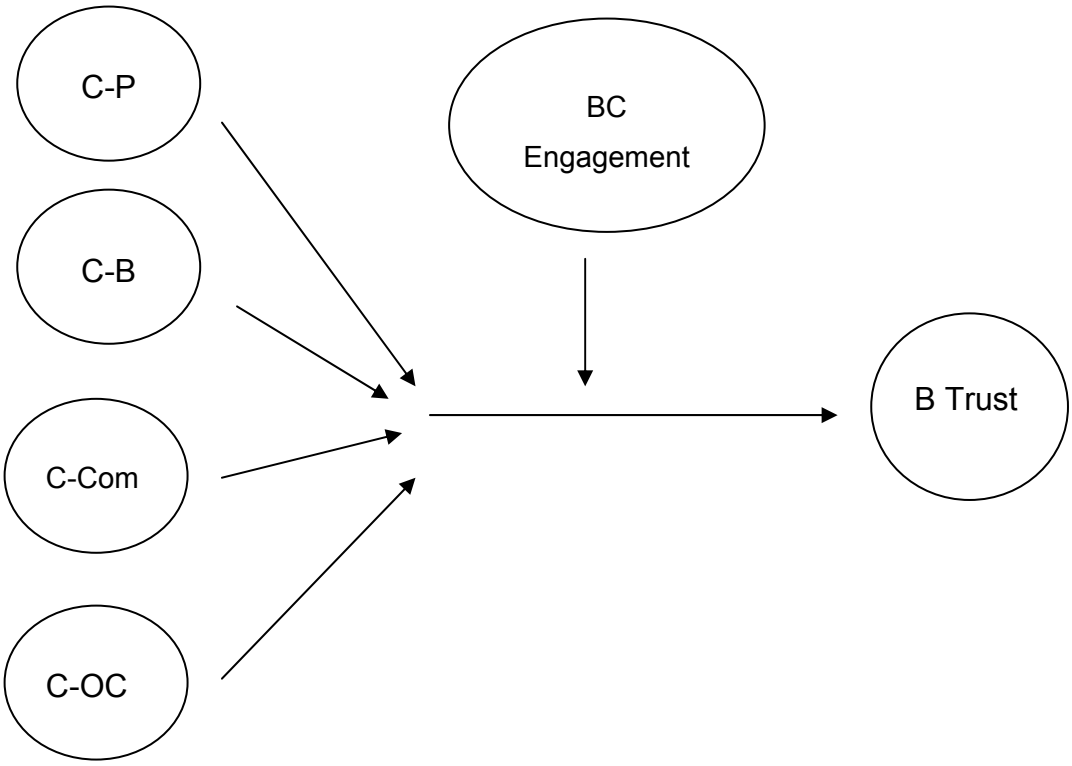



Figure 9: The relationship between the brand community (C-P, C-B, C-Com, C-Oc) and the brand trust (Habibi et al., 2014)

Legend: C=Customer, P=Product, Com= Company OC= Other, Customers, BC= Brand Community

The conceptual model for this research study is to understand the social media marketing components and their influence on international entrepreneur's business venture. Therefore, this research study will look at and test the existing framework and combine it with the international entrepreneur's case studies.

Due to insignificant literature and studies done on perceived relationship investment, it has been omitted in this research study. Therefore, the study will involve the Experiential benefit, Functional benefit, Brand Social Network Relationship Quality, Brand Relationship Quality, Brand Social Network Word

of Mouth (BSN WOM) and willingness to pay. In addition, an investigation into the relationship between the brand community and brand trust is also studied.

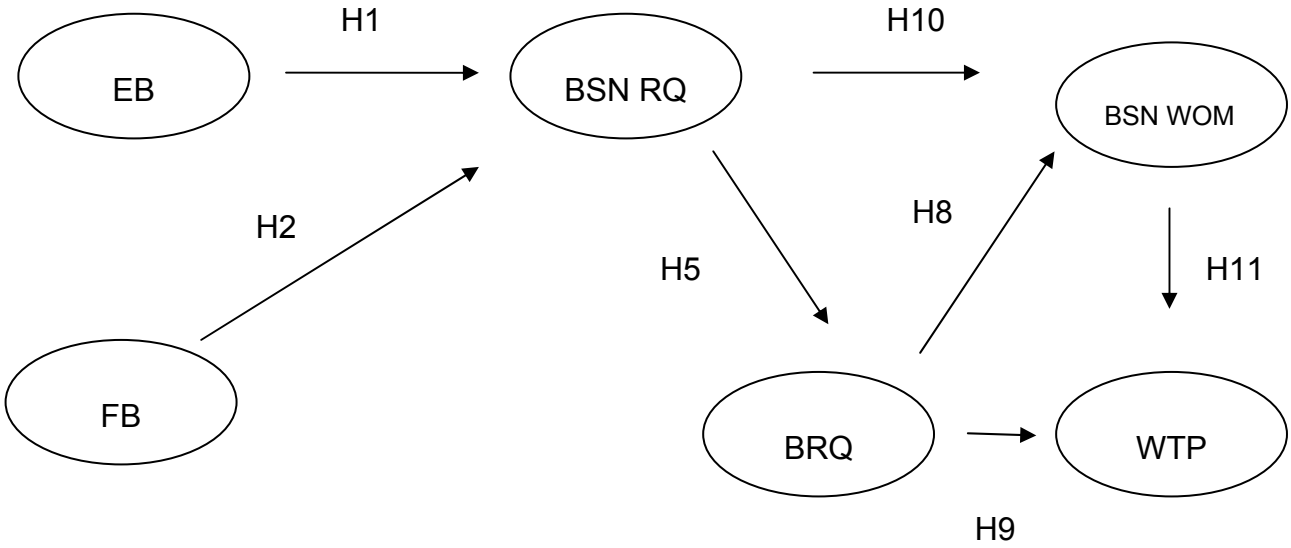



Figure 10: Testing the hypothesis (Park and Kim, 2014)

## 2.3 Conclusion of Literature Review

In conclusion, the research and literature review will show that there is direct correlation between social media marketing and international entrepreneurial business venture.

# CHAPTER 3.RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

## 3.1 Research methodology/paradigm

This chapter describes the research methodology, design and instrument including the sample population, the procedure for data collection, data analysis and interpretation, validity and reliability as well as the statistical method that will be used to test the research hypothesis. The research paradigm that has been used for this research study is based on Interpretivism and Positivist paradigm. Interpretivist research is not solely based on objective external observation but also observation through direct experience of people (Mack, 2010). Cohen et al. (2007) stated that the interpretivist paradigm is to “understand, explain, and demystify social reality through the eyes of different participant”. The Positivist paradigm purpose is to prove or disprove a hypothesis, thus, emphasizing the scientific method, statistical analysis and generalized findings.

This research study involves quantitative and qualitative cross-sectional research. According to Neuman (2011), cross-sectional research examines information at one point in time.

The following methodological steps were adopted for the research on International entrepreneurs (Walsham, 2006):

Step 1: Developing a questionnaire for the fieldwork

Step 2: Choosing the style of involvement (e.g. Outsider researcher or Involved researcher)

Step 3: Developing codes for all measurement of constructs

Step 3: Obtaining access to the appropriate organization for the fieldwork

Step 4: Collecting field data

Step 5: Analysing data

Step 6: Presenting findings

The following methodological steps were adopted for the research on social media user (Suhr, 2006)

Step 1: Reviewing the relevant literature to support the model

Step 2:  Developing questionnaires from past research studies

Step 3: Collecting data through online questionnaires

Step 4: Estimating parameters in the model

Step 5: Assessing model fit

Step 6: Presenting findings

## 3.2 Research Design

The research study involves a qualitative and quantitative approach. The methodological approach that was adopted consisted of online interviews and an online survey. The online interview was done via Skype, Viber, Cisco as well and face to face whereas the online survey was posted on Google. In order to ensure data confidentiality, participants were entered as anonymous.

The research questions for the online survey was extracted from previous studies (Habibi et al., 2014; Kahar, R., Yamimi, F., Bunari, G., & Habil, H. 2012; Park, H., & Kim, Y-K., 2014), however, some measured items were either omitted or amended based on the generalisation of the nature of social media users as well as international entrepreneurs. Additional measurement items related to recent research were added to the existing instrument. There

are a few advantages of doing online survey (Cooper and Schindler, 2011; Neuman, 2006; Wegner, 2010):

- It's very fast and inexpensive
- It allows for flexible design and visional images
- It can reach local, national and international targeted populations
- Data is current and, therefore, is more likely to be accurate
- Implementations can be reduced from weeks to days
- It allows the participants to think about the question
- Participants are entered as anonymous

However, there are also disadvantages in using an online survey (Cooper and Schindler, 2011; Neuman, 2006; Wegner, 2010):

- Sampling a specific user group is difficult due to the limited email addresses
- Not all potential respondents have access to the Internet
- There will be a low response rate
- The complex design of the online survey and some software is difficult to run online
- Some respondents will experience anxiety
- Protecting respondents' privacy is necessary

Interview questionnaires were extracted from previous studies (Cabiddu, De Carlo and Piccoli 2014; Chui, Hsu and Wang, 2006; Park, Kim 2014. Interviews were held either online via Skype, Viber or Cisco or face-to-face. There are advantages of having an online interview (Neuman, 2006; Wegner, 2010):

- It allows a quicker contact with geographically dispersed respondents
- If respondents are not available, callbacks can be made
- The cost is low when compared to personal surveys

- Respondents are willing to talk on the telephone as they feel safe at home
- Interviewer probing is possible and thus, questions can be controlled
- Questions can be clarified by the interviewer
- The use of aided-recall questions is possible
- A large sample can be reached within a short space period of time
- There is a higher response rate
- 95 percent of the populations can be reached for a telephonic interview
- It is very flexible

The disadvantage of having a telephonic interview (Neuman, 2006; Wegner, 2010):

- It is very expensive
- The interview length is limited
- Some respondents don't have telephones and they are unreachable
- Interview calls may cause inconvenience to respondents
- It reduces anonymity and introduces potential interviewer bias
- Open questions are difficult to use
- Serious disruptions and respondents tone and hesitancy can influence the interviewer
- Non-verbal response can influence interview
- Interviewers need to be trained which increases the cost price
- Respondents could possibly terminate the interview prematurely by ending the session (e.g. putting the telephone down)

Face-to-face interviews were conducted and there are advantages to them (Neuman, 2006; Wegner, 2010)

- Longer questions are possible
- A higher response rate is occasionally achieved
- Data collection is immediate and it reflects the current reality

- Greater data accuracy is achieved
- The above is useful when the required data is of a technical nature
- Non verbal language can be observed (e.g. body language, facial expression)
- More questions can be asked
- Responses are spontaneous and, thus, more likely to be valid
- Recall questions and other visual prompts are possible.

According to Neuman, (2006) and Wegner, (2010), the disadvantages of conducting face-to-face interviews are

- It is time consuming
- It requires trained interviewer and this increases the costs
- Fewer interviews are conducted due to financial costs and time constraints
- Interviewers can influence and add bias to the data
- Interviewer's wording, tone of voice and appearance can influence the respondent's response

An ethical consideration has been taken into account when designing the research. The purpose of the study as well as the respondents' rights and protection of personal information was explained to the respondents and the international entrepreneurs were briefed about the research study. An email explaining respondent's rights and protection of the data with the interview questions was sent to both parties. All respondents (Social media users' and international entrepreneurs') rights to privacy were protected during the data collection process.

The computer programme software, Gephi 0.8 beta which is an open source software (http://gephi.org/), was used to analyse the social network of the international entrepreneurs. Nodes were used to calculate the strength of the network ties between the international entrepreneurs and their consumer. The

social network aggregator was used to keep any personal or sensitive information of the social media user and the international entrepreneur's identity antonymous. The social media identification, the social network URL as well as the web content was kept confidential

Table 2: Summary of the different types of surveys used in this research study (Neuman, 2006)

| | Telephonic interview | Face-to-Face interview | Web Survey |
|---|---|---|---|
| Cost | Moderate | Expensive | Cheap |
| Speed | Fast | Slow to moderate | Fastest |
| Length of questionnaire | Short | Longest | Moderate |
| Response rate | Moderate | Fastest | Moderate |
| Probes possible | Yes | Yes | No |
| Specific respondents | Yes | Yes | No |
| Question sequence | Yes | Yes | Yes |
| Open ended question | Restricted | Yes | Yes |
| Sensitive question | Restricted | Restricted | Yes |
| Social desirability | Some | Worst | No |
| Interviewer bias | Some | Worst | No |
| Respondent's reading skill | No | No | moderate |

### 3.2.1 *Population*

The sampling frame of participants consisted of social media network and SMEs, whereas the sample populations were social media users and international entrepreneurs.

A proper representation of the sample populations was determined to ensure that there was:

- A Social Media Network

  The target populations included social media users and international entrepreneurs who use the social media as leverage to market their business venture. A list of the social media network is provided in appendix C

- SMEs

  Due to privacy of the respondent, a list of the SMEs is not provided

## 3.3 Sample and sampling method

It is assumed that the sample of the respondents represents the social media network and the SME's. The aim was to build a sample size of 200 (n=200) and 11 (n=11) respectively.

A link to the online survey was copied on several respective social media networks in order to reach all respondents and they in turn were asked to choose their network in order to partake in the survey. These social media networks were used:

- Facebook (www.facebook.com)
- Twitter (www.twitter.com)
- YouTube (www.youtube.com)

- MySpace (https://myspace.com)
- Flickr (www.flickr.com)
- Vimeo (www.vimeo.com)
- LinkedIn (www.linkedin.com)
- WordPress (www.wordpress.com)
- Tumblr (www.tumblr.com)
- Google+ ( https://plus.google.com/)

The international entrepreneurs' sample frame consisted of entrepreneurs with international firms who utilize the social media as a marketing tool for the business. They were interviewed through Skype, Cisco and Viber that were recommended by the Business development Centre in South Africa, India and USA.

A total of 200 surveys were sent out via through the social network sites. Overall, a total of 143 survey questionnaires were completed, 11 were unusable or incomplete and 46 respondents did not participate.

A total of 90 males and 53 females responded to this research paper. The age of the participants ranged from 19 to 54 with a mean age of 37.8 (Standard deviation 7.19) and the age range for females was from 18 to 65, with an average age of 30.12 (standard deviation 10.71). The average age for males' was between 15-20 (6.8%), whereas, females in the same group were about 4.0%. Additionally, 20.3% of males and 25.7% of females were from the 21-30 year age group. There are more males who filled out the form than females in the 31-40 year age group (8.1% to 3.7% respectively). However, there was the same number for both sexes (1.4%) in the 41-50 year age group. There was only one female who was >50. 30.77% of the social media users have obtained their undergraduate degree (20.98% male and 9.79% female).

## 3.4 The research instrument

The research instrument was designed to test the research questions and to provide the data for testing the six research hypothesis. The online survey for the social media was a closed questionnaire which consisted of 14 sections or parts and a total of 44 closed ended questions. The survey was posted online and the results were captured through a remote online system, Google (www.google.com). The questionnaires are presented in Appendix A.

