CONFERENCE PROCEEDINGS

2014
ICODM

Digitally enable marketing strategies

THE INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON Digital Marketing

03rd - 04th June - Colombo, Sri Lanka

Hosted by,

TIIKM
The International Institute of
Knowledge Management

Academic Partners,

msu
management &
science university

KNOWLEDGE REUSE

Proceedings of the International Conference on Digital Marketing - 2014

ICODM- 2014

03rd - 04th June 2014

The International Institute of Knowledge Management (TIIKM)

Colombo, Sri Lanka

Disclaimer

The responsibility for opinions expressed, in articles, studies and other contributions in this publication rests solely with their authors, and this publication does not constitute an endorsement by the ICODM or TIIKM of the opinions so expressed in them

Official website of the conference

www.digitalconference.co

Organized by:

The International Institute of Knowledge Management (TIIKM)

<table>
<tr><td colspan="2">ICODM Committee</td></tr>
<tr><td>DR. JOSE MARIA ÁLVAREZ RODRIGUEZ</td><td>(Conference Co-Chair, ICODM)</td></tr>
<tr><td></td><td>Computer Science Department, University of Oviedo, Spain</td></tr>
<tr><td>DR. NALEEN ABEYSEKARA</td><td>(Conference Co-Chair, ICODM)</td></tr>
<tr><td></td><td>Senior Lecturer in Marketing – Open University of Sri Lanka</td></tr>
<tr><td>DR. J. INDUMATHI</td><td>(Session Chair, ICODM)</td></tr>
<tr><td></td><td>Associate Professor, Anna University, India</td></tr>
<tr><td>MR. ISANKA. P. GAMAGE</td><td>(Program Chair, ICODM)</td></tr>
<tr><td></td><td>The International Institute of Knowledge Management</td></tr>
<tr><td>MR. OSHADEE WITHANAWASAM</td><td>(Publicity Chair, ICODM)</td></tr>
<tr><td></td><td>The International Institute of Knowledge Management</td></tr>
<tr><td>MR. SAMPATH ABEYWICKRAMA</td><td>(Operation Chair, ICODM)</td></tr>
<tr><td></td><td>The International Institute of Knowledge Management</td></tr>
<tr><td>MR. W. D. R. P. SAMPATH</td><td>(Co-Coordinator, ICODM)</td></tr>
<tr><td></td><td>The International Institute of Knowledge Management</td></tr>
<tr><td>MR. G. A. DINESH MADUSHANKA</td><td>(Co-Coordinator, ICODM)</td></tr>
<tr><td></td><td>The International Institute of Knowledge Management</td></tr>
<tr><td>MS. W. M. S. D. K. ABEYRATHNA</td><td>(Conference Team Member)
The International Institute of Knowledge Management</td></tr>
<tr><td>MS. K. D. SEWWANDI</td><td>(Conference Team Member)</td></tr>
<tr><td></td><td>The International Institute of Knowledge Management</td></tr>
</table>

Table of Contents   **Page No**

v

Virtual Presentations

[01]

CONJOINT ANALISYS AS A USEFUL STATISTICAL TOOL FOR DIGITAL MARKETING IN REAL ESTATE

Pedro Juez

University UNED

pjuez@cee.uned.es

ABSTRACT

Objective: *To demonstrate the utility of conjoint analysis for the digital marketing with a real application*

Methods: *Very often the consumer makes his decision analyzing many variables. And many times also this variables are contradictory. For example, if we want to buy a house, everybody wants a big, well situated and not very expensive one. It is necessary to know what aspect is more valued for the possible purchasers if the price, the surface of the house or the situation. The conjoint analysis allows to check it. We made a survey to 100 people in Madrid to check it for a construction company. In this survey we tried to analysed the most important aspects for the consumer. The conjoint analysis allows to infere results when all the atributes are presented at the same time.*

We examined 4 variables: price, quality of the region where the flat is, number of squared meters and number of rooms. We presented to 100 potential consumers to value which aspects where the most valued.

With this technique you get not only a summary for all the data but also the result for every person. Thanks to this results we made a classification of other purchasers who valued more other aspects like the number of squared meters. According to this, and the percentage of this people we make a specific number of flats related to their preferences.

Results: *The results shows that a medium price (150.000-200.000 euros) and the situation of the houses –near to the centre- are the most valued items of the survey. This technique and the survey allowed to design a suitable marketing campaign through the web.*

In this moment, a real estate company is building flats according to this study. Also the quantification of the results allowed to offer other kind of flats for the people who valued more the number of squared meters. In spite of the economic crisis in the real estate market in this moment in Spain, the introduction of this study has allowed to sell an 85% of the flats after only one year.

Conclusions: *The conjoint analysis is a very useful technique for marketing because allows to analyze the most valued items for the consumers of a product. The application to the marketing allows to know what aspects are more valued and develop the product according to these preferences*

Keywords: *marketing, conjoint analysis, real estate*

[02]

NEURAL NETWORKS IN PREDICTIVE ANALYTICS FOR ONLINE MARKETING

Dr.Indumathi.J[1],Amala.S.P[2]

Department of Information Science and Technology,

College of Engineering, Anna University,

Chennai, Tamilnadu, India

j.indumathi@gmail.com,amalasp21@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

The current saturated and competitive online markets face an increasing difficulty in marketing and bringing about a consumer behavior among the customers. This also proves to be very expensive as hundreds of companies compete for the same group of consumers and want to retain them. There are several ways employed to increase the profit margin. Many online markets have turned to predictive analytics to gain an edge. Predictive analytics on a broader term can be described to develop models with the help of a variety of statistical and analytical techniques that are used to predict future events or behaviors. Predictive analytics overcome the traditional reporting solutions by providing an ability to look ahead by discovering patterns and trends in historical sales and marketing data to determine how potential and existing customers are likely to behave in the future.Even though there are a variety of traditional statistical methods such as the regression analysis, logistic regression, survival and reliability analysis, Auto-Regressive Integrated Moving Average (ARIMA) modeling, Fuzzy Systems, and Rule based systems to forecast, classify the data and recognize the patterns this paper focuses on the Neural Networks (NN) in predictive analytics which replaces all of these methods with its improved accuracy and unified approach. Unlike the other methods which use different algorithms with different data assumptions NN save time by managing complex predictive analytics in an automated way with only fewer statistical assumptions. Moreover this paper investigates on the different models of NNsuch as the Feed-forward NN, Recurrent NN, and Nonlinear Autoregressive network with eXogenous NN (NARX) in forecasting. The performance of the models are evaluated using performance function to find out which model performs better than the others.

Keywords: predictive analytics, online marketing, data mining.

[03]

TRENDS IN LOCATION ADVERTISING WITH MOBILE SERVICES

Reshma Sekar[1] and Gopalabhatla K Chaitanya[2]

SRM University

[1]*reshsekar15@gmail.com,* [2]*chaitanya_92@hotmail.com*

ABSTRACT

Locality based advertising is a field of marketing wherein the GPS technology is used in advertising the products and services that are within the proximity of the people. This is an effective approach of displaying offers, advertisements and information that is within the reach of the person and therefore, is most likely to be useful. Many forms of locality based advertising exist today. Advertisements are displayed on the phone when downloading and using applications. Also many applications are dedicated to this purpose. Even though they manage to reach people efficiently, they have many limitations. From our observations, we noticed that many people felt they were being spammed with advertisements. Some faced technical issues with these GPS based mobile advertising applications. Some applications caused a breach of their users' privacy. A thorough analysis of these existing applications has been done and the results were used to understand the requirements of an informative mobile application.A model application is then proposed which is targeted to have a GUI that is user friendly and attemptsto overcome all the limitations existing in the field.

Keywords: Locality based advertising, GPS, mobile applications, limitations, model application, GUI.

Locality or location based advertising is a way of merging mobile advertising with location based applications or services. Location specific advertisements reach people through an effective medium which is through the mobile devices. With the advent of smart phones, almost all information and knowledge has quicker and efficient ways of reaching people. Gone are those days where one would have to ask for directions to a particular location or look up for offers and advertisements. However, there is a varying range of attitudes observed among people towards locality based advertising using mobile applications and technology. There is a plethora of applications in the market which form a part of mobile based advertising and cater to location based services. They are spread and used at a global level. From Foursquare which is a location based social networking application that displays information about places to visit to Zomato which enlists restaurants these applications have provided a supporting step in mobile based advertising. Their significance and drawbacks have been enlisted in the paper. Using this information, a thorough understanding of people's requirements and attitude towards trends in locality based advertising has been recorded and displayed. An attempt to resolve these issues from existing applications has been made to resolve the current issues with the applications and to reach a satisfactory level of digital marketing in order to develop a long lasting customer- client relationship.

LOCATION BASED SERVICES TODAY-A DESCRIPTION

Foursquare

Foursquare is a popular location based service which is expanding globally. This application is being used by over billions of people and is used to connect with friends and visit new places in the city. Foursquare is useful in keeping up with the trending places of a location. It also has features which display the current location of friends in the neighborhood by using a concept called 'check-in'. Check ins are used as and when a person visits a particular place. Furthermore one also has the option of rating and providing suggestions about the place.

Foursquare has undoubtedly helped a lot of businesses and people. But despite its success, it has many drawbacks that have been recorded by its subscribers. Foursquare tends to become a privacy breach when whereabouts of a person are known using the check-ins. Since the purpose of foursquare is also promotion of locality services, one can never be sure of the ratings and suggestions as it could be a spam. It may be very uncomfortable and even dangerous to display whereabouts of a person.

Zomato

Zomato is tagged as the ultimate restaurant finder which locates and displays all the restaurants that a person is looking for. It also allows the person to rate the particular place and share their experiences through pictures and photos. It is the most popular location based service. The success of the above applications serve is a quintessential of how location based advertising using mobile technology will be of significant importance in the future.

AN ANALYSIS OF LOCATION BASED SERVICES

A survey was conducted among a random set of people to analyze their opinions on locality based advertising. This was done to analyze responses in two steps. The first is to find out if they are already open and use the existing location based services and second, to find out if they were open to pop up advertisements.

Using this randomly generated information, a few conclusions were drawn. From them, a list of conventional problems that were encountered using these applications is formed. More than 50 percent of the people who participated in the survey used these applications to their benefit. Out of the 50 percent that utilized these applications, an average rating of 7.6 was given to these applications. Some recorded problems are as follows.

- Information is sometimes unnecessary, outdated or not useful.

- Numbers of the services were not updated or correct.

- Sometimes, the application spams the subscriber on knowing their requirements.

- Some of these applications caused a breach of privacy.

The second step of the survey was to find out if information in the form of pop ups were entertained. Out of these four choices were given to pick.

The four choices were broadly categorized as:

1. If information was necessary, the user herself will look it up.

2. If the user would be open to advertisement pop ups.

3. If the user encouraged ad pop ups depending on his/her mood and requirements

4. If the user's attitude depended on the relevancy of the advertisement.

Pie Chart 1

An analysis of the general attitude towards mobile advertising using pop ups.

- no, if I need information,I'll look it up
- It depends on my mood and requirement
- Yes,I'm open to interesting ads
- It depends on the advertisements
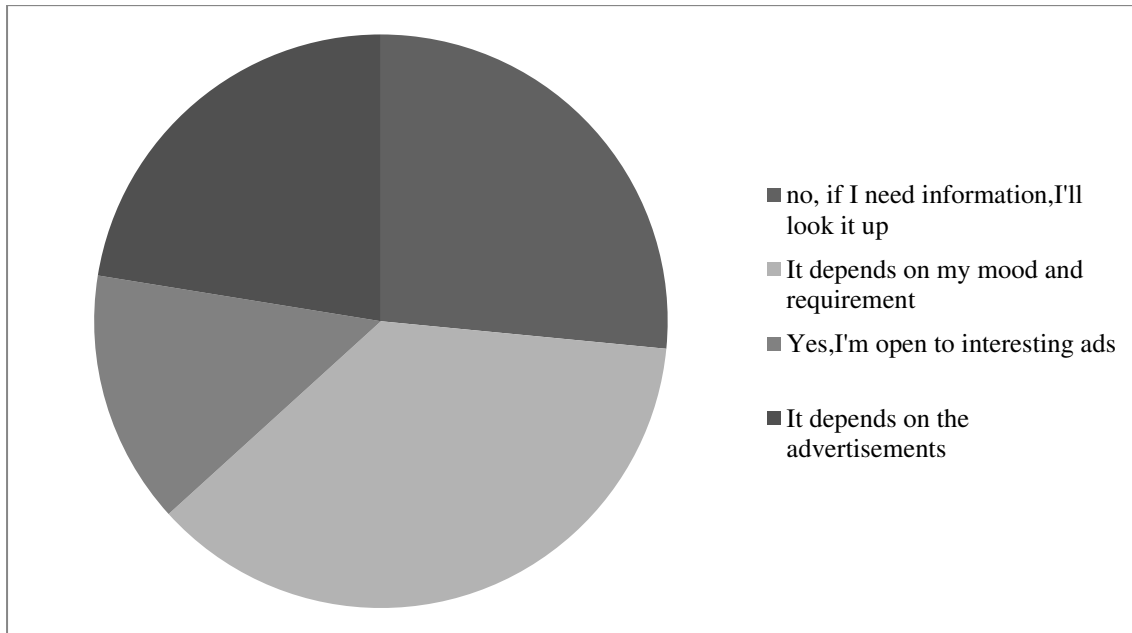
From the above pie chart, it was found that, majority of the people subscribed to the application only when certain conditions were met. Therefore, not many people were open to pop up advertisements. Therefore, we concluded that pop up based mobile advertising is an inefficient way as it is difficult to build, not widely accepted and irritating. Another method in which the user was given more control had to be devised. A model mobile application which eliminates the need of pop ups and uses push notifications instead to send essential information on advertisements is given.

A MODEL MOBILE APPLICATION

The model mobile application is designed to be informative in such a way that the right information reaches the right customer base at the right time. The application once installed into the mobile, would locate the location of the device using the Global Positioning System technology. The subscriber has the freedom to set the frequency of push notification advertisements and also the kind of advertisements he/she is looking for. So as and when the subscriber travels, the subscriber can meet new advertisements and offers around his immediate locality which is queued and displayed. While keeping subscribers informed of the market in and around them, it also protects their privacy and lets the subscriber choose what information should reach the device. Eliminating pop ups was ideal as it does not interrupt any essential activity in the device thereby annoying the user. Push notifications are a subtler way of sending advertisement information regarding the place they are in to people.

The push notifications are smaller messages with just the abstract information of the advertisement. It is way easier to handle and has lesser chances of engendering irritation.

Push advertisements work like any other applications push-messages. They can be controlled to a certain level. These are controlled by the server. These messages and advertisements are slotted in the server based on their area and type of advertisement. If the user is found to be in a particular area and the user's settings are welcome to advertisements, the push messages appear and are displayed. If the user does not wish to view advertisements at that particular point of time or that particular type of advertisement he/she also has the option of changing the settings. The working of the application is quite similar to news applications or mail applications that send a push mails or push messages. Therefore, the application is designed to be less burdensome. In general, the motive of the application is to produce new and informative advertisements pertaining to a particular locality in a user friendly manner to devices within its proximity. However, the above is just the expectation and requirements of an ideal model mobile application. The possibilities are endless and limitations are also being investigated upon since the design and modeling of such an application is intricate and time consuming.

LIMITATIONS

1. These kinds of advertisements can be easily ignored as they are not flashy.

2. The design of such an application is extremely complex.

3. Server is required to handle a lot of load and maintains a lot of responsibilities.

4. Design and implementation may be expensive. It requires high maintenance too.

5. Efficient content routing technique should be evolved to push messages appropriately.

LIMITATIONS OF OUR RESEARCH

1. The survey results are an approximation and subject to minimal mathematical error.

2. The model mobile application is just an ideal expectation of an informative mobile

   application that caters to serve people and burgeoning business. Therefore, it is subject

   to many design issues.

3. Limited access of information to mobile application development projects that are

   working on the same platform.

4. Limited access to designs of existing mobile applications in location based services.

REFERENCES

Attitude towards Location Based Advertising, Gordon C. Bruner II,Anand Kumar. (2007). Journal of Interactive Advertising,Vol 7 No 2 Spring 2007,1525-2019.

http://www.manfredhauswirth.org/research/papers/MobilePush.pdf

Location Based Marketing Made Easy-A Marketers Guide,Website publishing- http://www.mediative.com.

https://sites.google.com/site/beginnersguidetofoursquare/issues

APPENDIX

1.Location Based Advertising :   Location-based advertising is a new form of advertising that integrates mobile advertising with location-based services

2.GUI : Graphical User Interface is an interface that allows users to interact with electronic devices through the use of graphical and visual icons.

3.Check-in : The action of registering one's presence

4.Pop-ups :   Forms of advertising where the advertisement displays itself in the window.