The online survey for the international entrepreneurs was an open and closed questionnaire which consisted of 16 closed questions and 1 open question. The survey was posted online and the results were captured through a remote online system, Google (www.google.com). The questionnaires are presented in Appendix A

The interview questions for the international entrepreneurs consisted of 4 open questions; a progress monitor for the usage of the social media network was included. The questionnaires and progress monitor are presented in Appendix A.

*Social media users*

The questionnaires for the social media network consisted of the following parts:

**Biographical information** – This section focuses on the biographical information of the respondents such as the brand name that the respondent will be referring to for the survey, the job level, education level and gender.

**Experiential benefits (Q1 - Q6) –** This section focuses on experiential benefit which examines how consumers perceive the benefit from using the Brand Social Network. The aim of this question is to answer research question 1 and research question 2. This section also included questions from Park and Kim

(2014). A seven point scale was used; the levels are1-Strongly disagree and 7-Strongly agree.

**Functional benefit (Q7 – Q13) –** This section focuses on functional benefit which examines how consumers view information posted on the Internet by the brand. This section also included questions from Park and Kim (2014). A seven point scale was used; the levels are1-Strongly disagree and 7-Strongly agree.

**BSN Relationship Quality (Q14 – Q26) –** This section focuses on the strength between the consumer and the relationship with brand on the Brand Social Network, according to Hennig-Thurau and Klee (1997), they argued that the interaction between the consumer and the company through the service they provide is the most crucial point, this will give the consumer perception of the service quality they are receiving as this is a fundamental feature of a buyer-seller relationship. Rauyruen and Miller (2007) pointed out that the fundamental component of the relationship quality is the quality of service; however, they added that there are other components such trust and commitment that are needed. Within this context of study, there are three dimensions ( Commitment, trust and partner quality) are selected to represent the Brand Social Network Quality in which the constructed items are adapted from Park et al. (2005), that examined a consumer-brand relationship within an online environment. A seven point scale was used; the levels are1-Strongly disagree and 7-Strongly agree.

**BSN Relationship (Q27 – Q29) –** This section focuses on the consumers commitment to the brand community (Zhou et al., 2012) . This section also included questions from Park and Kim (2014). A seven point scale was used; the levels are1-Strongly disagree and 7-Strongly agree.

**Brand Relationship Quality (Q30 – Q32) –** This section focuses on the relationship between the consumer and the brand (Smit *et al*., 2007), the

Brand Relationship Quality measurement constructs reflects the broad spectrum that contributes to the consumer-brand relationships (Huber *et al*., 2010). This section includes a seven point scale that was used; the levels are 1-Strongly disagree and 7-Strongly agree.

**BSN WOM (Q33 – Q36) –** This section focuses on the consumer where they give reviews on the product, the measurement constructs are adapted from Carroll and Ahuvia (2006) in which it reflects the context of Brand Social Network with relations to word of mouth. This section includes a seven point scale that was used; the levels are1-Strongly disagree and 7-Strongly agree.

**Willingness to pay for premium (Q37-Q38) –** This section focuses on the consumer loyalty to the brand, by examining their willingness to pay for a higher price for a particular brand even though it is available elsewhere at a lower price (Chaudhuri and Ligas, 2009). This section also included questions from Park and Kim (2014). A seven point scale was used; the levels are1-Strongly disagree and 7-Strongly agree.

*International Entrepreneurs interview*

There were three sections in the interview. The first section aimed at understanding the overview of the company such as their history, competitor as well as consumer base. The second section focused on the type of social media platform the company uses (e.g. Facebook, Twitter etc.) and the third section investigated how the company implements their brand on the social media. Interviews were done online via Skype, Cisco and Viber.

## 3.5 Procedure for data collection

The data was collected through the online questionnaires.

*Social media users*

A survey was sent out on several social media networks with an invitation for participants to fill in the questionnaires. Participants were notified that information collected will remain anonymous and should they want the results, an email address was provided for easy access. Participants had to agree to have their information recorded; they also had the option to opt out. If the participant chose the opt-out button, the participants were redirected to the end of the survey. Data was collected and was screened for any incomplete surveys.

*International entrepreneurs*

Business development centres (African Association of Entrepreneurs) referred some international entrepreneurs to participate in the research paper. The business development centres are located in various parts of the world namely South Africa, Ghana, India and the USA.

Multiple case studies as well as online surveys were used for this research paper. The reason for using multiple case studies was to give a more holistic and dynamic view of the complex research area, i.e. the influence of Internet capabilities on international business ventures. A one-hour interview was conducted with founding international entrepreneurs in South Africa, India, Ghana and the United States of America. These SMEs operate internationally and utilise the Internet for their international business transactions. The significant part of the interview included questions about the business owners' usage and integration of Internet technologies within the firm. After the interview, the owners were notified that their social media would be

monitored, i.e. specifically the messages they post and how many consumers respond to them over a period of 8 weeks.

## 3.6 Data analysis and interpretation

The data collected from the online survey for the social media user, was tested using structural modelling equation (SEM) using SAS 9.2. According to Anderson and Gerbing (1988), a two-step approach should be used to validate the measurement construct and to test the proposed hypothesis. Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) was firstly conducted to see whether the measurement construct reliability reflected the hypothesis latent construct

*Social media users*

A correlation and content analysis was done on the survey and interview respectively. The questionnaires was taken from various literatures and were had modified to address the research. Measurement of the consumer's relationship with a brand was taken from McAlexandra et al (2002). Surveys from Chaudhuri and Holbrook (2001) were used to measure consumer relationship and brand trust. Two questions from Chaudhuri and Krishan was added to measure consumer/company relationship. Algesheimer et al. (2005) questionnaires were used to measure community engagement. The survey was based on a 7-point likert scale in which (1) represents "Strongly disagree" and (7) represents "strongly agree".

To test the model, SAS 9.3 was used to conduct the structural equation model of the sample. Therefore it will involve the analysis of the measurement model and then it will focus on structural relationships among latent constructs.

Conformity factor analysis will be applied to construct validity of the company brand, community interaction, hours spent on the social media, posts being uploaded onto social media, social interaction and knowledge sharing.

As Fornell and Larcker suggested, a convergent validity of the scales will be verified with three criteria's, namely, all indicators loading should be significant and exceed 0.7, reliabilities should exceed 0.8 and the average variance extracted from each construct will have to exceed the variance due to the measurement error for that construct.

*International entrepreneurs*

The interviews ranged from half an hour to one hour in length, each was recorded and transcribed verbatim which generated about 43 pages of audio transcript. The analysis proceeded through various stages. In the first stage of the analysis of the interview audio, a provisional list of codes created from the studies done by Miles and Huberman (1994) was used and compared. An example of the code is found in appendix D.

The international Entrepreneurs Social Network Analysis was tested using Gephi 0.82 Beta. Social Network Analysis is the methodical analysis of social networks (Akhtar, 2014) in which it views the social relationship in terms of the network theory, consisting of nodes and ties. There are two types of network analysis, ego network analysis and complete network analysis. In this research, complete network analysis was used, as it allows the researcher to analyze the relationship between the nodes (International entrepreneurs and online social media users).

Codes were assigned to online users as well as for the action taken between the online social media user and the international entrepreneurs, the codes are given in appendix F.

## 3.7 Validity and reliability

### 3.7.1 *Internal validity*

Cronbach alpha will be used to validate the internal consistency of the instrument.

### 3.7.2 *Reliability*

Results that were obtained from this research paper will be compared with previous literature paper.

*International entrepreneurs using the social media*

The analysis of the interview will go through several rounds of coding with Nivivo 9. Within the first round, a provisional list of codes (Miles & Huberman, 1994) will be derived (Appendix 3) from the conceptual model (Appendix 7). To improve the reliability of the analysis, a second round of coding will be implemented, in which themes will be identified independently that will emerge from interview (Krippendorf, 2004)

- *Internal consistency*

To evaluate the internal consistency, the Cronbach alphas (Cronbach, 1970) will be calculated.

- Discriminate and convergent validity

To assess the construct validity, a five-factor conformity model with all latent constraints in the model was used (i.e. four customer centered relationship and brand trust).

- Validity of survey

To assess the construct validity of the survey, the results obtained will be compared with past research work done by Park (2011)

## 3.8 Limitations of the study

This research has several limitations:

- By using the Interpretivist research, it has to abandon the scientific procedures of verifications therefore results generated by research cannot be generalised to other situations. Although the research study consisted of several international entrepreneurs from different countries, there is a need to increase the sample and population size of the international entrepreneurs from the same and different countries.
- The measurement of the model is weak as it was mainly generated by two constructs, namely Brand relationship Quality as well as Brand Social Network relationship quality.
- The measurement construct, Brand Relationship Quality, does not necessarily serve as a basis for consumers to join the Brand Social Network, as it is possible that there are pre-existing relationship qualities between the brand and the consumer.
- There is not enough significant past research on the functional benefits on BSN relationship quality.

## 3.9 Chapter conclusion

This chapter focused on the methodology, sample population and size, research instrument, the data gathering procedure and the statistical method that was used to test the research hypothesis and answer the research questions.

There were a number of limitations to the research study but it is still adequate to test the research hypothesis and answer the research questions.

# CHAPTER 4. PRESENTATION OF RESULTS

In this chapter, data analysis of the research study will be reported in accordance with the research methodology chapter. Data will be presented in the form of a table

## 4.1 Introduction

According to table 2, there is a high number of social media user that is found between the ages of 21-30. However, females using the social media tend to decline between the ages of 31-40 but remain constant. Males usage of the social media tend to peak between the ages of 31-40 but decline rapidly between the ages of 41-50+.

Females tend to use the social media more often then their counterpart, 94% spend more than 6 hours per week on the social media comparing that to 55%. Most social media user tend to spend less than 1 hour on the social media and the reason could be due to the convenience of technology such as smartphones, laptop as well as ipad.

Males tend to be visit sports brand online, which is consistent with the entire sports brand such as Nike and Adidas. Interestingly, females spend their time on the Coca Cola brand. This could be due to the fact that Coca-Cola, have changed their marketing strategy and brand message focusing more on family and well as corporate social responsibility.

Table 3: Demographic of social media user

| | | Male (n=90) | Female (n=53) |
|---|---|---|---|
| Age | 15-20 | 6.8 % | 4.0 % |
| | 21-30 | 20.3 % | 25.7 % |
| | 31-40 | 25.7 % | 8.1 % |
| | 41-50 | 1.4 % | 1.4 % |
| | >50 | 0.0 % | 1.4 % |
| Social network usage (hours per week) | < 1 Hour | 13.0 % | 29.0 % |
| | 2-3 Hours | 29.0% | 24.0 % |
| | 4-5 Hours | 45.0 % | 82.0 % |
| | >6 Hours | 55.0 % | 94.0 % |
| Most popular brand visit online | Adidas | 14.0 % | 4.7 % |
| | Apple | 9.3 % | 2.3 % |
| | Coca Cola | 14.0 % | 16.3 % |
| | Nike | 14.0 % | 14.0 % |
| | Samsung | 7.0 % | 4.7 % |

Table 4: Most popular social media network used by social media users and the hours spent per week

| | Social media network | N (%) | Hours spent (%) | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | < 1 Hour | 2-3 Hours | 4-5 Hours | >6 Hours |
| 1 | Facebook | 25 | 0.29% | 0.29% | 0.44% | 9.93% |
| 2 | LinkedIn | 5 | 1.46% | 0.15% | 0.15% | 2.04% |
| 3 | Twitter | 1 | 0.15% | 1.75% | 4.38% | 6.13% |
| 4 | YouTube | 24 | 0.15% | 0.15% | 1.17% | 2.34% |
| 5 | Flickr | 25 | 0.29% | 0.15% | 0.44% | 5.11% |
| 6 | Vimeo | 2 | 3.65% | 0.44% | 2.04% | 0.73% |
| 7 | MySpace | 2 | 0.73% | 0.29% | 0.05% | 1.31% |
| 8 | Tumblr | 14 | 0.15% | 2.04% | 0.29% | 0.15% |
| 9 | Google+ | 7 | 3.50% | 1.02% | 0.29% | 4.67% |
| 10 | Other: WordPress | 15 | 3.65% | 2.19% | 0.29% | 0.29% |

Most of the social media users spend more time on Facebook, followed by twitter and Flickr. However with the introduction of Google+ in 2011, and after 4 years, many users are becoming more comfortable in using the social platform comparing that to Facebook which was launched in 2004. It is not surprising to see most social media user spend less time on blogs such as WordPress and Tumblr.

Social media user spend less time on YouTube, and this could be due to Internet bandwidth in some countries, therefore it is more convenient for social media user to use Facebook, as it require less time to download newsfeed.

There is a variety of educational and job level Social Media user respondents (Table 4) for this research studies (Table 5), an overall of 6 Phd (4.1%), 22 Masters (14.9%), 42 University honours degree (28.4%), 44 University undergraduate degree (29.7%), 27 Pre-university (18.2%) and 7 Grade 12 (4.7%).

An online survey was sent to social media users through Facebook, and Google+. The survey showed that the majority of social media users lie within the “middle/lower management, specialist” as well as the “Not management, professional or specialist area” (Table 5)

Table 5: Respondents profile (Social media user)

| TYPE OF RESPONDENTS | | |
|---|---|---|
| Position | Education level | N (%) |
| Senior management | PhD | 4 (3) |
| | Master's Degree | 6 (4) |
| | University honours degree (Including 4th year of engineering and the like | 9( 6) |
| | University undergraduate degree or BTech | 2 (1) |
| | Pre-university but post school diploma (e.g. 1-year certified diploma in bookkeeping | 4(3) |
| Middle/ lower management or professional | University honours degree (Including 4th year of engineering and the like | 22 (15) |
| | University undergraduate degree or BTech | 30 (20) |
| | Pre-university but post school diploma (e.g. 1-year certified diploma in bookkeeping | 6 (4) |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Specialist technical | PhD | 1 (0.7) |
| | Master's Degree | 15 (10) |
| | University honours degree (Including 4th year of engineering and the like | 10 (7) |
| | University undergraduate degree or BTech | 7 (5) |
| | Pre-university but post school diploma (e.g. 1-year certified diploma in bookkeeping | 2 (1) |
| Not management, professional or specialist | Master's Degree | 1 (0.7) |
| | University honours degree (Including 4th year of engineering and the like | 1 (0.6) |
| | University undergraduate degree or BTech | 5 (3.4%) |
| | Pre-university but post school diploma (e.g. 1-year certified diploma in bookkeeping | 15 (10) |
| | Grade 12 of high school ( ≥18 years old) | 7 (5) |

Table 6: Social media user job level and their usage on the social network site

| Job level of social media users | Hours spent per week on the social network site (%) | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | <1 hours | 2-3 hours | 4-5 hours | >6 hours |
| Senior management | 5.0 % | 2.0 % | 7.5 % | 1.0% |
| Middle/ lower management or professional | 9.1 % | 7.5% | 6.5 % | 5.5% |
| Specialist technical | 6.5 % | 5.8 % | 5.0 % | 6.0 % |
| Not management, professional or specialist | 8.0 % | 4.0 % | 2.0 % | 9.0 % |

Senior management tend to spend less time on social media platform as opposed to “middle/ lower management or professional”, “Specialist” and “Not management, professional or specialist”. This corresponds to Table 5 in which only 25 “senior managers” use social media whereas 29 are “not management, professional or specialist”, 35 “Specialist technical” and 58 are from “middle/lower management or professional”.