5.Push notifications : Push, or server push, describes a style of Internet-based communication where the request for a given transaction is initiated by the publisher or central server

[04]

INTEGRATING DIGITAL MARKETING WITH MOBILE SENSORS

Dr.Indumathi.J[1],Sharmila.M[2]

Department of Information Science and Technology,

College of Engineering, Anna University,

Chennai, Tamilnadu, India

j.indumathi@gmail.com,sharmi.m.k@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

Digital marketing using smart phones as active sensors integrated with cloud computing plays vivacious role in providing effective custom-made marketing. This amalgamation of technology marks the dawn of applications that can sense the perception of a customer and provide more personalized and meticulous solutions. This paper focuses on the design and development of such an application which can metamorphose a consumer's smartphone into a mobile sensor. Using the user's current location, the movement direction, weather conditions and location based time(also date), and other factors, this application provides perspective to the user's probable needs and so enables brands to customize their offer. For example proposing to someone who is in a terrible cold environment the whereabouts of a hot drink and its price. This application ensures greater flexibility, scalability, faster deployment, minimal upfront capital expense, reduced IT staff requirements, business agility and effectual way of customer reach for promotions, to enable reusability of digital resources and to get the maximum return on investment. The rewards are far more reaching when deployed on cloud which thereby offloads the complexities of upgrades, maintenance and disaster recovery, rapidly scale up or down to meet seasonality and growth needs, get up and running quickly, rapidly deploy new capabilities, gain access to rich functionality with limited capital outlay spend smarter by paying as you go, refocus resources on strategic imperatives. This paper also suggests the avenues for future developments like use of marketing automation tools to trigger lead nurturing campaigns based on content interest, create targeted LinkedIn Company Product Page variations, create targeted landing pages geared toward different marketing personas, target content to speak to the specific needs of various marketing personas.

Keywords: mobile sensors, analytics, online marketing, data mining.

[05]

THE IMPACTS OF ELECTRONIC WORD OF MOUTH IN SOCIAL MEDIA ON CONSUMERS` PURCHASE INTENTIONS

Ismail Erkan[1] &Chris Evans[2]

[1]*Brunel University /* [2]*Brunel Business School*

[1]*ismail.erkan@brunel.ac.uk,* [2]*chris.evans@brunel.ac.uk*

ABSTRACT

The influence of Electronic Word of Mouth (eWOM) on consumers` purchase intentions has been known for a long time. However, eWOM has gained a new dimension with the advent of social media. Before this new phenomenon, people wereable to talk with anonymous people on the Internet. Social media enable people to talk with friends and acquaintances, on the Internet. This new way of eWOM might be more powerful in terms of triggering purchase intention. This study discusses the electronic word of mouth within the context of social media. Particularly, this study examines the influence of eWOM in social media on consumers` purchase intentions. The research consists of two phases. First, survey will be conducted to understand the effect of eWOM in social media on purchase intention. Then interviews will be made to reveal that how eWOM in social media affects consumers` purchase intentions. The results should contribute to both researchers and practitioners.

Keywords: *word of mouth, electronic word of mouth, social media, purchase intention*

INTRODUCTION

Marketing means making lucrative relationships with customers, which includes gaining new customers and keeping current ones (Kotler et al., 2013). In order to keep and grow current customers, marketers try to increase satisfaction and quality about their products or services. However with the purpose of acquiring new customers, marketers generally try to present their products and services by different sorts of advertisements.

Consumer behaviour can be affected with many types of advertising but word of mouth has a stronger impact than the other types such as personal selling, written and radio advertisements (Engel, Blackwell &Kegerreis, 1969). Word of mouth (WOM) is a communication among consumers, which consists comments related to products and services (Arndt, 1967). People find these comments more trustworthy than the other non-personal sources like television commercials or other kinds of advertisements. In fact, according to Trusov, Bucklin and Pauwels (2009), the traditional form of getting information which we called advertising starts to lose its efficacy because of reliability issues.

These studies lead the marketers and academics to examine word of mouth more deeply. The capability of WOM to affect consumers' purchase decisions has long been known to researchers and marketers; but in the age of the Internet it has appeared in a new way which we called electronic word of mouth (eWOM)(Cheung and Thadani, 2012). Then researchers start to discover the stronger and weaker sides of this new phenomenon. Although eWOM might be less personal due to not being face-to-face, it is stronger because it is immediate and is accessible by others (Hennig-Thurau et al., 2004).

In recent studies, lack of information about the identityof authors of postings has been considered a weak side of eWOM (Keller, 2007). This is due to the fact that they have mostly focused on eWOM which has been occurring in online forum sites and sites that have consumer reviews related to products. However, thanks to social media (social networking sites) eWOM now not only occurs between unknown people but also happens between people who already know each other. This new way of eWOM might be more powerful in terms of triggering purchase intention. Therefore the aim of this study is to understand the relationship between eWOM in social networking sites and purchase intention.

THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

Word of Mouth

Word of mouth is defined as a communication between people where the person receives some non-commercial messages regarding to brands, products or services (Arndt, 1967). In other words, sharing and exchanging information about consumption experience.
Balter and Butman (2005), draw attention to the difference of WOM from the other marketing tools because of its natural structure formed by real reviews and information about products and services. Therefore, word of mouth is considered by consumers as an effective way to reduce perceived risk by getting information about the products. Consumers can do that both offline and online and for this reason WOM is divided into two categories: Offline Word of Mouth and Electronic Word of Mouth.

Electronic Word of Mouth

The method people used to communicate has noticeably been changed and it has become more convenient for people to share their personal opinions and experiences through the Internet. This process has revealed a new approach for word of mouth that is called "electronic word of mouth" or "online word of mouth". Hennig-Thurau et al. (2004), defined eWOM as a: "statement made by potential, actual, or former customers about a product or company, which is made available to a multitude of people and institutions via the Internet".
Electronic word of mouth can be marketer-generated or user-generated. While the information on the internet is often supplied by company-generated sites, online communities are enabling people to share their views with others by creating media content as pictures, videos or texts. As an example, social networks (e.g. Facebook, Google+), brands' websites, product review sites (e.g. epinions.com), forums and blogs are different kinds of eWOM platforms (Bickartand Schindler, 2001; Cheung and Thadani, 2012) (see Table 1).

Table 1

Different types of eWOM platforms (Cheung and Thadani, 2012)

Platforms	Examples
Social networking sites	*Facebook.com, Twitter.com*
Online brand/shopping sites	*Amazon.com, Ebay.com*

Online consumer review sites	*Epinions.com, Shopping.com*
Online discussion forums	*Ukbusinessforums.co.uk*
Blogs	*Xanga.com, Blogger.com*

EWOM and Social Networking Sites (SNS)

Social networking sites are described as web-based services which aim to provide internet users an opportunity to create their profiles and personal networks via friend lists while allow them to reach others` (Boyd and Ellison, 2007).Besides the term "Social Networking Sites", the term "social media" also appears in both academic studies and public discourses in order to describe this phenomenon.

Consumers can find a chance to talk about the product information which has effects on their purchase decisions with their friends by social media (Kozinets et al. 2010). Social media users create their own contents related to their opinions which can be post, comment or like. In fact they generate even their own community which consists of the people who have similar ideas about the same product or services.

EWOM and Purchase Intention

In order to understand whether it is a strong marketing tool or not, the first thing that should be understood is,does WOM influence the purchase intention? This question has been studied by many of researchers and these previous research has revealed that WOM has significant effects on customers' purchase intentions (Engel, Blackwell andKegerreis, 1969).

By the improvements in online shopping facilities eWOM has gained more and more importance. When consumers get suggestions from their friends or acquaintances on social media, they can visit the websites which provide the products or services. In other words, if consumers take recommendations into consideration, it can be turn into purchase action instantly. This is one of the prominent features which make eWOM superior over offline WOM.

RESEARCH GAP

Previous studies have mostly focused on the electronic word of mouth which is happening between the people who don't know each other. For this reason, eWOM has been considered a weak marketing tool (Keller, 2007). However, social media has removed this deficiency by providing people an opportunity to talk with their friends and acquaintances on the Internet. But the effects of eWOM in social media on purchase intention still have not been known. The aim of this research is to address this research gap (see Figure 1).

Word of Mouth
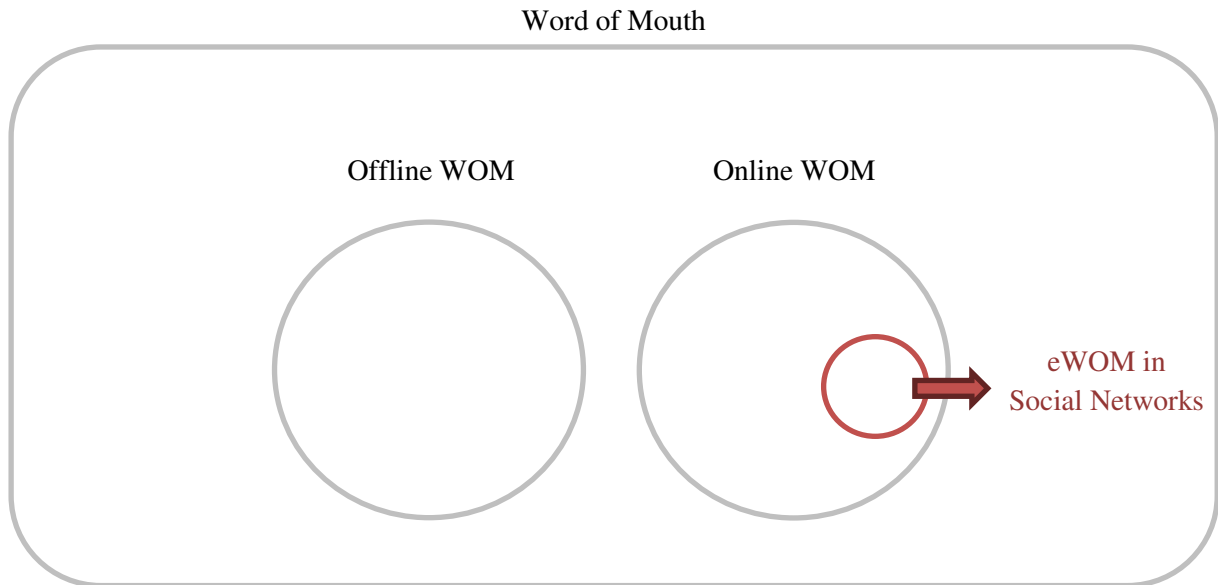
*Figure 1.*Research GAP

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Research has been designed to answer following questions:

- Does eWOM in social media affect purchase intention? If so, how?

- Is "eWOM between friends" more effective than "eWOM between non-friends" on purchase intention?

- How do social networks differ from each other in terms of eWOM?

- How do different types of eWOM messages affect purchase intention? (e.g. Picture oriented – Video oriented – Text only) Why?

METHODOLOGY

To address these research questions, two studies will be conducted sequentially with both quantitative and qualitative methods. In the first study, we aim to understand is there a relationship between eWOM in social media and purchase intention. Besides, in order to find whether eWOM in social media is more effective than the other types or not, we need to compare it with another eWOM source. For those reasons, survey method will be used in order to test the relationships between the key variables in the proposed model of study 1 (see Figure 2).
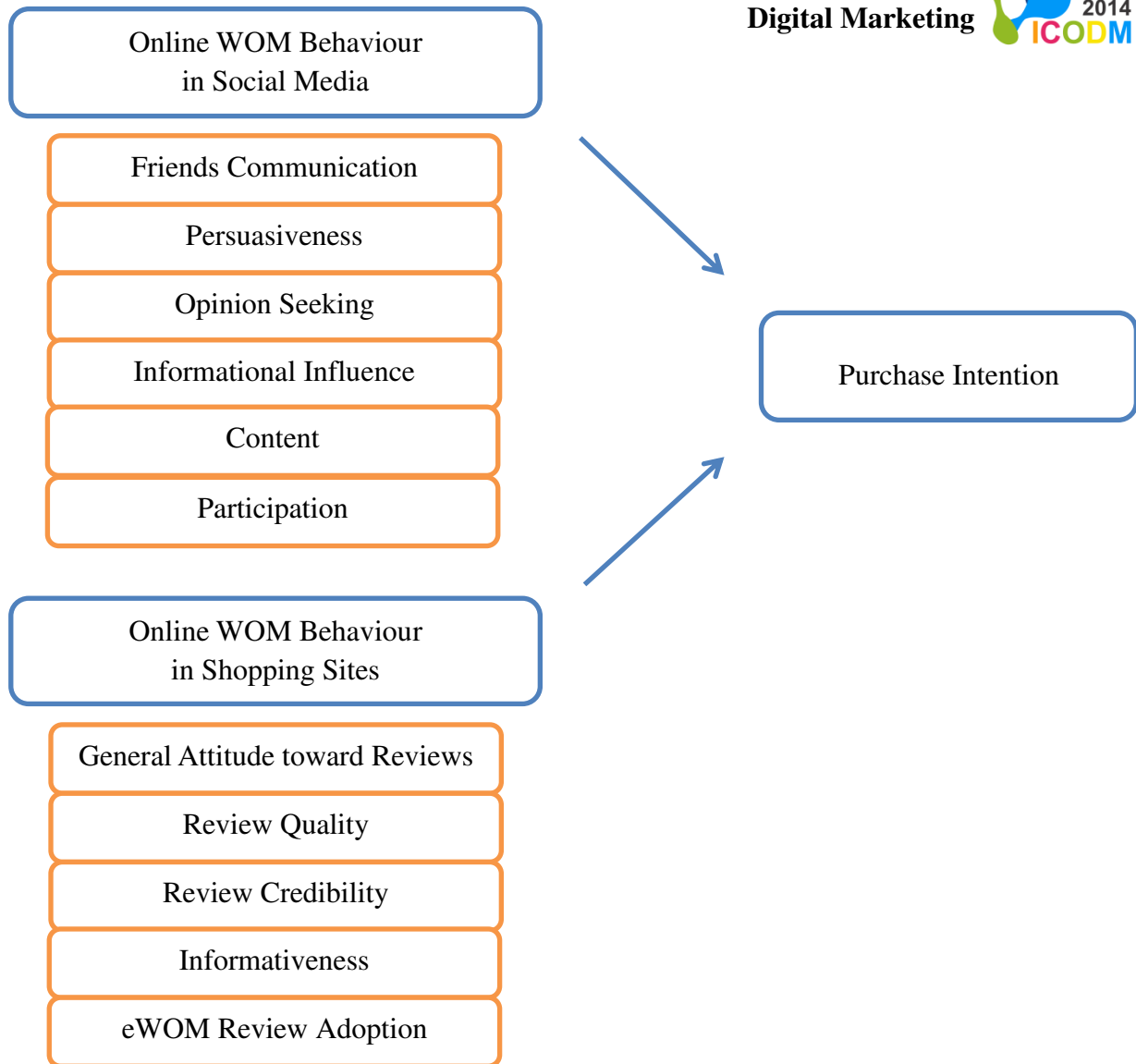
*Figure 2.*Model of Study 1

In the second phase, interviews will be conducted to expand initial results and to find how/why social networks and eWOM message types differ from each other in terms of affecting purchase intention. By using interviews, we aim to understand these questions deeply. The use of interviews can help the researchers to get reasonable and credible data which are appropriate to their research questions (Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill, 2012).

Sequential mixed methods research includes more than one stage of data collection and analysis. In this research design, the researchers use the second method in order to expand or elaborate on the initial findings (Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill 2012). This approach fits perfectly to the purpose of this study.

The data will be collected from university students due to the fact that they have been considered most active social media users. They constitute the greatest segment of the social media users, with 75% of adult between the ages of 18 and 24 (Chu and Kim, 2011). Thus, the sample is appropriate for study.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, as a one of the fastest growing areas for marketing, online word-of-mouth could offer obvious chances for marketers. In particular, eWOM in social networks is an appealing research topic due to exceptional growth, power and popularity of social networks. Besides, the effects of eWOM in social media on purchase intention remain uncertain. The aim of the research is to address this gap and the results should be useful for both practitioners and researchers.

REFERENCES

Arndt, J. (1967). Role of product related conversations in the diffusion of a new product.*Journal of Marketing Research*, 4, 291-295.

Balter, D. &Butman, J. (2005).*Grapevine: the New Art of Word-of-Mouth Marketing*. London: Penguin Group.

Bickart, B. & Schindler, R.M. (2001). Internet forums as influential sources of consumer information.*Journal of Interactive Marketing*, 15, 31-40.

Boyd, D.M. & Ellison, N.B. (2007). Social Network Sites: Definition, History, and Scholarship.*Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication*, 13, 210-230.

Cheung, C.M.K. &Thadani, D.R. (2012). The impact of electronic word-of-mouth communication: A literature analysis and integrative model.*Decision Support Systems*, 54, 461-470.

Chu, S. C. & Kim, Y. (2011). Determinants of consumer engagement in electronic word-of-mouth (eWOM) in social networking sites.*International Journal of Advertising*, 30, 47-75.

Engel, J.E., Blackwell, R.D.&Kegerreis, R.J. (1969). How information is used to adopt an innovation.*Journal of Advertising Research*, 9, 3-8.

Hennig-Thurau, T., Gwinner, K.P., Walsh, G. &Gremle, D.D. (2004). Electronic word-of-mouth via consumer-opinion platforms: What motivates consumers to articulate themselves on the Internet?*Journal of Interactive Marketing*, 18, 38-52.

Keller, E. (2007). Unleashing the power of word of mouth: Creating brand advocacy to drive growth.*Journal of Advertising Research*, 47, 448.