Table 7: Comparing the Assessment of normality between the survey response and Park (2011)

| | | | | Survey | | | | Park (2011) | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Construct | Item | Min | Max | Mean | STD | Skewness | Kurtosis | Mean | STD | Skewness | Kurtosis |
| Experiential benefit | 1 | 1 | 7 | 4.676 | 1.980 | -0.632 | -0.779 | 4.65 | 1.703 | -0.402 | -0.621 |
| | 2 | 1 | 7 | 4.716 | 1.855 | -0.730 | -0.488 | 4.80 | 1.660 | -0.500 | -0.542 |
| | 3 | 1 | 7 | 4.331 | 2.088 | -0.376 | -1.217 | 4.88 | 1.460 | -0.358 | -0.355 |
| | 4 | 1 | 7 | 4.730 | 1.975 | 0.702 | -0.685 | 4.44 | 1.761 | -0.268 | -0.854 |
| | 5 | 1 | 7 | 4.351 | 2.131 | -0.439 | -1.253 | 4.62 | 1.741 | -0.362 | -0.730 |
| | 6 | 1 | 7 | 3.486 | 2.328 | 0.480 | -0.757 | Data unavailable | | | |

| | | | | Survey | | | | Park (2011) | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Construct | Item | Min | Max | Mean | STD | Skewness | Kurtosis | Mean | STD | Skewness | Kurtosis |
| Functional Benefits | 7 | 1 | 7 | 3.585 | 2.491 | 0.454 | -0.748 | 5.48 | 1.267 | -0.690 | 0.156 |
| | 8 | 1 | 7 | 4.716 | 1.877 | -0.587 | -0.290 | 5.48 | 1.198 | -0.587 | 0.256 |
| | 9 | 1 | 7 | 4.622 | 1.786 | -0.496 | -0.535 | 5.37 | 1.248 | -0.532 | 0.034 |
| | 10 | 1 | 7 | 3.938 | 1.794 | -0.103 | -0.985 | Data unavailable | | | |
| | 11 | 1 | 7 | 4.507 | 2.002 | -0.330 | -0.855 | 5.65 | 1.253 | -0.902 | 0.916 |
| | 12 | 1 | 7 | 4.588 | 1.881 | -0.562 | -0.686 | 5.59 | 1.177 | -0.550 | -0.228 |
| | 13 | 1 | 7 | 4.149 | 2.110 | -0.348 | -1.189 | Data unavailable | | | |

| | | | | Survey | | | | Park (2011) | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Construct | Item | Min | Max | Mean | STD | Skewness | Kurtosis | Mean | STD | Skewness | Kurtosis |
| BSN relationship quality | 14 | 1 | 7 | 4.020 | 2.168 | -0.217 | -1.405 | 3.86 | 1.932 | 0.037 | 1.167 |
| | 15 | 1 | 7 | 3.705 | 2.121 | -0.055 | -1.428 | 3.61 | 1.942 | 0.156 | -1.152 |
| | 16 | 1 | 7 | 3.865 | 2.137 | -0.0801 | -1.219 | 4.52 | 1.771 | -0.373 | -0.682 |
| | 17 | 1 | 7 | 2.600 | 2.470 | 1.229 | 0.488 | 4.04 | 2.037 | -0.159 | -1.270 |
| | 18 | 1 | 7 | 2.541 | 2.134 | 1.121 | 0.368 | 3.86 | 2.013 | 0.021 | -1.245 |
| | 19 | 1 | 7 | 3.115 | 2.409 | 0.896 | -0.045 | 4.77 | 1.597 | -0.449 | -0.315 |
| | 20 | 1 | 7 | 4.415 | 1.872 | -0.379 | -0.888 | Data unavailable | | | |

| | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | 21 | 1 | 7 | 4.531 | 1.953 | -0.394 | -0.793 | Data unavailable | | |
| | 22 | 1 | 7 | 4.669 | 1.853 | -0.505 | -0739 | Data unavailable | | |
| | 23 | 1 | 7 | 4.101 | 2.163 | -0.312 | -1.401 | 4.01 | 2.003 | -0.148 | -1.175 |
| | 24 | 1 | 7 | 4.236 | 1.963 | -0.440 | -1.031 | Data unavailable | | |
| | 25 | 1 | 7 | 4.115 | 2.075 | -0.192 | -1.254 | 4.66 | 1.621 | -0.377 | -0.494 |
| | 26 | 1 | 7 | 3.986 | 2.010 | -0.251 | -1.254 | 4.71 | 1.669 | -0.462 | -0.382 |

| | | | | Survey | | | | Park (2011) | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Construct | Item | Min | Max | Mean | STD | Skewness | Kurtosis | Mean | STD | Skewness | Kurtosis |
| BSN Relationship | 27 | 1 | 7 | 4.503 | 1.694 | -0.585 | -0.431 | 5.32 | 1.304 | -0.560 | 0.074 |
| | 28 | 1 | 7 | 4.581 | 1.682 | -0.551 | -0.378 | 5.28 | 1.378 | -0.625 | 0.076 |
| | 29 | 1 | 7 | 4.689 | 1.694 | -0.668 | -0.230 | 5.29 | 1.319 | -0.593 | 0.209 |

| | | | | Survey | | | | Park (2011) | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Construct | Item | Min | Max | Mean | STD | Skewness | Kurtosis | Mean | STD | Skewness | Kurtosis |
| Brand Relationship Quality | 30 | 1 | 7 | 4.419 | 1.913 | -0.509 | -0.868 | 4.61 | 1.716 | -0.520 | -0.486 |
| | 31 | 1 | 7 | 3.562 | 1.993 | 0.777 | -0.820 | 4.84 | 1.544 | -0.503 | -0.146 |
| | 32 | 1 | 7 | 3.041 | 2.086 | 0.219 | -1.029 | 4.70 | 1.685 | -0.424 | -0.487 |

| | | | | Survey | | | | Park (2011) | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Construct | Item | Min | Max | Mean | STD | Skewness | Kurtosis | Mean | STD | Skewness | Kurtosis |
| BSN WOM | 33 | 1 | 7 | 3.898 | 2.063 | -0.042 | -1.130 | 4.48 | 1.842 | -0.417 | -0.860 |
| | 34 | 1 | 7 | 3.885 | 2.143 | -0.038 | -1.268 | 4.30 | 1.864 | -0.290 | -0.965 |
| | 35 | 1 | 7 | 3.685 | 2.094 | 0.056 | -1.217 | 4.70 | 1.718 | -0.502 | -0.571 |
| | 36 | 1 | 7 | 3.905 | 2.200 | -0.061 | -1.404 | 4.62 | 1.797 | -0.463 | -0.659 |

| | | | | Survey | | | | Park (2011) | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Construct | Item | Min | Max | Mean | STD | Skewness | Kurtosis | Mean | STD | Skewness | Kurtosis |
| Willingness to pay premium | 37 | 1 | 7 | 4.061 | 2.123 | -0.249 | -1.094 | 4.73 | 1.687 | -0.552 | -0.419 |
| | 38 | 1 | 7 | 4.595 | 1.927 | -0.722 | -0.642 | 4.99 | 1.535 | -0.649 | -0.003 |

*Note*

*The mean score was based on a 7-poimt likert scale (1=Strongly disagree and 7=Strongly agree) *Key: Item code (Appendix B)

The reliabilities of the construct are presented in table 8 and table 9. According to Nunnally and Bernstein (1994), they suggested composite reliability should be above 0.70 for internal consistency. The range from the construct for this research study is between 0.745 and 0.944, which shows internal consistency.

Table 8: comparison of Construct and Composite reliability between the survey and Park (2011)

| | Survey | | Park (2011) | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Construct | Number of items | Composite reliability | Number of items | Composite reliability |
| Experiential benefit | 6 | 0.913 | 7 | 0.946 |
| Functional benefit | 7 | 0.857 | 7 | 0.923 |
| BSN relationship quality | 13 | 0.932 | 13 | 0.964 |
| BSN Relationship | 3 | 0.944 | 3 | 0.897 |
| Brand relationship quality | 3 | 0.944 | 3 | 0.895 |
| BSN WOM | 4 | 0.906 | 4 | 0.943 |
| Willingness to pay premium | 2 | 0.745 | 2 | 0.936 |

Many researchers have explored motivations or the benefits of using online consumer communities, which is related to the social aspects. Within this research paper, the social benefit is defined as a consumers' perception of the extent to which Brand Social Network offers social benefits. These include interaction and communication with other consumers. As the items for social benefit questions were adopted from Dholakia et al. (2009), it measured social media users on how they perceived social benefit from a certain brand.

The informational benefit section (Functional benefit and experiential benefit) of the Brand social network measures a consumer's perception of the extent to which a BSN offers informational resources such as brand information and news of the product, events or activities.

The Brand Social Network relationship quality is the consumers overall assessment of strength of his/ her relationship with the Brand Social Network.

The construct for the perceived relationship investment is to understand the consumers' perception on how much the brand devotes its resources, efforts, and attention in maintaining or enhancing relationships with the consumer.

Brand relationship quality is a measure of the brand community, while Brand Social Network. BSN WOM, for this construct is defined as how the consumer praises a Brand Social Network to others.

Willingness to pay price premium assesss how loyal the consumer is towards the brand, the construct is to see if a consumer is willing to pay a higher price for a particular brand item when it is less expensive elsewhere (Chaidhuri & Ligas, 2009).

Table 9: Final measurement model: Factor loadings and reliability (Survey)

| Variable | Factor Loading | t-value | Composite reliability |
|---|---|---|---|
| The social aspects of (#brand)'s Facebook page are important to me | 0.83 | ---- | |
| On (#brand)'s Facebook page, I get to know other people who are interested in this brand | 0.81 | 30.38*** | |
| I enjoy communicating with other members on (#brand)'s FB page | 0.85 | 26.80*** | 0.948 |
| I enjoy browsing and/or participating in (#brand)'s FB page | 0.80 | 27.46*** | |
| Browsing and/or participating in (#brand)'s FB page enriches my life | 0.84 | 26.76*** | |
| The information provided by (#brand)'s FB page is valuable | 0.15 | ----- | |
| The information provided by (#brand)'s FB page is useful | 0.59 | 8.18*** | |
| (#brand)'s FB page provides information at an appropriate level of detail | 0.56 | 8.14*** | 0.813 |
| (#brand)'s FB page provides special offers (e,g. discounts, promotions) for me. | 0.62 | 7.72*** | |
| (#brand)'s FB page provides updates on upcoming sales | 0.59 | 6.87*** | |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| (#brand)’s FB page plays an important role in my daily life | 0.81 | 7.72*** | |
| I feel something is amiss when I stop using (#brand)’s FB page | 0.85 | 6.87*** | |
| I have made a commitment to (#brand)’s FB page | 0.84 | 17.64*** | |
| I am willing to make sacrifices to keep using (#brand)’s FB page | 0.40 | 18.24*** | |
| I will stay with (#brand)’s FB page through good times and bad times | 0.45 | 5.87*** | 0.932 |
| (#brand)’s FB page adds a sense of stability to my life | 0.47 | 7.39*** | |
| (#brand)’s FB page treats me like a valuable customer | 0.89 | 25.17*** | |
| (#brand)’s FB page shows continuing interest in me | 0.82 | 18.02*** | |
| (#brand)’s FB page takes good care of me | 0.84 | 16.72*** | |
| (#brand)’s makes efforts to increase customers’ loyalty | 0.87 | 17.50*** | |
| (#brand)’s makes various efforts to improve its ties with customers | 0.76 | 17.59*** | 0.944 |
| (#brand) really cares about keeping customers | 0.76 | 16.11*** | |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| (#brand) says a lot about the kind of person I am | 0.70 | 3.57*** | 0.567 |
| (#brand)'s image and my self-image are similar in many respects | 0.76 | 1.73*** | |
| (#brand) plays an important role in my life | 0.42 | 6.72*** | |
| I have recommended (#brand)'s FB page to lots of people | 0.32 | 4.32*** | 0.879 |
| I 'talk up' (#brand)'s FB page to my friends | 0.83 | 6.43*** | |
| I try to spread the good word about (#brand)'s FB page | 0.80 | 6.72*** | |
| I give (#brand)'s FB page lots of positive word-of-mouth advertising | 0.70 | ---- | |
| I would be willing to pay a higher price for (#brand) over other similar brands | 0.66 | 12.89*** | 0.746 |
| I prefer to purchase from (#brand) even if another brand advertises a lower price | 0.68 | ---- | |

Table 10: Final measurement model: Factor loadings and reliability (Park, 2011)

| Construct | Variable | Factor Loading | t-value | Composite reliability |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Experiential benefit | The social aspects of (#brand)'s Facebook page are important to me | 0.890 | --- | 0.932 |
| | On (#brand)'s Facebook page, I get to know other people who are interested in this brand | 0.799 | 21.024** | |
| | I enjoy communicating with other members on (#brand)'s FB page | 0.812 | 21.626*** | |
| | I enjoy browsing and/or participating in (#brand)'s FB page | 0.883 | 25.580*** | |
| | Browsing and/or participating in (#brand)'s FB page enriches my life | 0.890 | 25.769*** | |
| Functional benefit | The information provided by (#brand)'s FB page is valuable | 0.862 | --- | 0.918 |
| | The information provided by (#brand)'s FB page is useful | 0.872 | 23.069*** | |
| | (#brand)'s FB page provides information at an appropriate level of detail | 0.876 | 23.196*** | |
| | (#brand)'s FB page provides special offers (e,g. discounts, promotions) for me. | 0.750 | 17.666*** | |
| | (#brand)'s FB page provides updates on upcoming sales | 0.791 | 18.032*** | |

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| BSN relationship quality | (#brand)'s FB page plays an important role in my daily life | 0.880 | ---- | 0.964 |
| | I feel something is amiss when I stop using (#brand)'s FB page | 0.844 | 26.515 | |
| | I have made a commitment to (#brand)'s FB page | 0.865 | 25.266*** | |
| | I am willing to make sacrifices to keep using (#brand)'s FB page | 0.868 | 24.545*** | |
| | I will stay with (#brand)'s FB page through good times and bad times | 0.896 | 30.512*** | |
| | (#brand)'s FB page adds a sense of stability to my life | 0.846 | 20.379*** | |
| | (#brand)'s FB page treats me like a valuable customer | 0.906 | 27.079*** | |
| | (#brand)'s FB page shows continuing interest in me | 0.846 | 23.059*** | |
| | (#brand)'s FB page takes good care of me | 0.828 | 19.886*** | |
| BSN relationship | (#brand)'s makes efforts to increase customers' loyalty | 0.863 | 22.218*** | 0.897 |
| | (#brand)'s makes various efforts to improve its ties with customers | 0.866 | 22.394*** | |
| | (#brand) really cares about keeping customers | 0.858 | ---- | |