Kotler, P., Armstrong, G. M., Harris, L. C. & Piercy, N. (2013).*Principles of marketing*.6[th]European

Kozinets, R.V., de Valck, K., Wojnicki, A.C.&Wilner, S.J.S. (2010). Networked Narratives: Understanding Word-of-Mouth Marketing in Online Communities. *Journal of Marketing*, 74, 71-89.

Saunders, M., Lewis, P. &Thornhill A. (2012).*Research methods for business students*.6[th]edn.Pearson Education.

Trusov, M., Bucklin, R. E. &Pauwels, K. (2009). Effects of word-of-mouth versus traditional marketing: Findings from an internet social networking site. *Journal of Marketing*, 73, 90-102.

[06]

TOURISTS' USE OF HOTEL WEBSITES: IS THE INTERNET A CRITICAL MARKETING TOOL?

Thilini Chathurika Gamage[1], Dr. Fazeela Jameel Ahsan[2]

[1]*Probationary Lecturer, Dept. of Marketing Management, Sabaragamuwa University of Sri Lanka*

[2]*Senior Lecturer, Dept. of Marketing Management, University of Colombo*

[1]*thilinicg84@gmail.com,* [2]*dr.fazeela@gmail.com/ fazeela@fmf.cmb.ac.lk*

ABSTRACT

Despite the growing importance of the Internet as an information source, in marketing literature there is a lacuna of empirical research on how effective the Internet as a marketing medium in tourism settings. Understanding how tourists use the Internet as a marketing medium, and its influence on their purchase behavior is of critical importance to hoteliers in formulating appropriate marketing strategies to fully exploit the potential of this new marketing medium. This study reflects the results of an empirical study of tourist hotel selection in three major tourist destinations in Sri Lanka. A survey of 268 tourists from seven countries (India, United Kingdom (UK), Germany, France, Maldives, China and Russia) shows that while a reasonable percentage of tourists believe the medium to be a useful research tool, approximately 30 percent of tourists translate research into patronage (use the Internet for reservation or purchase of any hotel products or services); a disconnect that should be of significant interest to hoteliers considering the return of investment of their Internet marketing strategy. Findings also indicate that those tourists, predominantly from Western countries with higher education levels, are more likely to use the Internet for online purchase of hotel products and services. Implications and suggestions for hoteliers and /or marketing managers are discussed.

Key Words: Internet, Information Source, Internet Marketing, Marketing Medium

INTRODUCTION

The Internet is one of the most recent developments in communications and information transfer (Ngai, 2003). It is a technology asset because of its ability to disseminate large volume of information quickly and efficiently to all types of stakeholders, including employees, customers, shareholders and suppliers (Celuch and Murphy, 2010). To date, the Internet is more accessible and less expensive than it was, and the number of Internet users is growing tremendously. According to Internet World Stats (2013), more than 7 billion people around the world have online access by end of the year 2013 and the Internet penetration among the world population is 34.3%. While the outlook depicted by the above statistics looks positive and encouraging, it clearly shows increasing trend of customers who use Internet for pre-purchase information search and shopping over the next few years. From a marketing perspective, this has manifested itself primarily in two ways: (1) a drastic increase in the number of organizations that seek to use the Internet to communicate with (potential) customers, and (2) the rapid adoption of the Internet by broad customer segments for a variety of purposes, including pre-purchase information search and online shopping (Schibrowsky et al., 2007; Varadarajan and Yadav, 2009).

Despite the growing importance of the Internet as an information source for tourists, there is a lack of information on how tourists use the Internet, especially hotel Websites for pre-purchase information, booking and purchase of hotel products and services; factors influencing Internet usage rates; relationship between demographic characteristics and the use of the Internet; and Internet usage differences among tourists of different countries. Understanding how tourists behave is of critical importance to hoteliers in formulating appropriate marketing strategies that fully exploit the developing potential of this new marketing medium, the Internet. On this background, this paper aims to investigate tourists' Internet usage for hotel information and purchase of any hotel products/ services.

This paper is structured in the following way. First, prior literature pertaining to the Internet and its impact on marketing function is briefly reviewed followed next by a detailed discussion on information search behavior and information needs of tourists. Second, the research methodology used in this paper is discussed. Third, the analyses of empirical research findings are presented. Fourth, the findings are discussed in relation to previous literature. Fifth, implications of the findings for theory and practice and suggestions for future research are presented.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The Internet

The Internet is the global network of interlinked computers operating on a standard protocol which allows data transfer between them. The Internet emerged from its predecessor the ARPAnet which was created in the 1970's by the Advanced Research Projects Agency to support the excahnge of information between researchers, academics, the defense departments and related industries (Frost and Strauss, 1998). In the 1980's the ARPAnet was decommissioned and became part of the Internet. The Internet backbone networks in the United States were then subsidized by the National Science Foundation (NSF) till April 1995 when NSF subsidies for the backbone network ended and the networks were privatized. By that time the basic functions of the Internet include support for electronic mail and news services to send or broadcast messages to other users, file transfer to access and retrieve files from remote computers and telnet (Berners-Lee, 2000). As hardware and software technologies advanced to client-server computing, new advanced functions have become available on the Internet. These include wide area information services, which allow users to search for and retrive text information distributed over multiple computer servers on the Internet. The introduction of the newest component of the Internet, the World Wide Web (WWW) has transformed the Internet into a popular medium due to its unique capability to blend text, pictures, sounds and video clips into multimedia documents (Berners-Lee et al., 2001).

Since 1993 the Internet has grown at an exponential rate. An Internet domain survey conducted by Network-Wizards reveals that the number of host computers connected to the Internet increased from 1.3 million to 6.6 million between January 1993 to July 1995. Today, the Internet reaches over 223 countries. Although the NSF planted the seeds for this rapid growth by subsidizing the Internet backbone networks, the more recent dramatic growth in the use of the Internet is driven by increasing customer demand for inexpensive communications and decentralization nature of the Internet (e.g. no one owns or controls the Internet). To date, the Internet is more accessible and less expensive than it was and consequently the number of Internet users Worldwide is growing at an exponential rate. According to Internet World Stats (2013), on the demand side, the Internet is estimated to reach 60 million people Worldwide, with growth estimates averaging approximately 10% per month. In recent years, new advances in Internet can be summarized by the transformation of its most prominent component, the so called WWW into Web 1.0, Web 2.0, Web 3.0 into Web 4.0 (Aghaei, 2012), and,

principally, the development of social networks into artificial intelligence, which have created new forms of collaboration, participation and communication between organizations and its customers.

MARKETING IN THE DIGITAL SPACE: THE INTERNET AS A MARKETING MEDIUM

The last two decades were a revolutionary period of time for the marketing discipline (Schibrowsky et al., 2007). Its subject matter hasn't changed; marketing still pertains to the exchange of value between buyers and sellers, but the routes and dynamics of the value exchange processes are strongly challenged with emergence of the Internet along with a wide range of other Information and Communication Technologies (ICT), especially the WWW, into the business arena (Ngai, 2003; Kimilogu, 2004).The introduction of the Internet with its recent developments (e.g. Web 2.0 and Web 3.0) together with the wide spread use of personal computers created the context of e-commerce, in which the core marketing function has acquired new universal characteristics and directions, inducing development of the Internet as a marketing medium (Ngai, 2003; Varadarajan and Yadav, 2009). Thus, emergence of the Internet as a marketing medium has had a major impact on contemporary marketing thought and practice and offers many unique challenges to marketers.

As a marketing medium, the Internet has a blend of both unique characteristics and characteristics that are shared with other traditional marketing media (Kimilogu, 2004; Peterson et al., 1997). In summary, the main traits of the Internet as a marketing medium can be determined as the following (See Table 1).