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Brand Relationship Quality | (#brand) says a lot about the kind of person I am | 0.832 | 22.136*** | 0.894 |
| | (#brand)'s image and my self-image are similar in many respects | 0.864 | 23.839*** | |
| | (#brand) plays an important role in my life | 0.882 | ---- | |
| BSN Word of mouth | I have recommended (#brand)'s FB page to lots of people | 0.915 | 29.966*** | 0.947 |
| | I 'talk up' (#brand)'s FB page to my friends | 0.887 | 24.240*** | |
| | I try to spread the good word about (#brand)'s FB page | 0.901 | 28.476*** | |
| | I give (#brand)'s FB page lots of positive word-of-mouth advertising | 0.911 | ---- | |
| Willingness to pay price premium | I would be willing to pay a higher price for (#brand) over other similar brands | 0.864 | 21.777*** | 0.858 |
| | I prefer to purchase from (#brand) even if another brand advertises a lower price | 0.870 | ---- | |

Table 11: Correlation matrix of constructs (Survey)

| | Experiential Benefit | Functional Benefit | BSN relationship quality | BSN relationship | Brand Relationship quality | BSN WOM | Willingness to pay price premium |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Experiential Benefit | 1 | | | | | | |
| Functional Benefit | 0.36238 | 1 | | | | | |
| BSN relationship quality | 0.50228 | 0.19405 | 1 | | | | |
| BSN relationship | -0.13902 | 0.1994 | 0.18711 | 1 | | | |
| Brand Relationship quality | 0.13135 | -0.1186 | 0.02481 | 0.3151 | 1 | | |
| BSN WOM | 0.22899 | -0.14163 | 0.32275 | 0.16626 | 0.00662 | 1 | |
| Willingness to pay price premium | -0.04477 | 0.12834 | 0.04587 | 0.20643 | 0.07707 | 0.36181 | 1 |

Table 12: Correlation matrixes construct (Park, 2011)

| | Experiential Benefit | Functional Benefit | BSN relationship quality | BSN relationship | Brand Relationship quality | BSN WOM | Willingness to pay price premium |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Experiential Benefit | 1 | | | | | | |
| Functional Benefit | 0.722 | 1 | | | | | |
| BSN relationship quality | 0.909 | 0.648 | 1 | | | | |
| BSN relationship | 0.713 | 0.873 | 0.697 | 1 | | | |
| Brand Relationship quality | 0.844 | 0.730 | 0.899 | 0.827 | 1 | | |
| BSN WOM | 0.882 | 0.664 | 0.922 | 0.708 | 0.833 | 1 | |
| Willingness to pay price premium | 0.737 | 0.725 | 0.796 | 0.811 | 0.930 | 0.767 | 1 |

There are a few strong correlation namely experiential benefit and BSN relationship quality as well as experiential benefit and Functional Benefit.

There are also a few negative correlations between the measurement construct namely experiential benefit and BSN relationship, functional benefit and BSN relationship quality and functional benefit and BSN WOM. Both the functional and experiential between are informational benefit.

Results obtained from the survey and the results from Park (2011) reflects that the results are not the same. This could be due to different brand community being used as well as product preference.

Table 13: Structural path, correlation and t-value

| Structural path | Standard Est. | Standard error | t-value |
|---|---|---|---|
| Experiential benefits → Brand social network relationship quality | 0.455 | 0.513 | 8.87*** |
| Functional benefit → Brand community on social network relationship quality | 0.344 | 0.570 | 6.041*** |
| Brand Social Network Relationship Quality → Brand Relationship Quality | 0.677 | 0.035 | 19.355*** |
| Brand Social Network Relationship Quality → BSN WOM | 0.586 | 0.042 | 13.811*** |
| Brand Relationship Quality →BSN WOM | 0.804 | 0.023 | 35.178*** |
| Brand Relationship Quality → Willingness to pay price premium | 0.441 | 0.052 | 8.475*** |
| BSN WOM → Willingness to pay price premium | 0.716 | 0.0315 | 22.732*** |

***p<0.001

**Research hypothesis 1:** Experiential benefit will have a positive effect on BSN Relationship Quality. In this result, it has shown that consumers who have some experience with the product and have benefitted from it; tend to build a stronger brand social network relationship with the company. Therefore, research hypothesis one is supported.

**Research hypothesis 2:** Functional benefit will have a positive effect on BSN Relationship Quality. Consumers, whom have used the product and have seen it via the Internet, tend to build a stronger relationship in the brand community on the social network and therefore fail to reject research hypothesis 2.

**Research hypothesis 5:** Brand social network relationship quality will have a positive effect on Brand Relationship Quality. The relationship between Brand social network relationship quality and brand relationship was significant ($p<0001$), therefore research hypothesis 5 is supported.

**Research hypothesis 8:** Brand Relationship quality will have a positive effect on Brand Social network word-of-mouth. The relationship between Brand social network relationship quality and Social Network word-of mouth was significant ($p<0001$), therefore research hypothesis 8 is supported.

**Research hypothesis 9:** Brand Relationship quality will have a positive effect on the consumers who are willing to pay the premium price. The relationship between Brand relationship quality and the willingness to pay the premium was significant ($p<0001$), therefore research hypothesis 9 is supported.

**Research hypothesis 10:** Brand Social Network Relationship Quality will have an influence on the Brand Social Network Word-of-Mouth. The relationship between Brand social network relationship quality and brand Social Network Word-of-Mouth was significant ($p<0001$), therefore research hypothesis 10 is supported.

**Research hypothesis 11:** Brand Social Network word of mouth has a positive effect on the consumers who are willing to pay the premium price. The relationship between Brand social network word of mouth and consumers who are willing to pay

the premium price was significant (p<0001), therefore research hypothesis 5 is supported.

Table 14: Test for structural relationships

| Relationship | Coefficient (S.E.) |
|---|---|
| Consumer/Brand → Brand trust | 0.355 (0.102)* |
| Consumer/ Product → Brand trust | 0.345 (0.037)* |
| Consumer/ Company → Brand trust | 0.251 (0.069)* |

*Significant at p<.05

**Research hypothesis 3:** Consumer's relationships with the brand, product, company and other consumers on the social media have a positive influence on the brand trust.

Table 13 shows that all the path coefficients are significant and that they are all positive, therefore research hypothesis 3 is supported.

Table 15: Respondents type (International entrepreneurs)

TYPE OF RESPONDENTS

| Position | Education level | N (%) |
|---|---|---|
| Senior management | Master's Degree | 2 (33) |
| | University honours degree (Including 4th year of engineering and the like | 1 (16) |
| Middle/ lower management or professional | Master's Degree | 1 (16) |
| | University undergraduate degree or BTech | 1(16) |
| Specialist technical | Grade 10 of high school and Grade 12 of high school | 1(16) |

Most international entrepreneurs have a high level of education, however this seen opposite where there is less international entrepreneurs with a lower qualification

Table 16: Most popular social media network used by international entrepreneurs and the hours spent

| | | | Hours spent (%) | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Social media network | N (%) | < 1 Hour | 2-3 Hours | 4-5 Hours | >6 Hours |
| 1 | Facebook | 6 | 0.15% | 0.44% | 3.50% | 12.55% |
| 2 | LinkedIn | 3 | 3.21% | 3.50% | 4.4% | 0.44% |
| 3 | Twitter | 3 | 1.61% | 0.29% | 1.46% | 2.63% |
| 4 | YouTube | 1 | 0.58% | 1.31% | 0.29% | 0.15% |
| 5 | Flickr | 4 | 0.15% | 0 | 0 | 2.5% |
| 6 | Vimeo | 1 | 1.17% | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 7 | MySpace | 0 | 0.29% | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 8 | Tumblr | 3 | 4.23% | 0 | 0 | 1.20% |
| 9 | Google+ | 6 | 0.29% | 0 | 0 | 3.4% |
| 10 | Other | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |

International entrepreneurs tend to spend less time on social media platforms, with an average of less than 2%. Most of the time spent on social media is through LinkedIn as opposed to Facebook, which most large corporate companies use.

Table 17: The number of years of international entrepreneurs using the most popular social media network

| | | | Years (%) | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Social media network | N (%) | < 1 Year | 2-3 Years | 4-5 Years | >6 Years |
| 1 | Facebook | 6 | 0.36 | 8.8 | 0 | 0 |
| 2 | LinkedIn | 3 | 0.34 | 8.7 | 0 | 0 |
| 3 | Twitter | 3 | 0.70 | 8.1 | 0 | 0 |
| 4 | YouTube | 1 | 0.70 | 8.3 | 0 | 0 |
| 5 | Flickr | 4 | 0.73 | 7.3 | 0 | 0 |
| 6 | Vimeo | 1 | 0.71 | 0.71 | 0 | 0 |
| 7 | MySpace | 0 | 0.72 | 0.65 | 0 | 0 |
| 8 | Tumblr | 3 | 0.80 | 0.55 | 0 | 0 |
| 9 | Google+ | 6 | 0.80 | 0.58 | 0 | 0 |
| 10 | Other | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |

*4.1. Interviews with international entrepreneurs*

*Company A: Case A*

Case A is a Toy company situated in South Africa, that is one of the few companies that have the exclusive rights to sell marvel comics, DC comic, Star Wars, Disney, and Warner Bros products. The owner of the company has been living in South Africa for the past 10 years. The yearly turnover (after expense and tax) is close to R70 000. At the beginning, the owner started off as a wholesaler selling products from China and after several years of frustration of bargaining good prices from suppliers, he decided to open a different company which sold limited and unique toys.

*Company B: Case B*

Case B is a steel company situated in South Africa, where the owner started off as a junior accountant in the company and after 7 years, bought the company. Prior to the company's change of ownership, the company focused on local business and most of the equipment was manufactured locally. Because of the weakening rand the owner decided to place the company on the Internet. The company decided to purchase products overseas and sell it locally with the aid of the social media and as a result, the company has made an astonishing profit of almost R.30 000 on average per month.

*Company C: Case C*

Case C is a Martial Arts Company based in the USA. The owner was originally from China. His first overseas business venture started in 1996 to South Africa and after travelling to several international competitions across the world, he decided to move to the USA. After the dot.com boom and using the Internet to brand his school, he decided to use social media to promote a more philosophical teaching outlook. Since then, he has attracted 100 students per year who study with him.

Company D: Case D

Case D is a modelling agency in India. The owner is a female, who was hoping to study medicine and in her spare time model for different agencies. Seeing that there was potential in the modelling world, she decided to further her studies in Postgraduate Diploma in Business management. She then started to work in a corporate environment and after several years of questioning herself she decided to start her own company, Gamiifcation. Using the Internet and social media, she now has a large client list all over the world

Company E: Case E

Case E is an eco-tour specialist situated in Ghana. This company provides day and night ecotourism experience and have appealed to clients all over the world. At the start, the local business driven model of the company was to educate local people about their surroundings. After several years, some volunteers from Europe visited the area and noticed its unique environment. This led owner to start an international business model and due to financial and telecommunication instability; he used the social media to advertise his company.

Table 18: Case study analysis of the international entrepreneurial (Glavas and Mathews, 2014)

| Participants case number | Job role of the entrepreneurs | Age of entrepreneur | Gender of entrepreneur | Country of origin of the entrepreneur | International business experience of the entrepreneur | Firms years of establishment | Firms year of first international activity | Firms number of employees |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Case A | Founder and CEO | 38 | Male | Hong Kong | Yes | 5 | 5 | 20 |
| Case B | Owner | 42 | Male | South Africa | Yes | 3 | 1 | 17 |
| Case C | Founder and Grandmaster | 40 | Male | China | Yes | 10 | 7 | 4 |
| Case D | Founder and CEO | 28 | Female | India | Yes | 6 | 2 | 2 |
| Case E | Founder and manager | 50 | Male | Ghana | Yes | 2 | 0 | 0 |

Table 19: Case study analysis of the international entrepreneurial using social media (Glavas and Mathews, 2014)

| Participants case number | Firm descriptive type | Firms main use of the Internet | Intensity of Internet use within the firm | Note |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Case A | Toy Company | Website, email, advertising and public relations | High | Struggle at times to post update news onto the Internet |
| Case B | Steel company | Website, email, marketing | Moderate | Staff are not well equipped with the knowledge on how social media works |
| Case C | Martial art company | Website, email, marketing | Low | Have to scrutinise information before posting |
| Case D | Model agency and education | Website, email, marketing, | Moderate | Little time to post onto social media |
| Case E | Tourism | marketing | Low | Still learning on how social media platform operates |

Case A is the sole distributor for Marvel Comics, DC Comics, Star Wars, Disney as well as Warner Bros franchise. A large volume of emails are received from potential sellers which has left the company at times struggling to update their website as well as their social network site. Thus consumers tend to phone in and ask about their new product range adding more pressure to the company in answering the consumers requests on time.

Case B was a change in ownership; therefore the new owner as well as the staff do not have the knowledge on how the Internet or social network operates.

Case C has a low level use of the Internet, as the product/service is mostly physically done, most of the potential consumers will have seen it either during a performance or website and would physically visit him.

Case D gets clients from word of mouth; however, she is sole worker of the company which means most of the time, she is not able to update the social network or Internet on time.

Case E started off as a local business and after a visit from a volunteer nearby, this gave him the idea to advertise his business through the Internet as well as the social media. However due to the generation gap, there is difficulty for the owner to learn how the Internet or social networks function.

Table 18: Key international entrepreneur characteristics elicited during the interview (Glavas and Mathews, 2014)

| Characteristics | Case and level characteristics presented in the research | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Characteristics influencing Internet application in international business process | A | B | C | D | E |
| International innovativeness | High | Moderate | Low | Moderate | Low |
| International proactiveness | Moderate | High | High | Moderate | High |
| International business experience | High | Low | High | High | Low |

Keys: High, (high) levels of behaviour recorded, Moderate, (moderate) levels of behaviour recorded, Low, (low) levels of behaviour recorded

*International innovativeness*

The findings of this research, table 18 shows that there 1 out of the 6 cases internationally focused firms displayed a high level of international innovativeness behaviour. After the release of a block buster movie from Marvel comics, Iron man and spiderman, there was model or figurine that resemble the movie action hero. the owner then made a request, in obtaining exclusive rights to produce the marvel hero figurine as well as be the sole seller of the franchise. After several months of negotiation, Marvel comics granted him the distribution as well as the sole seller of the Marvel comic action figure in South Africa

*International proactiveness*

Four out of the 6 international entrepreneurs in this research specified that they are still hoping to grow their social network presence as well as increasing the traffic flow of visitors surfing their webpage. However, two companies showed moderate proactiveness, when probed,

Case A said

“Everybody knows what Marvel comics and DC comic is, so there is no need to increase a fan base. Since the movie does all the marketing in promoting their film, I just have to make sure that I deliver my product in time to the stores”

Case D said

“As we are a model agency, there is no need to do marketing, as models are the face of the product. Whenever you put a picture of a model onto a webpage or social network, without asking them to click on the link, they will click on it anyway”

**Research hypothesis 7:** International entrepreneur’s high innovation and high proactiveness have a positive effect on the online brand community. This hypothesis

is rejected, as they have financial constraint. Case C is a typical example, where there is a low innovation and a proactiviness.