Table 1

Characteristics of the Internet as a Marketing Medium

Characteristic	Implication
Accessibility	Ability to cover whole demographic spectrum, enhance operational and geographical scope, no proximity barriers, greater convenience for customers, enable organizations to compete in the global market
Interactivity	Ability to give real-time response to user actions and inputs, facilitate two-way communication between organizations and its customers, which is a salient dimension in relationship marketing
Availability	Ubiquitous/ ever-presence nature 24/7 (24 hours a day, 7 days a week), Ability to reach customers whenever they are ready to buy
Customization/ Personalization	Ability to tailor-made products/services/ market offerings to suite to individual customer preferences
Flexibility	Ability to rapidly respond and adapt to changing customer preferences and market conditions, flexibility is a unique feature lacked by traditional marketing media
Information Capacity	Ability for everyone to operate with information (information richness), For both organizations and customers the Internet acts as a global database, where data and information is available to make profitable transactions, the Internet reduces information asymmetry, allowing customers to select best quality

	products/ services at the lowest minimum cost
Collaboration	Ability to link with others, Organization can link with its customers, suppliers, partners and other stakeholders through the Internet, Modern business world is now moving away from traditional commerce and e-commerce to c-commerce by using the Internet as the transmission mode where they recognize the vital importance of collaboration in current competitive business environment
Communication	Offers cost-effective communication platform for one-to-one marketing, which allows low-cost, high-speed information transmission, e-mail arrives at its destination only few seconds after dispatch, and cost less than long distance charges for traditional ICT

(Sources: Schibrowsky et al., 2007; Turban et al., 2008; Varadarajan and Yadav, 2009)

NEW WAYS OF REACHING TOURISTS: THE IMPACT OF THE INTERNET ON HOTEL INDUSTRY

The current technological and market turbulence of the Internet with its recent developments has made conducting business over the Internet much more popular. The Internet severely destroyed and has more severely threatened some industries, but also created new markets as well (Porter and Millar, 1985; Turban et al., 2008). In this endeavor, several industries have began to use the Internet as an effective means to discover and meet customer needs profitably and tourism is no exception (Buhalis and Jun, 2011). Tourism has historically been an early adopter in new technology and it encompasses a large number of different travel-related activities, including, hospitality enterprises/ lodging facilities, destination management organizations (DMOs), souvenir and craft businesses, travel agencies, transport facilities, tour operators and tourist guides. The exponential growth of the Internet has brought revolutionary changes to the structure of the tourism industry by allowing tourism experience providers, hoteliers, DMOs, airliners, travel agents and tour operators to directly communicate with customers.

The Internet has also dramatically changed the competitive dynamics of the global hotel industry as well (Buhalis and Jun, 2011; Zafiropoulos and Varna, 2006). As Buhalis and Jun (2011) point out, the global hotel industry has been facing a technology-based revolution and high-profile and high-tech services have become a demanding requirement by a majority of technology-savvy sophisticated tourists. Clearly there has been an unprecedented increase in the uptake of technology, especially the Internet and WWW in global hotel industry over the past few years and shows no signs of slowing down (Main, 2001). This is further reconfirmed by findings of a recent survey conducted by Sierra Technologies on hotel distribution channels. According to them, due to the rapid technological changes new distribution channels (e.g. social media, IDS) emerge quite frequently; thus nowadays hotels use multiple distribution channels to contact with its customers as opposed to late 1980's (See Figure 1).
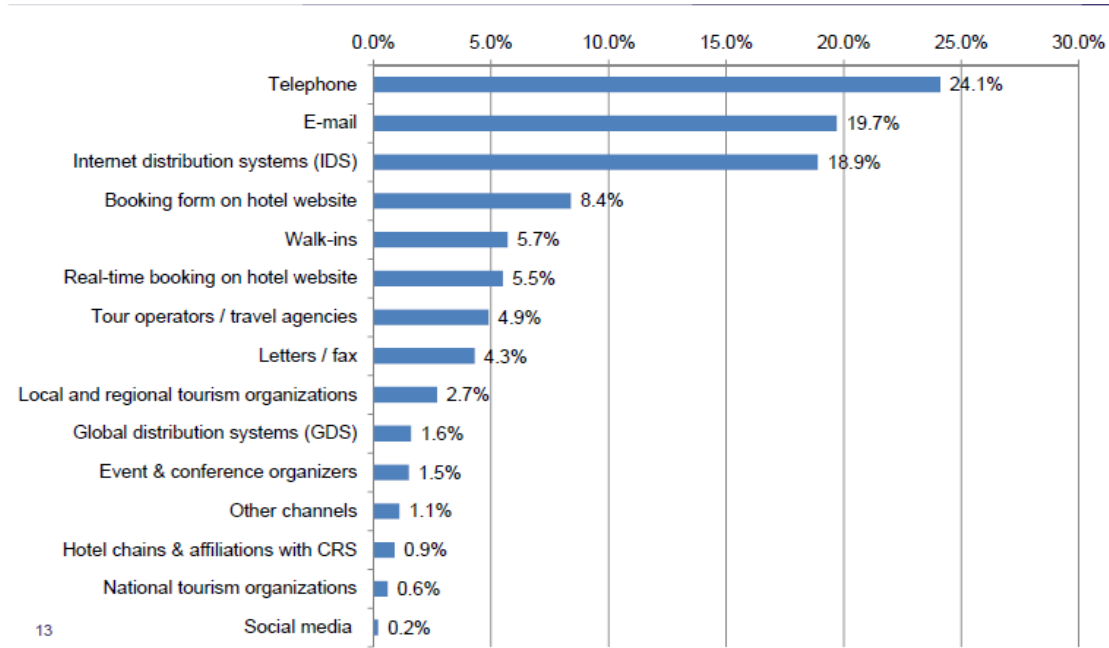
Figure 1: Distribution of Hotel Booking Channels as at end 2011 (Sierra Technologies, 2011)

In their study more specifically, they highlight the fact that bookings made through the Internet and its related technologies (e.g. Email, IDS, real time booking on hotel Website and social media) which aggregates nearly 55% of hotel bookings will be the future wave of worldwide hotel distribution. In amalgamated with them, Buhalis and Jun (2011) emphasize that the traditional direct distribution channels (e.g. telephone, fax, and letter) are considerably less important in star class hotels compared to real time bookings on their own hotel Websites. Furthermore, he emphasizes that the trend towards online booking channels is unbroken. This may be due to the fact that the Internet offers greater flexibility for both customers and hoteliers operating in volatile markets. Thus, majority of hoteliers utilize the Internet as a communication, transaction and/or distribution channel (Heung, 2003). The narrow casting ability of the Internet enables hoteliers to interact with customers in a more active manner, thus tailor-made products and services could be developed as a consequence of identifying individual customers' needs and preferences.

The most popular use of the Internet in global hotel industry is in communication followed next by online bookings and reservations (Khemthong and Roberts, 2006). In terms of communication, the Internet is undoubtedly faster and provides around the clock global services while reducing operational costs not previously possible with conventional marketing communication channels (Heung, 2003). Like other industries, majority of players in the global hotel industry have used the Internet as a potential distribution channel to extend their target markets to reach the global market, to receive online bookings, to enhance customer services and to generate revenue. As hotel products are mainly intangible and experiential, their marketing process is heavily reliant upon information (Murphy et al., 1996). Moreover, due to the wide availability of information via the Internet such as new destinations, attractions, given facilities in hotels, how and where to find the best deals; the travel buying behavior has become more and more complex and the travelers are more involved in the purchase decision than ever before. Therefore the traditional marketing tactics and channels such as giving incentives to the tour operators, agents, participating in travel exhibitions and distributing brochures can soon be out-dated. Instead, hoteliers will have to be more proactive and ready to engage well with end customers from the inception of the buying funnel of the potential customer. Thus, the

Internet has become an integral part of hotel's marketing strategy and a new challenge for hoteliers in the 21st century is to see how the Internet, can be integrated into their existing business operations (Law and Jogoratnam, 2005; Zafiropoulos and Varna, 2006).

INFORMATION SEARCH BEHAVIOR AND INFORMATION NEEDS OF TOURISTS

The popularity and exponential growth of Internet usage in commercial transactions across the world resulted in rapid adoption of the Internet as a marketing medium by broad customer segments for a variety of purposes, including pre-purchase information search and online shopping (Brashear et al., 2009). It has been well established in marketing literature that customers' shopping behavior in virtual markets (e.g. online shopping behavior) is fundamentally different from that in traditional retail settings (e.g. traditional offline shopping behavior) (Litvin et al., 2004). Consequently, customers' perception towards Internet shopping has gained a great deal of attention in marketing literature in recent years. However, as each part of the World is unique in its social norms, culture, and infrastructure, these differences may cause the profiles of Internet shoppers and non-shoppers to be different worldwide.

The pattern of Internet shoppers and non-shoppers varies by country and region (Heung, 2003). For example, in the United States, 74% of customers use the Internet as a pre-information search tool, and approximately 33% of them purchase online (Brashear et al., 2009). In the Asia-Pacific region, Australians and New Zealanders are the most likely to use the Internet to seek information about products and services. Online purchasing is far more common in Australia, New Zealand, and South Korea than in Hong Kong, Taiwan, and Singapore. European browsing and purchasing patterns vary from country to country (Heung, 2003). Two out of three Internet users in Germany buy online whereas in Brazil 40% of Internet users have made purchases. However, heavy Internet usage need not necessarily translate into frequent online shopping. Prior research finds that the heavy users of the Internet are believed to be younger, less educated, and lower in income (Brashear et al., 2009). This is particularly true for emerging markets like China where a majority of Internet users are very young. Therefore, to target heavy users alone may be a flawed strategy as all users may not necessarily be Internet shoppers. A consideration of demographic characteristics alone in targeting Internet shoppers can therefore be detrimental to the growth of an effective marketing strategy. Attitudinal and motivational dimensions are thus an important component of an effective marketing strategy when targeting Internet shoppers.

In travel and tourism, tourism information sources have been identified as a main factor influencing destination choice (Buhalis and Jun, 2011). This is because tourism products are intangible and cannot be evaluated in advance. Furthermore, taking a holiday is considered as one of the biggest expenditures in tourists' annual budget, (Salem et al., 2013). Tourists are also often eager to meet "like-minded souls" who have similar attitudes, interests, or lifestyles (Chung and Buhalis, 2008). This behavior is believed to occur in order to reduce risk and uncertainty (Chung and Buhalis, 2008). Hence prospective tourists often attempt to maximize knowledge through searching information as much as possible. The emergence of Internet and its related technologies ranging from online virtual communities to commercial advertising on mobile phones creates new types of information sources (Buhalis and Jun, 2011). Consequently it has a major impact on tourist's information search behavior as well (Salem et al., 2013). In particular, the Internet has changed the way of purchasing tourism-related products and services due to its interactive and two-way communication functionality. For instance, consumers not only receive content from the Internet, but also increasingly generate their own content through digital cameras, web cams, picture phones, online communities, and web blogs (Chung and Buhalis, 2008).

Even in tourism, the pattern of information search in both online and offline is often influenced by demographic profiles, levels of experiences and a range of other variables (Buhalis and Jun, 2011). Buhalis and Jun (2011) highlight that tourists who have a more wired lifestyle and who are more time constrained tend to buy online more frequently. Potential tourists, not surprisingly, are exposed to many different kinds of information. However, the type and the relative importance of information sources have changed over time. The proliferation of information now available on the Internet from a plethora of different providers makes it difficult to appreciate the reliability of this information and to trust that it is accurate and appropriate. As a result, the demand for credible information sources has increased dramatically. While customers obviously search for information for pre-purchase decision, it is also evident that customers who collect information do not necessarily have an actual intention to travel (Chung and Buhalis, 2008). In addition to the functional needs, tourists attempt to use information for sharing with others, viewing pictures, or simply enjoying. Buhalis and Jun (2011) argue that tourists' information needs are expanded beyond functional needs, towards additional four dimensions, namely: hedonic, innovation, aesthetic, and sign needs. Hedonic needs involve the pursuit of enjoyment whereas aesthetic needs signify the search for visual stimulation for the imagination. Innovation needs indicate pursuit of new products and information and sign needs refer to needs for expressing one's social status, personality, and identity throughout interactions with others. Hence, hoteliers need to adopt proactive marketing strategies on the Internet not only to monitor what is reported about them online but also to create a positive image across all the communication channels that refer to their property.

METHODOLOGY

Following the positivistic research tradition and the quantitative research approach, in this paper survey research strategy was adopted.

Measures

Self-administered questionnaire developed after an extensive review of relevant literature on Internet marketing and e-commerce was used to collect the data. The measures used in this paper were obtained from previous research by Salem et al. (2013), Avcikurt et al. (2011) and Brashear et al. (2009), which looked at Internet shopper profiles, especially in hotel industry. The attitude scales were all measured on five-point likert scale with endpoints of 1= "strongly disagree" to 5= "strongly agree". Those measures have been shown to have high reliability in the previous research (all measure have coefficient alphas of 0.64 or higher). A pre-test of the questionnaire was carried out with 20 tourists and 3 academics and 3 industry experts for clarity, practicability and reliability. All participants felt comfortable with the wording and the overall flow of the questionnaires. Only marginal changes were requested by the participants in relation to wording expressions, sentence phrases and technical/ sophisticated language. The suggestions with regard to formatting, sequence and wording were mostly incorporated into the final design. Since all the items used in the questionnaires originally came from well tested existing scales in literature, the purified questionnaires were deemed appropriate and well understood for the given purpose.

RESEARCH SETTING, SAMPLE AND DATA COLLECTION METHOD

With over 1600 km coastlines, Sri Lanka is known to most tourists for its tropical beach resorts, which offer various attractions all year round. Sri Lanka's southern beaches have long been discovered by tourists as a tourist attraction. According to Sri Lanka Tourism Development Authority, the most popular tourist destinations (in terms of tourist density) on the southern coast are Unawatuna, Mirissa and Bentota. According to many industry experts, even tourists who are visiting Sri Lanka for

a short stay tends to go to at least one out of these beach destinations. Therefore Unawatuna, Mirissa and Bentota were selected as the research setting of this study due to the high tourist density. Western Europe is the main source of market region for tourism to Sri Lanka accounting 40% of International tourist arrivals followed next by Asia and North America (nearly 40%) (SLTDA, 2013). Moreover, India, United Kingdom (UK), Germany, France, Maldives, China and Russia are the top seven source markets to Sri Lanka (SLTDA, 2013). Tourists from those top seven source markets were considered for this paper as they represents the overwhelm majority of international tourist-base in Sri Lanka.

The administration of the survey spanned a period of three months from November 2012 to January 2013 as southern coast is best from November to April. A convenience sample of 450 tourists from selected three tourist destinations (150 from each destination) was used in this paper. Besides, two initial filtering questions were asked prior to the formal commencement of the survey in order to satisfy qualifying condition as those who are not staying at hotels and those who were not residents of one of the top seven source markets have to exclude from this survey. The survey generated 297 responses, out of which 17 were unusable as the respondents were not staying at hotels and were not residents of one of the seven target source markets. Additionally, 12 responses including over 10% missing values were excluded from further analysis. The final sample analyzed consisted of 268 responses. Sample demographics are presented in Table 2.

Table 2

Sample Characteristics

Characteristics	All Sample (n = 268) %	Internet Users (n = 80) %	Non-Internet Users (n = 188) %	df	p
Country of Residence					
India	33.86	26.25	37.2	6	0.000
UK	21.94	37.5	15.5		
Germany	13.76	10.0	15.4		
France	10.92	6.25	13.3		
Maldives	9.10	5.0	10.6		
China	5.46	10.0	3.2		
Russia	4.96	5.0	4.8		
Gender					
Male	56.2	56.4	53.2	1	0.083

Female	43.8	43.6	46.8		
Age					
Under 19	7.9	1.2	9.6	5	0.086
20-29	18.5	22.6	17.0		
30-39	27.0	41.1	20.1		
40 – 49	24.3	1.3	34.0		
50 – 59	13.1	26.3	7.4		
60 & Over	10.1	7.5	11.1		
Education (highest level completed)					
Primary	1.70	1.3	2.1	4	0.000
Secondary	17.1	17.5	17.1		
University	49.8	50.2	48.9		
Postgraduate	20.0	20.0	20.2		
Professional/ Vocational Qualifications	11.4	11.0	11.7		
Annual Household Income (US$)					
Less than 10,000	7.4	2.4	9.6	5	0.000
10,000 – 29,999	15.7	17.6	14.9		
30,000 – 49,999	19.5	23.7	17.5		
50,000 – 69,999	24.9	30.0	22.9		
70,000 – 89,999	16.9	21.3	14.9		
90,000 & Over	15.6	5.0	20.2		

Among 268 surveyed tourists, 80 (or 30%) and 188 (or 70%) were Internet and non-Internet users respectively.

DATA ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS

Major data analysis techniques used in this paper includes descriptive statistics (e.g. mean and standard deviation) and one-way analyses-of-variance (ANOVA), with t-test for continuous data and chi-square tests for categorical data.

Pearson Chi-square tests were used to examine if any significant differences existed in demographic characteristics between Internet and non-Internet users. Results indicate that Internet and non-Internet users differed in terms of educational level, income and country of residence. With regard to respondents' educational level, tourists with better educational levels (70%), at university or postgraduate level were more likely to purchase hotel products online than those tourists at a comparatively low education levels. As for the annual household income, approximately 56% of tourists earning US$50,000 or above per annum when compared to non-users. Moreover online hotel purchases were mainly from Western countries (UK = 375%) whereas non-Internet users mainly from Asia including India (37.2%), China and Maldives. Gender and age were not found to have any significant difference between Internet and non-Internet users. Among Internet and non-Internet users around 56% were males and around 50% of them were aged between 30-49.

The reasons for using the Internet for hotel pre-information search or bookings among Internet users are shown in Table 3. It is noted that the strongest influencing factor was "Offers time and place independency" (mean = 4.57) followed next by "Offers real time information and interaction" (mean = 3.78), "Enables me to get faster services than using other channels (mean 3.57). The results of this paper reconfirmed the findings of Heung (2003), Brashear et al. (2007) and Salem et al. (2013) who emphasize that the greater focus on location and time independency is likely to be the contributing factor to the growth of electronic commerce.