*International business experience*

Three out of the six entrepreneurs showed high levels of international business experience attitude, this could be due to the fact that they have lived overseas and it could be their experience living overseas that gave them the knowledge in living in a foreign country. Case A lived in Hong Kong for over 30 years, when starting a new business in South Africa, he brought point of view when establishing his own business. He did not follow the traditional way, of how South Africans did their business instead he applied a contemporary approach in doing business in South Africa.

Case C is a martial art expert, after spending most of his career in China . In 1996, he left China to start a martial art school business in South Africa. From the high crime rate in South Africa, he used the knowledge that he had gained from training and taught local citizens. After travelling to most parts of the world, he found that the USA are lacking the connection between Eastern philosophy and Chinese Martial arts.

Case D lived in Europe for a couple of years before returning to India. She brought a vast knowledge on how to promote and train potential models which is where India lacked.

Table 21: The average number of activities posted by the international entrepreneur on social media over a period of 8 weeks

| | Case and the average number of visit onto the company social network site | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Activities that are found on the social network site | A | B | C | D | E | F |
| Facebook fans | 1656 | 300 | 231 | 390 | 368 | 500 |
| “Like” post | 5 | 4 | 8 | 7 | 3 | 13 |
| “Response” post | 2 | 5 | 2 | 2 | 1 | 2 |
| Twitter follower | 0 | 450 | 0 | 250 | 0 | 4 |
| Twitter retweet | 0 | 20 | 0 | 6 | 0 | 7 |
| linkedin | 0 | 4 | 0 | 265 | 0 | 36 |

Table 22: Reasons for companies to use the social network sites

| | Reasons | N (%) |
|---|---|---|
| 1 | To attract new consumers | 6 (100 %) |
| 2 | To interact with consumers | 6 (100 %) |
| 3 | To increase company brand | 5 (83.0 %) |
| 4 | To communicate with consumers online | 4 (67.0 %) |
| 5 | To get feedback from consumers | 1 (16.7 %) |

**Research hypothesis 4:** International entrepreneur's informational and social content drive will have a positive effect on the BSN Relationship Quality. This research hypothesis is rejected due to the fact that they do not want to get any feedback from their consumers (n=4).

**Research hypothesis 6:** Brand social network relationship quality will have a positive effect on international entrepreneur's creativity content drive.

International entrepreneurs were asked several interview questions and was asked to select the closest reason in joining online social network that is related to their company. Table 19 summarises the main reason why international entrepreneurs use the social network site and the Internet. 27% international entrepreneurs answered during the interview that they would like to attract more customers as well as interacting with the consumer; however different CASE (table) had different approach in using the Internet as the social network site. Interaction with consumers

in this context is defined as the international entrepreneurs posting informational information about the product and service that the company offers.

Only one international firm stated that they would like to provide a better service for their customer thus they would like to get some feedback from their customer

Table 23: Barriers companies face when using the social network sites

| | Reasons | N (%) |
|---|---|---|
| 1 | Social network site are not important within the company operations | 2 (12.5 %) |
| 2 | Uncertainty whether or how social network sites could help brands | 6 (100 %) |
| 3 | Staff are not familiar with the social network sites | 4 (67.0 %) |
| 4 | Competitors do not use social network sites | 5 (83.0%) |
| 5 | Staff do not have the technical skills to use social network sites | 5 (83.0 %) |

Two international entrepreneurs acknowledge that the social network site is not important within the company operations, this could be due to their workload and pressure that they face every day in which they are unable to look into the social network site

However, all six international entrepreneurs noted that there is an uncertainty about how effective is the social network sites, adding to that, as they know other competitors are not using the social network site, they wanted to become the pioneer in their field.

**Research hypothesis 12:** International entrepreneur's continuous engagement on the social media will have a positive effect on online product reviews**.**

with all the interviews, most of the international entrepreneurs have repeatedly said that they don't have the time nor the skills in using the social media network. Therefore research hypothesis 12 is not supported as international entrepreneurs are not able to engage with the social media continuously.

*International entrepreneurs entering the foreign market: Porter's five force model*

This section examines the foreign market in which the international entrepreneurs physically operate.

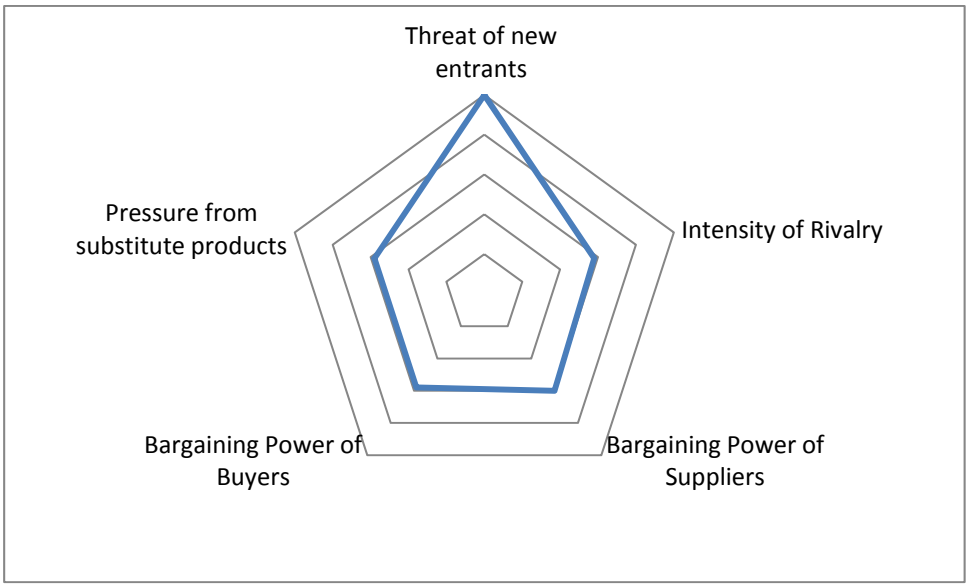



Figure 11: Porter's five forces analysis for Case A

Case A have secured the sole license as a distributor for Marvel comics, Disney, Star Wars as well as Warner Bros. Threats from new entrants is high, as a sole distributor, products are set high which allows other competitor to enter the market and sell it at a lower price.

Case A has managed to establish a relationship with other stores as well as their consume which lowers the intensity of competitors. As the model figurine are scare, the consumer has little say in purchasing their product, however interestingly, the supplier is also seen the same.

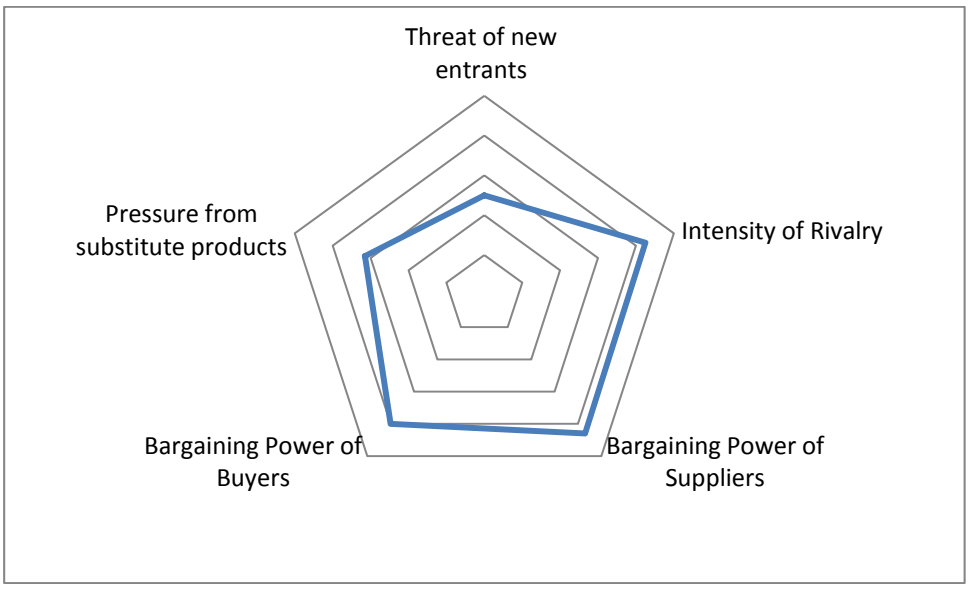



Figure 12: Porter's five forces analysis for Case B

Case B, was a takeover from the previous business owner. However from the previous owner, social media was not part of the company marketing strategy. There are little threats from new entrants, due to the fact that from the previous owner, relationship between consumer-company has been established. However, other companies who are in the same industry from the same period have utilized the online social network. This has caused massive rivalry competition, as other companies have dominated the online social media environment. There is also a

high bargaining power for the buyer and supplier, and this could be caused from rivalry online social network marketing campaign.

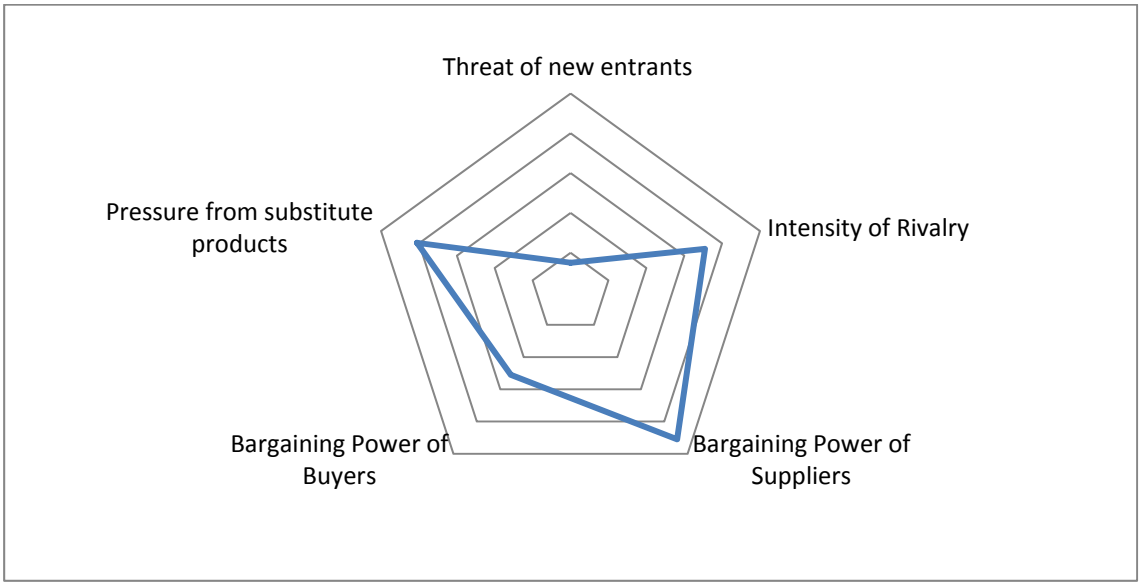



Figure 13: Porter's five forces analysis for Case C

There is little threat from new entrants, Case C owner noted that this is due to his personal teaching style. As most consumers seek for the unique feeling and teaching. There is a high intensity rivalry from other already established school in the surrounding area. The school relies on equipment made overseas, in which case C owner mentioned that at times when you need certain equipment, the suppliers tend to raise their price. Consumers are willing to spend on the fees, the reason is because of the new motto everybody is trying to live by, "eat healthy, stay healthy"

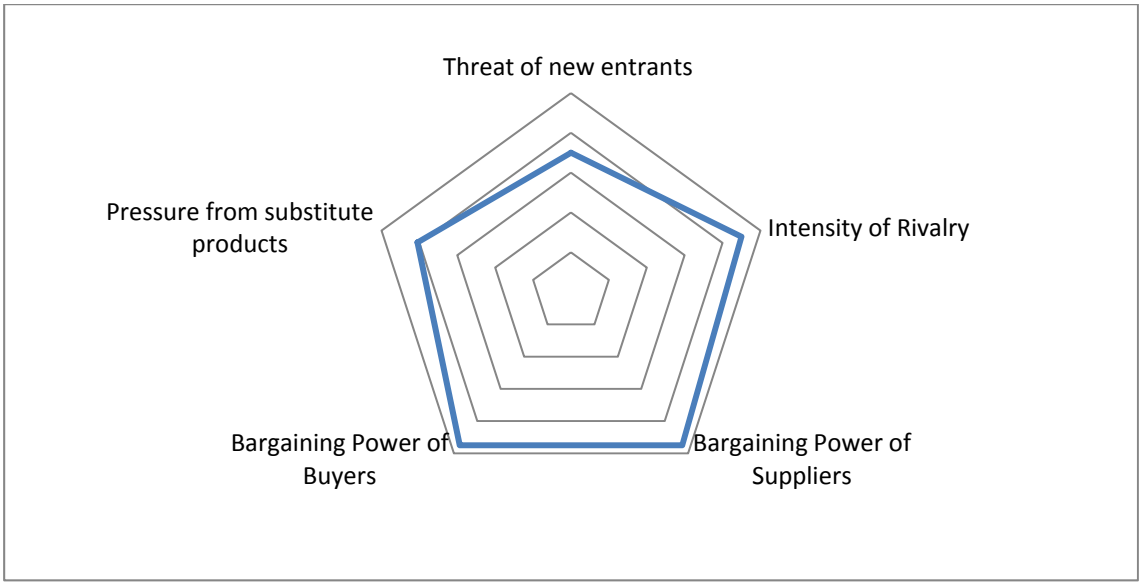



Figure 14: Porter's five forces analysis for Case D

Case D is a model agency in India, and recently there is a large boom in the model market. Entrance for new business owner is moderate however getting models and paying models for their work is intense. Some companies have resorted in using professional models and have substituted it with undergraduate students.

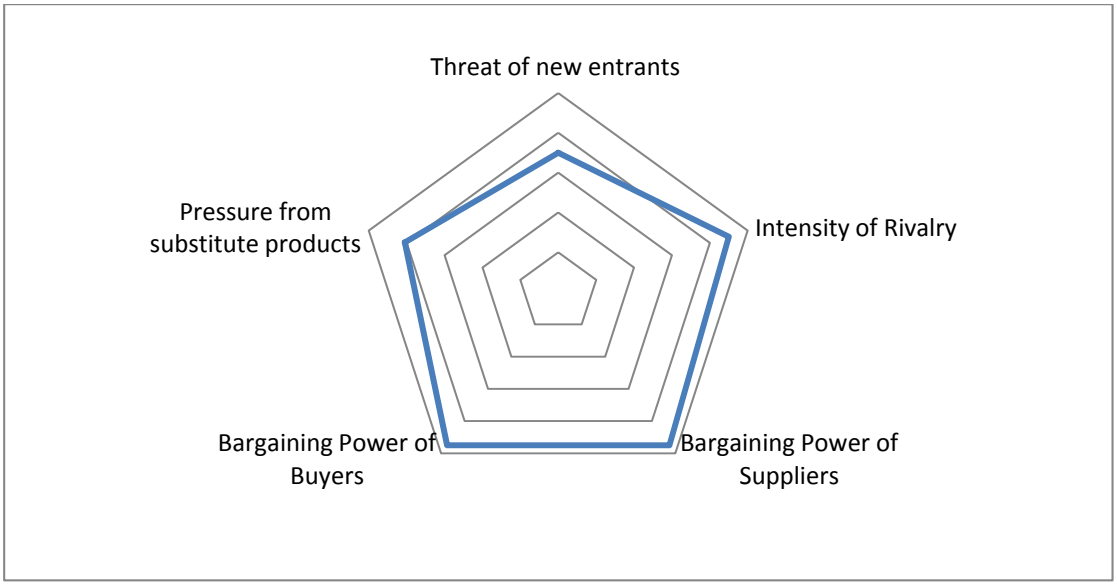



Figure 15: Porter's five forces analysis for Case E

Case E owner began to use the online social media at a late stage, therefore, to establish a business in the country is very difficult. The owner has experienced intense rivalry and at times, struggle to get equipment from the suppliers. As the business is still in its infant stage, consumers tend to bargain for a better price which diminishes Case E owner revenue.

*Social media network Analysis from case studies*

**Case A**

Case A deals mainly with famous brands, who are now turning towards the film industry. For Case A, marketing the product will not be meaningful as most consumers will have already experienced the movie. From the network analysis, we can see that there are a few strong relationship (bold lines). Consumers are the grey dot, which illustrates how case A consumer interact with one another.

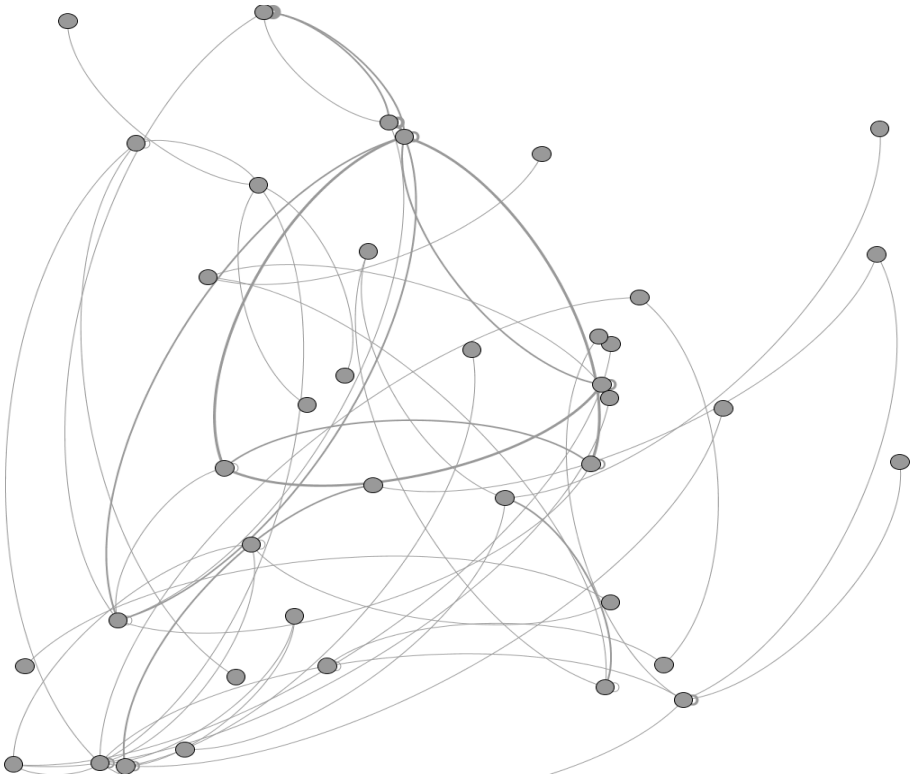


Figure 16: Social Media analysis for Case A (39 Nodes, 65 Edges)

**Case B**

Case B shows that their relationship with the consumer is very spacious and is not closely connected. This is due to the fact that they have entered into the online social network at a very late stage and other competitor has taken the online social media network space.

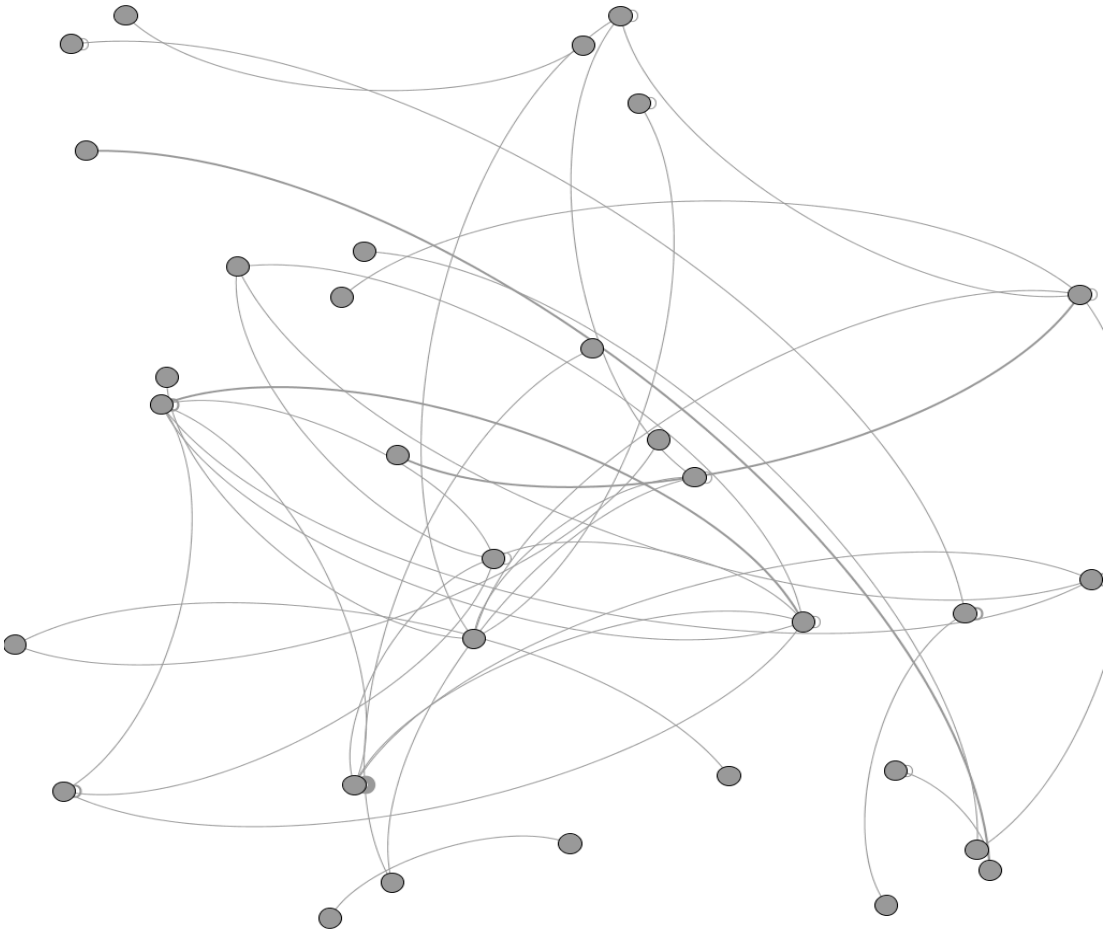


Figure 17: Social Media analysis for Case B (32 Nodes, 49 Edges)

**Case C**

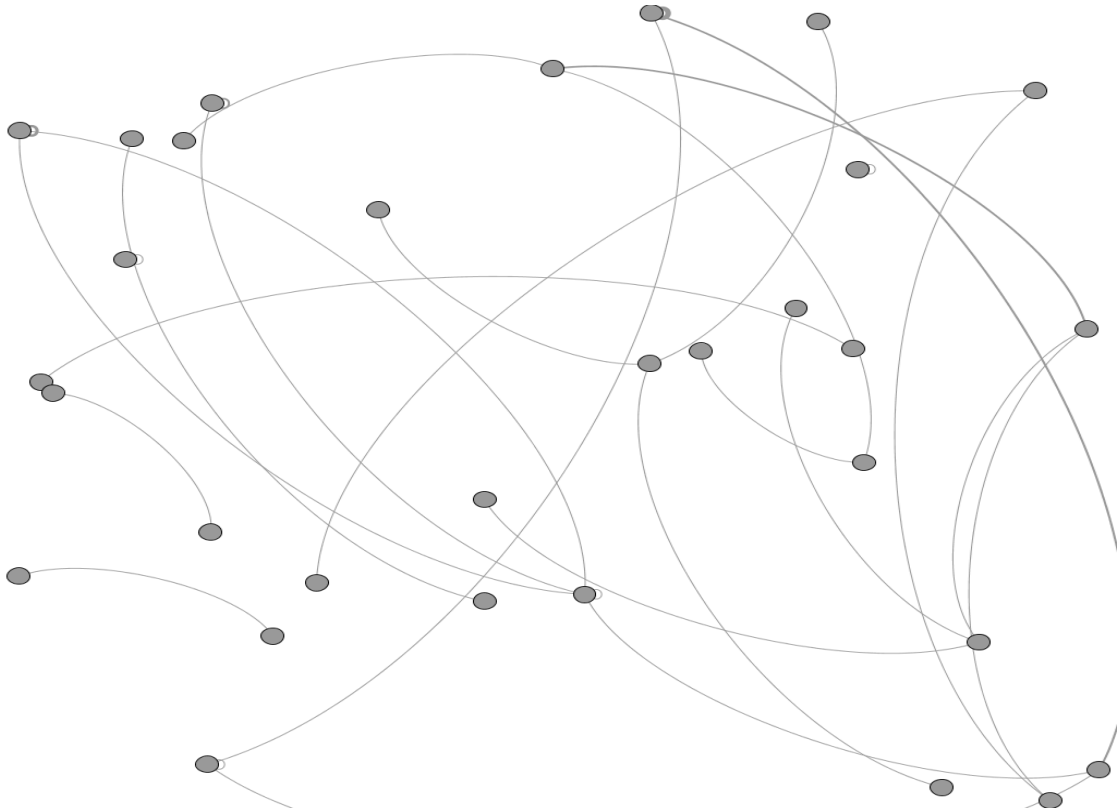


Figure 18: Social Media analysis for Case C (31 Nodes, 31 Edges)

The relationship between case C owner and this consumer are very weak. This could be due to the fact that competitor in the surrounding area are also using the online social media network

**Case D**

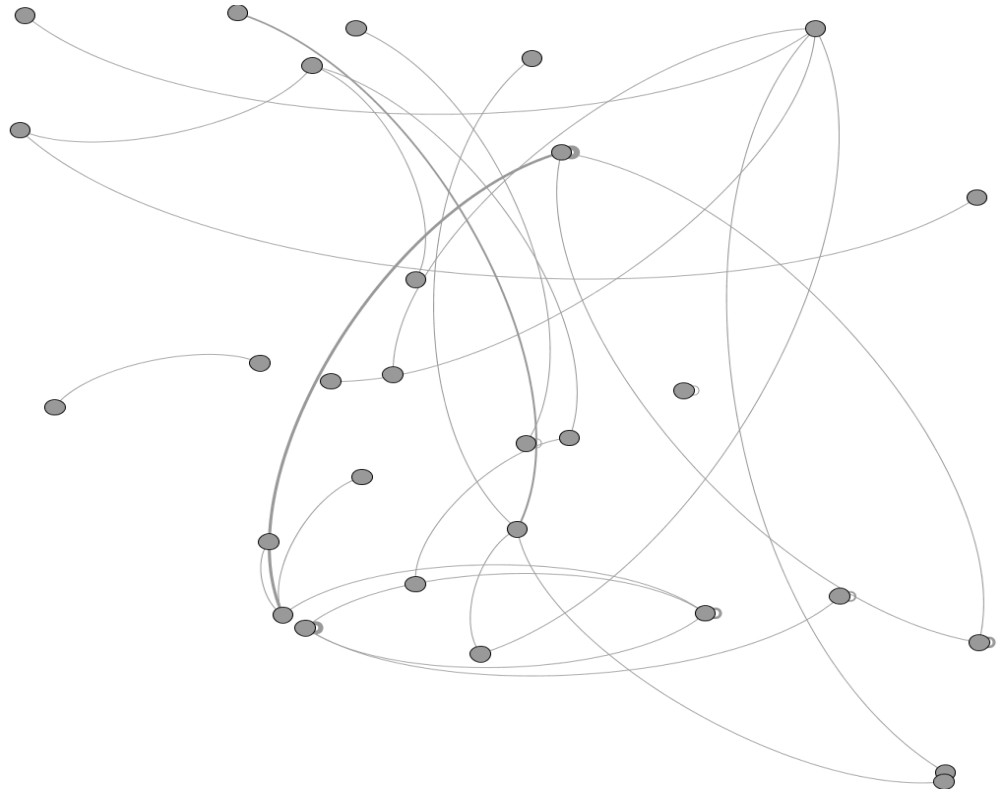


Figure 19: Social Media analysis for Case D (29 Nodes, 32 Edges)

Case D company tend to have a few strong relationships with its consumer. Most of their consumers are spaced out and they don't seem to be connected with each other. This suggests that there is very little electronic word-of-mouth between her consumers

**Case E**

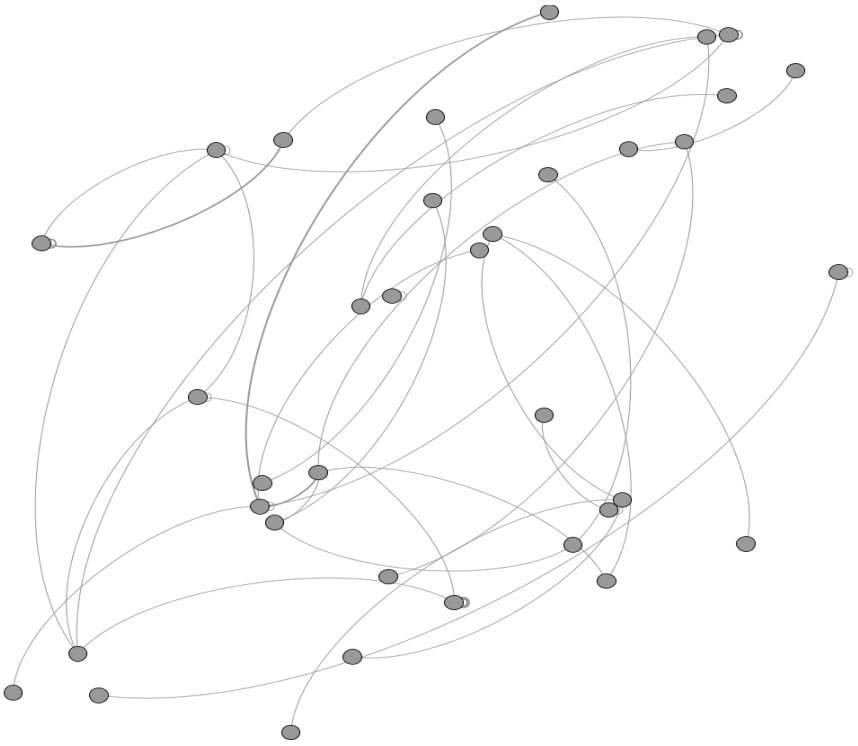


Figure 20: Social Media analysis for Case E (30 nodes, 25 Edges)

There is a very weak relationship between the owner and the consumer. There is little or weak evidence of electronic word-of-mouth between its consumers which suggested the high bargaining power of the buyer. A few strong relationships between the owner and consumer can be seen

## 4.2 Summary of the results

Table 24: Results of the hypothesis testing

| | | Total (N=148) | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Hypothesis | Structural path | Std. Est | Standard err | t-value |
| 1 | Experiential benefit →Brand Social Network Relationship Quality | 0.455 | 0.513 | 8.87*** |
| 2 | Functional benefit → Brand Social Network Relationship Quality | 0.344 | 0.570 | 6.041*** |
| 3a | Consumer/Brand → Brand trust | 0.744 | 0.053 | 14.121*** |
| 3b | Consumer/ Product → Brand trust | 0.682 | 0.055 | 12.487*** |

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 3c | Consumer/ Company → Brand trust | 0.741 | 0.053 | 13.931*** |
| 5 | Brand Social Network Relationship Quality → Brand Relationship Quality | 0.677 | 0.035 | 19.355*** |
| 8 | Brand Relationship Quality → Brand Social Network Word of Mouth | 0.804 | 0.023 | 35.178*** |
| 9 | Brand Relationship Quality → Willing to pay premium | 0.441 | 0.052 | 8.475*** |
| 10 | Brand Social Network Relationship Quality → Brand Social Network Word of Mouth | 0.586 | 0.042 | 13.811*** |
| 11 | Brand Social Network Word-of-Mouth → Willing to pay premium | 0.716 | 0.032 | 22.732*** |

# CHAPTER 5. DISCUSSION OF THE RESULTS

## 5.1 Introduction

This research is focused on how social media marketing affects International Entrepreneurs business ventures. Several factors were assessed to determine the impact that social media such as Facebook, Twitter, Vimeo, Youtube, Google+, MySpace and Wordpress has on potential customers.

Within the online brand community, potential and present consumers interact with each other with regards to the quality of the brand, in which it will create a positive perception of the brand (Adjei, et al., 2010; Hutter et al., 2013; McAlexander et al., 2002). As there is a strong reliability, which suggest that consumers would strongly interact with other members of the same online brand community but a weak relationship between the Brand community of social network relationship and quality and Brand relationship quality suggest that the branding of the company have not taken full usage of social media networks.

Consumers tend to trust a certain brand either by word of mouth or product review. Zhou et al. (2012), reported that if consumers develop a certain relationship with a certain brand social media community network, the consumer will become loyal towards the brand online community social media network and will then refer it to other potential consumers.

Results have also shown that consumers tend to join online brand communities as a sign of support for their brand (Compete, 2009), however, results were slightly different within the South African context, in hypothesis 1, Experiential benefit → Brand trust has shown to have a correlation of 0.5 which is small. As the GDP in South Africa decreases, consumers tend to be less loyal to their favourite brand and will seek alternative brands.

Content analysis has shown that international entrepreneurs have relied solely on networks to increase their business whereas large corporate companies have taken advantage of social media networks. International entrepreneurs have shown that their ability in using

social media is limited; this could be due to the fact that they have limited human capital resources or alternatively do not have the sufficient time to allocate a staff member which would specifically manage their social media network. Gensler et al. (2013) pointed out that a brand managers objective is to create a brand that is able to stay in the consumers mind for a period of time, these include brand stories (Schank, 1999; Singh and Sonnenburg, 2012; Woodside, 2010), personas and the company's successes.

Males tend to spend less time on social network sites compared to females who spend an average of more than 6 hours on the Internet compared to males. However, males tend to visit brands online more than females, where the majority visits are either technology or sportswear.

Earlier work done by Miller (1983), international entrepreneurs within this research tend to have international innovative dimensions which is also referred to as the development or enhancement of products and services, these included the changes of new administration techniques as well as technologies in order to improve their organisation operation in the international market. As there is a limited human capital resource, international entrepreneurs tend to develop different skills and techniques in order for the organisation to run its operation smoothly. It was also found that the international entrepreneurs have a "forward-looking" perspective, as many of these firms want to become pioneers, they become more proactive in capitalising on new and existing international business opportunities (Wiklund, & Sheperd, 2005). The case studies have also shown that the international entrepreneurs have taken advantage of the highly dynamic Internet environment and have targeted consumers via social media. These require international entrepreneurs to be innovative, proactive as well being a risk taker in an unknown competitive environment (Ripollés-Meliá et al., 2007).

International entrepreneurs' main reason for firms to be uncertain of the future of social network sites is due to field that their firm operates in as well as the effectiveness of social network sites. However the results have shown that companies tend to use social media as

they want to become the pioneer for their field, however there is lack of training and management/ technical support in supplying their staff with the knowledge on how the Internet and social networks (Buehrer et al., 2005; del Aguila-Obra & Padilla-Meléndez, 2006) operate. International entrepreneurs, as they have a limited resource on human and financial resources, are not able to hire another employee.

Previous literature on the adoption of technology (Frambach & Schillewaert, 2002; Mehrtens et al., 2001) and installing of social network site by SMEs' is determined by the international entrepreneur characteristics as well as their international business innovation (Frambach & Schillewaert, 2002; Mehrtens et al., 2001). International entrepreneurs have added that there is an uncertainty of how effective the social network site is and a study (Russel, 2009) has shown that there is still a need to develop an effective measuring metric.

Marketing managers have not been able to provide the data that is needed to demonstrate the effectiveness of the social network sites. This could explain the reason why international entrepreneurs are sceptical in using the social media, due to lack of quantified data that illustrates the importance of social network sites.

Due to the popularity and influence (e.g. customer reviews/ feedback) of social network sites, international firms are forced to use social media. However this will allow the firm to develop a more customer-centred metric that will allow them to evaluate the effectiveness of the social network (Borders et al., 2001). The metrics for measuring how effectiveness the social media within the firm will have to look at the number of users joining the social network group or brand community and the number of comments left by the consumer will be the best indicator that could be used to measure the effectiveness of the social network.

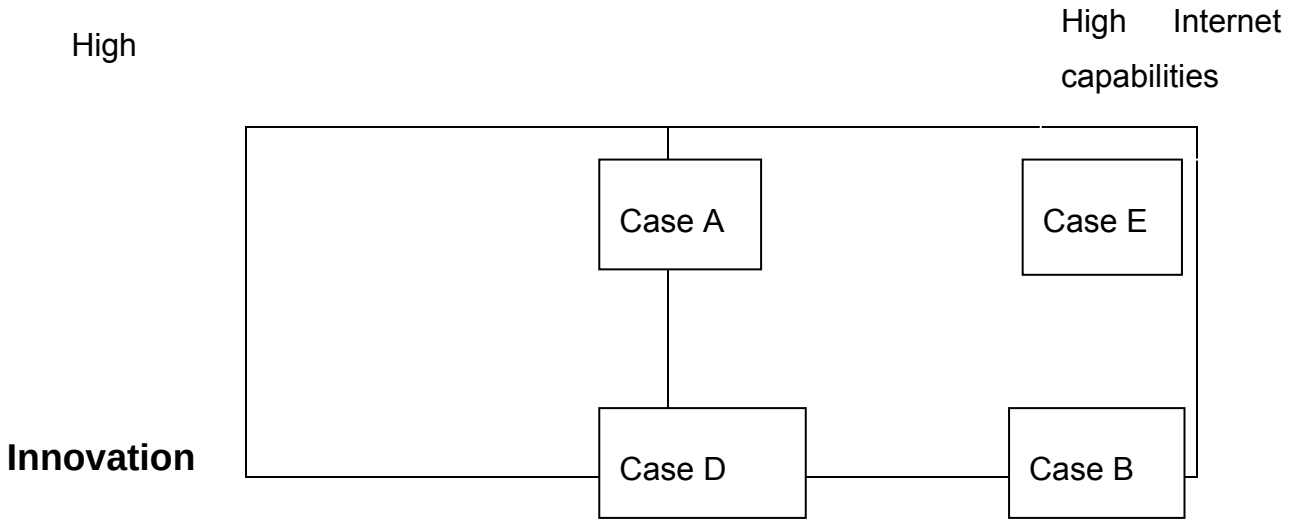
Attracting new customers as well as interacting with the consumer prevailed as the biggest reason for using the social network however the number of customers attracted via the social network as a measurement tool is still relatively low, this could be due to the fact that

international entrepreneurs prefer to network with potential consumers and buyers physically rather than using the Internet as a platform.

Social networking sites enable consumers to have all aspects of dialogue with companies, brands and other consumers (Mangold & Faulds, 2009). Strong relationships are “long-lasting, and affect-laden” (Krackhardt, 1992), while weak ones are “infrequent and distant” (Hansen, 1999).

Indeed many organizations have been slow to adopt new technologies due to perceived barriers such as a lack of money, time and training, negative views about its usefulness, as well as unfamiliarity with the particular technology (Buehrer et al., 2005, Venkatesh & Davis, 2000).

Adoption of an innovation is therefore based on the perception of organizations regarding the particular technology, which ultimately determines the time of adoption (Dillon & Morris, 1996; Jacovou, Benbasat,& Dexter, 1995). There is a lack of evidence that the size of the firm is positively related to the use of technology (Del Aguila-Obra & Padilla-Meléndez, 2006; Premkumar & Roberts, 1999) as well as the turnover.



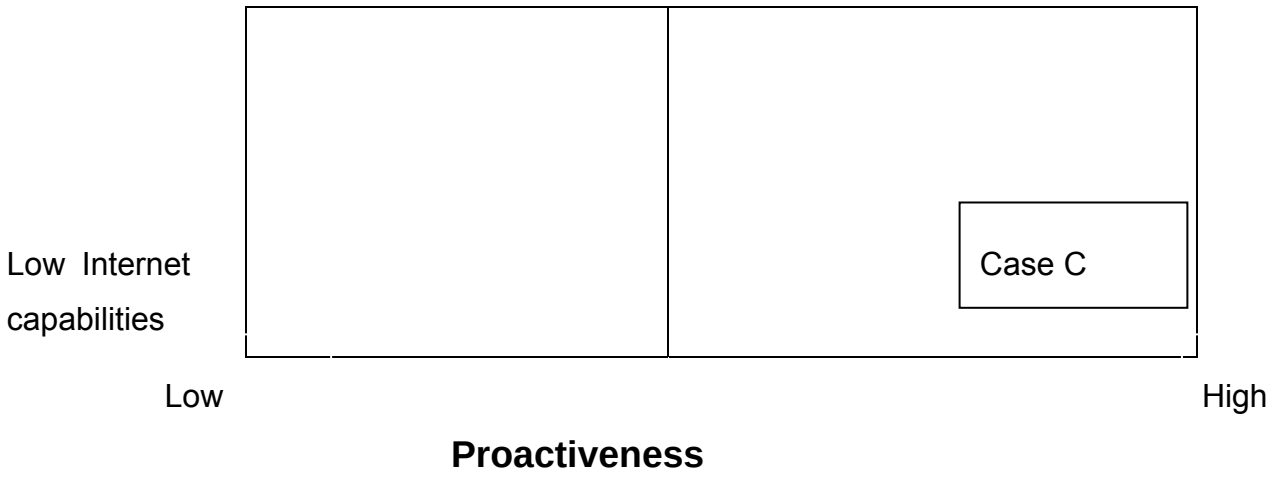



Figure 21: international Characteristics of innovation and proactiveness and the influence of Internet capabilities (Glavas and Mathews, 2014)

Previous literature researchers have found that the Internet played a vital role in the creation of relationships in firms thus creating international opportunities in SMEs (Bell & Young, 1998; Loane, 2006; Mathews & Healy, 2008). It has been suggested however that the Internet has enhanced the firm's ability to interact with international customers, suppliers and business partners through multiple inexpensive integrated Internet technologies (Mathews & Healy, 2008). However in this study, firms that tend to have higher levels of international innovation as well as international proactiveness characteristics tend to have a higher level of Internet capability development for international business processes.

Hennig-Thurau and Klee (1997) pointed out that the consumers' perception of service quality is a critical component of their overall perception of relationship quality, this is due to the fact that there is an exchange of service which is the fundamental feature between the buyer-seller relationship

## 5.2 Conclusion

In conclusion, research hypothesis 1, research hypothesis 2, research hypothesis 3 was supported however research hypothesis 4 was rejected. Therefore the three hypothesis supported research question 1.

Research hypothesis 5 and research hypothesis 6 supported research question 2 however research hypothesis 7 was rejected.

Research question 8, research question 9, research question 10 and research hypothesis 11 supported research question 3 but research 12 did not support it.

# CHAPTER 6.CONCLUSIONS & RECOMMENDATIONS

## 6.1 Introduction

This chapter consolidates the discussion of the research results, the conclusion of the study, implications on how social media marketing influences international entrepreneurs and recommendations for future research

## 6.2 Conclusions of the study

In conclusion to the study, international entrepreneurs have not been able to grasp fully the social media network which could affect their business venture. However social media users who are their potential customers tend to trust brands that provide useful and beneficial information. There is also a lack of evidence in which demonstrates the effectiveness of the social network sites within the how the company operates, creating an uncertainty of the impact it social marketing have on social media. Another barrier that international entrepreneurs face is their staff lack of training and knowledge on how social media and network sites use, thus firms will have to use the traditional advertising method that is printing, which increases the expense for the company and will be a burden for the international entrepreneurs SMEs.

## 6.3 Recommendations

International entrepreneurs will need to grow their human capital resources and utilise the social media network if they would want their business venture to grow. Social commerce is beginning to use the social media as opposed to electronic commerce, have taken the social media by surprise, therefore there needs to be further studies needed to understand more about the social media users characteristic in order for international entrepreneurs to understand the foreign environment through the Internet environment

More research needs to be done on the social media marketing with regards to online branding as well as online shopping within the South African context.

## 6.4 Suggestions for further research

As the sample size was small, further research will need to increase the sample and population size. This will provide better data to conduct a Confirmatory factor analysis as well as a Structural Equation Modelling analysis. Further research will be needed on online brand as well as online community; these will give a deeper insight on their online behaviour as well as their online routine.

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**APPENDIX A**

**International entrepreneur's questionnaire**

**A.1 Construct items**

Please provide your job title: _____

Please provide your current age: _____

**Tick the most appropriate options below**

Which of the following would best describe your job level?

- o Senior management
- o Middle/ lower management or professional
- o Specialist technical
- o Not management , professional or specialist technical

What is your highest completed level of education? (Note: if you started studying at a certain level and did not finish please do not tick that level)

- o Grade 10 of high school
- o Grade 12 of high school (matric)
- o Pre-university but post-school diploma (e.g. 1-year certified diploma in bookkeeping)
- o University undergraduate degree or BTech
- o University honours degree (including 4$^{th}$ year of engineering and the like)

- Masters degree
- Phd

What is your Gender?

- Male
- Female

Indicate the primary industry in which your organization operates

- Agriculture
- Accounting
- Advertising
- Airline
- Automotive
- Banking
- Broadcasting
- Brokerage
- Call centre
- Biotechnology
- Chemical
- Computer
- Consulting

- o Cosmetic
- o Education
- o Energy
- o Financial service
- o Health care
- o Internet publishing
- o Legal
- o Manufacturing
- o Newspaper publishers
- o Pharmaceuticals
- o Publishing
- o Real estate
- o Retail and wholesale
- o Technology

Which country is your company based in? _____

How long, in years, have you been at your current organization:

| <1 years | 2-3 years | 4-5 years | 6-7 years | 7-8 years | 9-10 years | 10-11 years | 11-12 years | >12 years |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | | | | | | |

**How many hours do you spend per week on the following social media?**

| Social Media Network | <1 hour | 2-3 Hours | 3-4 Hours | 4-5 Hours | >6 hours |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Facebook | | | | | |
| Twitter | | | | | |
| YouTube | | | | | |
| Flickr | | | | | |
| Vimeo | | | | | |
| MySpace | | | | | |
| WordPress | | | | | |
| Tumblr | | | | | |
| Google+ | | | | | |
| Other: | | | | | |

What are your reasons for using social media in your business?

(Kahar, R., Yamimi, F., Bunari, G., & Habil, H. 2012)

| | Yes | No |
|---|---|---|
| To find new customers | | |
| To build relationship with prospective customers | | |
| To strengthen relationship with existing customers | | |
| To build relationship with friends | | |
| To increase my sales | | |
| For fun | | |
| For image building | | |
| To create networking | | |
| To strengthen networking | | |
| Others: | | |

- This is the end of the survey. If you click submit you will not be able to return to edit your responses

- o I want to end the survey

**Interview questions (Referred by the Business Development)**

**Question 1**

Can you please give me an overview of your company's history, competitor and customer base?

**Question 2**

Does your company have any social media accounts? If so, which social media does your company use?

**Question 3**

How does your company implement its social media objectives (such as positing messages, reply to comment)?

**Monitoring the company social media network**

Name of Company (optional): _____

How many years have you been using the following social media

| Social Media | <1 year | 2-3 years | 4-5 years | 6-7 years | >8 years |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Facebook | | | | | |
| Twitter | | | | | |
| YouTube | | | | | |
| Flickr | | | | | |
| Vimeo | | | | | |
| MySpace | | | | | |
| WordPress | | | | | |
| Tumblr | | | | | |
| Google+ | | | | | |
| Other: | | | | | |

**How many hours do you spend per week on the following social media**

| Social Media Network | <1 hour | 2-3 Hours | 3-4 Hours | 4-5 Hours | >6 hours |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Facebook | | | | | |
| Twitter | | | | | |
| YouTube | | | | | |
| Flickr | | | | | |
| Vimeo | | | | | |
| MySpace | | | | | |
| WordPress | | | | | |
| Tumblr | | | | | |
| Google+ | | | | | |
| Other: | | | | | |

The number of activities occurring in the organization social media network within 8 weeks of observation

| | Week 1 | Week 2 | Week 3 | Week 4 | Week 5 | Week 6 | Week 7 | Week 8 | Average |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Facebook fans | | | | | | | | | |
| “Like” post | | | | | | | | | |
| “Response” to post | | | | | | | | | |
| Twitter follower | | | | | | | | | |
| Twitter re-tweet | | | | | | | | | |
| LinkedIn | | | | | | | | | |
| Instagram | | | | | | | | | |
| Wechat | | | | | | | | | |
| Others | | | | | | | | | |

**Questionnaires to students**

Instructions: Complete the questionnaire as honestly as possible.

Please write the name of the brand that you will refer to: _____

Which of the following would best describe your job level?

- o Senior management
- o Middle/ lower management or professional
- o Specialist technical
- o Not management , professional or specialist technical

What is your highest completed level of education? (Note: if you started studying at a certain level and did not finish please do not tick that level)

- o Grade 10 of high school
- o Grade 12 of high school (matric)
- o Pre-university but post-school diploma (e.g. 1-year certified diploma in bookkeeping)
- o University undergraduate degree or BTech
- o University honours degree (including 4$^{th}$ year of engineering and the like)
- o Masters degree
- o PhD

Could you indicate your Gender?

- o Male
- o Female

- **How many hours do you spend per week on the following social media network?**

| Social Media Network | <1 hour | 2-3 Hours | 3-4 Hours | 4-5 Hours | >6 hours |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Facebook | | | | | |
| Twitter | | | | | |
| YouTube | | | | | |
| Flickr | | | | | |
| Vimeo | | | | | |
| MySpace | | | | | |
| WordPress | | | | | |
| Tumblr | | | | | |
| Google+ | | | | | |
| Other: | | | | | |

| **Rank the following statement from 1 to 7 where 1= Totally disagree and 7= Totally agree**<br><br>***(#brand) refers to the brand that you chose as above** | Totally disagree | Somewhat disagree | Disagree | Neutral | Agree | Somewhat agree | Agree Totally agree |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| The social aspects of (#brand)'s Facebook page are important to me | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| On (#brand)'s Facebook page, I get to know other people who are interested in this brand | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| I enjoy communicating with other members on (#brand)'s FB page | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| I enjoy browsing and/or participating in (#brand)'s FB page | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| Browsing and/or participating in (#brand)'s FB page enriches my life | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| Overall, I enjoy browsing and/or participating in (#brand)'s FB page | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| The information provided by (#brand)'s FB page is valuable | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| The information provided by (#brand)'s FB page is useful | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| (#brand)'s FB page provides information at an appropriate level of detail | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |

| | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| On (#brand)'s FB page, there are good features that help me to accomplish my tasks | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| (#brand)'s FB page provides special offers (e,g. discounts, promotions) for me. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| (#brand)'s FB page provides updates on upcoming sales | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| (#brand)'s FB page gives me loyalty incentives for my continued participation | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| (#brand)'s FB page plays an important role in my daily life | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| I feel something is amiss when I stop using (#brand)'s FB page | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| I have made a commitment to (#brand)'s FB page | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| I keep (#brand)'s FB page in mind all the time | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| I am willing to make sacrifices to keep using (#brand)'s FB page | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| I will stay with (#brand)'s FB page through good times and bad times | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| (#brand)'s FB page is reliable and dependable | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| I have lots of respect for (#brand)'s FB | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |

page

| | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| I feel safe and secure when I use (#brand)'s FB page | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| (#brand)'s FB page adds a sense of stability to my life | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| (#brand)'s FB page treats me like a valuable customer | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| (#brand)'s FB page shows continuing interest in me | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| (#brand)'s FB page takes good care of me | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| (#brand)'s makes efforts to increase customers' loyalty | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| (#brand)'s makes various efforts to improve its ties with customers | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| (#brand) really cares about keeping customers | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| (#brand) says a lot about the kind of person I am | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| (#brand)'s image and my self-image are similar in many respects | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| (#brand) plays an important role in my life | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| I have recommended (#brand)'s FB page to lots of people | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |

| | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| I 'talk up' (#brand)'s FB page to my friends | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| I try to spread the good word about (#brand)'s FB page | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| I give (#brand)'s FB page lots of positive word-of-mouth advertising | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| I would be willing to pay a higher price for (#brand) over other similar brands | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| I prefer to purchase from (#brand) even if another brand advertises a lower price | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |

(Park, H., & Kim, Y-K., 2014)

## Appendix B

| Construct Item | Code |
|---|---|
| The social aspects of (#brand)'s Facebook page are important to me | 1 |
| On (#brand)'s  Facebook page, I get to know other people who are interested in this brand | 2 |
| I enjoy communicating with other members on (#brand)'s FB page | 3 |
| I enjoy browsing and/or participating in (#brand)'s FB page | 4 |
| Browsing and/or participating in (#brand)'s FB page enriches my life | 5 |
| Overall, I enjoy browsing and/or participating in (#brand)'s FB page | 6 |
| The information provided by (#brand)'s FB page is valuable | 7 |
| The information provided by (#brand)'s FB page is useful | 8 |
| (#brand)'s FB page provides information at an appropriate level of detail | 9 |
| On (#brand)'s FB page, there are good features that help me to accomplish my tasks | 10 |
| (#brand)'s FB page provides special offers (e,g. discounts, promotions) for me. | 11 |
| (#brand)'s FB page provides updates on upcoming sales | 12 |
| (#brand)'s FB page gives me loyalty incentives for my continued participation | 13 |
| (#brand)'s FB page plays an important role in my daily life | 14 |
| I feel something is amiss when I stop using (#brand)'s FB page | 15 |

| | |
|---|---|
| I have made a commitment to (#brand)’s FB page | 16 |
| I keep (#brand)’s FB page in mind all the time | 17 |
| I am willing to make sacrifices to keep using (#brand)’s FB page | 18 |
| I will stay with (#brand)’s FB page through good times and bad times | 19 |
| (#brand)’s FB page is reliable and dependable | 20 |
| I have lots of respect for (#brand)’s FB page | 21 |
| I feel safe and secure when I use (#brand)’s FB page | 22 |
| (#brand)’s FB page adds a sense of stability to my life | 23 |
| (#brand)’s FB page treats me like a valuable customer | 24 |
| (#brand)’s FB page shows continuing interest in me | 25 |
| (#brand)’s FB page takes good care of me | 26 |
| (#brand)’s makes efforts to increase customers’ loyalty | 27 |
| (#brand)’s  makes various efforts to improve its ties with customers | 28 |
| (#brand) really cares about keeping customers | 29 |
| (#brand) says a lot about the kind of person I am | 30 |
| (#brand)’s image and my self-image are similar in many respects | 31 |
| (#brand) plays an important role in my life | 32 |
| I have recommended (#brand)’s FB page to lots of people | 33 |

| | |
|---|---|
| I ‘talk up’ (#brand)’s FB page to my friends | 34 |
| I try to spread the good word about (#brand)’s FB page | 35 |
| I give (#brand)’s FB page lots of positive word-of-mouth advertising | 36 |
| I would be willing to pay a higher price for (#brand) over other similar brands | 37 |
| I prefer to purchase from (#brand) even if another brand advertises a lower price | 38 |

# Appendix C

List of social media network

- Facebook
- Twitter
- YouTube
- Flickr
- Vimeo
- MySpace
- WordPress
- Tumblr
- Google+

# Appendix D

Table 22: Definitions and sample codes for exteroceptoin, proprioception and coperception. (Cabiddu *et al*., 2014)

| Category | Definition | Phrases to look for |
|---|---|---|
| Exteroception | Perception of social media characteristics | Facebook is…….<br>The followers are ……..<br>Twitter…… |
| Proprioception | Perception of the business venture Internet characteristics | Our customers want……<br>Company X is…….. |
| Coperception | Simultaneous awareness of social media and Internet capabilities relative to the international entrepreneurs possible action | We use facebook…..<br>We could run campaigns…. |

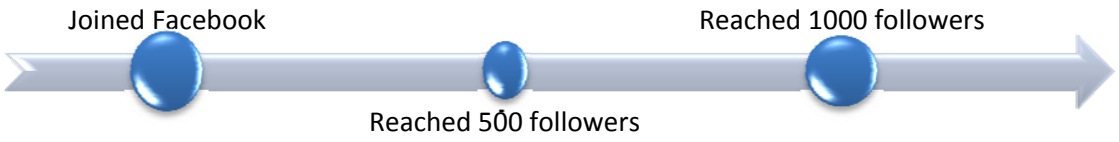
Table : Sample of the coding used for exteroception, proprioception and coperations (Cabiddu *et al*., 2014)

| Category | Illustrative quote |
|---|---|
| Exteroception | “Within the social media network, the inability to send a private message” |
| Proprioception | “Our company are reluctant to change and will continue what has been working for the past year. Why fix it when its not broken yet?” |
| Coperception | “Our company uses facebook for marketing purposes” |

# Appendix E

Timeline of international entrepreneurs starting their business venture through the online social media network

Case A




- Joined Facebook in 2012
- Reached 500 followers by mid-2012
- Reached 1000 followers by beginning of 2013

Case B




- Joined Facebook in 2010
- Joined Youtube in 2010
- Joined Twitter in 2012

Case C




- Joined Facebook in 2014
- First video upload on youtube in mid 2014
- A total of 200 followers reached at the end of 2014

Case D




- Joined Facebook and Twitter in 2013
- Uploaded  videos on Facebook and youtube by the end of 2013
- Passed 300 likes in 2015

Case E




- Joined Facebook in 2010
- Passed 500 likes in 2015
- Joined Youtube in 2015

# Appendix F

Codes that were used for the Social Network Analysis, Gephi 8.2 beta

| Code | Course of action |
|---|---|
| 1 | “Like” the Facebook post |
| 2 | View the post |
| 3 | Comment on the Facebook post |
| 4 | Sharing the Facebook post |
| 5 | Like the Facebook page |
| 6 | Post an image on the organisation website |
| 7 | Posted a tweet on twitter |
| 8 | Retweet message |
| 9 | Followers retweeting organisation tweet |
| 10 | Following tweet |
| 11 | Twiiter being follwed |

| | |
|---|---|
| 12 | Upload image onto twitter |
| 13 | Upload video on youtube |
| 14 | Youtube video posted onto social media network |

## Appendix F: Consistency matrix

Social Media Marketing and its influence on International Entreprenerus

| Aims of research | Literature review | Hypothesis or proposition or Research question | Sources of data | Type of data | Analysis |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Understanding the levels of passion that international entrepreneurs have, when using the social media | Dholakia, Bagozzi, & Pearo, (2014); Chiu, Hsu, & Wang, (2006); Arora, Arora, & Palvia, (2014) | International entrepreneurs providing beneficial information will be more likely to have a positive response from the online brand community | Interview, linkert scale | Intervals, Continuous | Inferential statistics, |
| Determine the capabilities of social media usage by the | Lu, Chang, & Chang (2014); Brogi, (2014), | International entrepreneurs providing beneficial information will be more likely to have a | Interviews, case studies, likert | Intervals | Inferential statistics |

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| international entrepreneur | Galvas & Matthews (2014) | positive response from the online brand community | | | |
| Evaluate how consumers view social media information and the affect it has on the firms brand | Kietzmann,, Hermkens, McCarthy, Silverstre (2011); Erdogmus, & Cicek, (2012); Przepiorka, (2013); Jung, Kim, & Kim (2014); Habibi, Laroche, & Richard, (2014) | International entrepreneurs who build a strong online brand trust will have a significance influence in consumer revisit intention | Continuous, Netnography research approach, interviews, Categorical | Intervals | Inferential statistics, |