Table 3

Reasons for using Internet among Internet Users

Reasons	Mean	SD
1. Helps me to get reasonably priced products/services	2.56	1.31
2. Provides me personalized products/services	2.88	1.56
3. Enables me to save time	3.01	1.15
4. Enables me to get faster services than using other channels	3.57	1.23
5. Enables me to test new technologies	3.17	0.99
6. Offers time and place independency	4.27	0.91
7. Offers real time information and interaction	3.78	1.17

Note: Mean of influence level ranges from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree)

To examine if the reasons for using the Internet differed significantly by the demographic profiles of the Internet users, one-way ANOVA is used. As illustrate in Table 4, the seven reasons did not show any difference in influence levels among tourists of different countries.

Table 4

Results of One-way ANOVA of mean differences on reasons for using the Internet by country of residence

Reasons	India (n=21)	UK (n=30)	Germany (n=8)	France (n=5)	Maldives (n=4)	China (n=8)	Russia (n=4)	F-value	*p*
1.Helps me to get reasonably priced products/service	3.34	2.18	2.57	2.34	3.57	2.96	3.11	1.645	0.114
2. Provides me personalized products/services	2.96	2.11	2.87	2.41	3.01	2.88	2.99	1.011	0.055
3. Enables me to save time	3.67	3.89	3.35	3.57	3.77	3.12	3.47	1.743	0.234
4. Enables me to get faster services than using other channels	3.47	3.99	3.35	4.01	3.59	3.01	3.39	1.814	0.145
5. Enables me to test new technologies	3.88	3.12	3.31	3.42	3.78	3.23	3.52	1.725	0.324
6. Offers time and place independency	3.96	4.57	4.32	4.11	3.88	4.01	4.07	1.796	0.096
7. Offers real time information and interaction	3.88	3.93	4.01	4.05	3.73	3.88	4.02	1.672	0.0257

Note: Mean of influence level ranges from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree)

As shown in Table 5 the strongest influential factor for not using the Internet for pre- information search and reservation was "Concern about security" (mean = 3.57) followed next by "Is risky" (mean = 3.22) and "Increases anxiety" (mean = 3.12). The findings are in line with Litvin (2004) who emphasizes credit card security as the main reason for not purchasing hotel products online.

Table 5

Reasons for not using Internet among Internet Users

Reasons	Mean	SD
1. Is risky	3.22	1.01
2. Concern about security	3.57	0.96
3. Increases anxiety	3.12	1.58
4. Non-availability of reservation on the Internet	1.25	1.36
5. Not familiar with the Internet	1.41	1.11
6. No access to the Internet	1.93	1.58

Note: Mean of influence level ranges from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree)

The influence level of the six reasons for not using the Internet by different country of residence was analyzed using one-way ANOVA as shown in Table 6. Three reasons showed a significant difference (p<0.05) among different countries of residence. Those reasons included "Is risky", "Concerned about security" and "Non-availability of reservation on the Internet".

Table 6

Results of One-way ANOVA of mean differences on reasons for not using the Internet by country of residence

Reasons	India (n=70)	UK (n=29)	Germany (n=29)	France (n=25)	Maldives (n=20)	China (n=6)	Russia (n=9)	F-value	p
1. Is risky	1.86	2.42	2.33	2.12	1.87	2.03	2.11	3.215	0.003*
2. Concern about security	2.74	3.67	3.57	3.44	2.93	3.01	3.13	3.771	0.001*
3. Increases anxiety	1.89	1.27	1.78	1.76	1.91	1.74	1.93	1.857	0.257
4. Non-availability of reservation on the Internet	1.68	2.53	2.47	2.23	1.73	2.12	2.02	3.114	0.004*
5. Not familiar with the	1.76	1.13	1.67	1.34	1.87	1.61	1.53	1.234	0.056

Internet								
6. No access to the Internet	1.69	1.43	1.49	1.58	1.93	1.72	1.62	1.342	0.067

Note: Mean of influence level ranges from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree);*p < 0.05

DISCUSSION & MANAGERIAL IMPLICATIONS

This paper extends the work of Heung (2003) and Brashear et al. (2009) by examining Internet shoppers and non-shoppers in seven different countries. In doing so, this paper seeks to expand the domain of findings to a global context. As highlighted earlier, Internet usage and commerce are expected to grow significantly across the world. However, as each part of the world is unique in its social norms, culture, and infrastructure, these differences may cause the profiles of Internet shoppers and non-shoppers to be different worldwide. Therefore, it becomes increasingly important to fully understand the differences, similarities, and unique characteristics of Internet shoppers and non-shoppers that exist worldwide.

The results of the seven-country comparison presented in this paper indicate that across the markets examined, there exist both commonalities and differences between the Internet shopper and the non-shopper profiles. In amalgamated with Brashear et al. (2009), the findings of this paper highlight that Internet shoppers across most countries seek time and location independency offered by online shopping as the most influential factor. They also exhibit differences in terms of income and education level.

The findings of this paper provide interesting insights for hoteliers and hotel marketing managers on tourists' behavior in using the Internet for hotel information and reservation. As Internet usage grows worldwide, managers need to understand the major factors that affect the usage of the Internet as an information source and purchasing tool and their relationship with tourists' demographic characteristics. This distinction will enable managers to tailor the online experience in ways that will actually make Internet shoppers purchase and repurchase from their Websites while encouraging non-shoppers to shop online. Hoteliers and marketing managers need to focus on the benefits of staying online in order to encourage repeat purchases among Internet shoppers. Moreover, managers can emphasize the convenience of shopping from home as opposed to physically going to a store. The Internet can be thus positioned as a tool that can make shopping easier. Since security issues are identified as the main reason for not purchasing hotel products online, it is recommended to incorporate more trust including factors (e.g. security and privacy policy, user guides/ manuals and third party certificate) to hotel Websites.

The mixed results for demographic variables such as age and gender imply that demographic variables might not play the same role in every country. Even though Internet shoppers are distinguished from non-shoppers by virtue of education level and income, they are not different from non-shoppers with regard to age and gender in most of the countries examined. This is in contrast to findings in prior research where Internet shoppers in the United States were found to be primarily young, educated, and male. Although not tested in this paper, this could be related to the spread of the Internet worldwide. Further, managers need to exercise caution in using only demographic variables to target online tourists.

LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH DIRECTIONS

Several limitations of this paper are worth addressing. This paper is exploratory in nature and provides only a general picture on the present status of tourists' Internet usage for pre-information search and reservations. There is a need for more in-depth studies focusing on specific market segments (e.g. free independent tourists (FIT), group inclusive travelers (GUI) and backpackers) with regard to Internet usage as the weight of influence of different factors might be different from one market segment to the other. The number of countries used in this paper is limited primarily due to a lack of access, so whether the findings are generalizable to other countries is unclear. Future research could attempt to replicate this study with tourists from other countries to see if the results in this paper hold in other contexts and cultures.

REFERENCES

Aghaei, A., Nematbakhsh, M.A. and Farsani, H.K. (2010) Evolution of the world wide web: From web 1.0 to Web 4.0, *International Journal of Web & Semantic Technology*, 3(1), pp. 1-3.

Avcikurt, C., Ibrahim, G. and Sahin, S. (2011) An evaluation of thermal hotel and the use/ non-use of the Internet as a marketing tool by thermal hotels in Turkey, *African Journal of Business Management,* 5(7), pp. 2817-2827.

Berners-Lee, T. (2000) *Weaving the Web: The Past, Present and Future of the World Wide Web by its Inventor*. London, Texere.

Berners-Lee, T., Hendler, J., Lassila, O. (2001) The Semantic Web. *Scientific American,* 284(5), pp.34-43.

Brashear T.G., Kashyap, V., Musante, M.D., and Donthu, N. (2009) A Profile of the Internet Shopper: Evidence from Six Countries, *Journal of Marketing Theory and Practice,* 17(3), pp. 267-281.

Buhalis, D. and Jun, S. H. (2011), E-Tourism, *Contemporary Tourism Reviews,* pp.2-38.

Celuch, K. and Murphy, G. (2010) SME Internet use and strategic flexibility: The moderating effect of IT market orientation, *Journal of Marketing Management,* 26, pp.131-145.

Chung, Y. and Buhalis, D. (2008). Informtion Needs in Online Social Networks, *Information Technology and Tourism,* 10(4), pp. 267-281.

Heung, V.C.S. (2003) Internet Usage by International Travelers: Reasons and Barriers, *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality*, 15(7), pp.370-378.

Internet World Stats (2013), *World Internet Usage and Population Statistics*. Available at: http://www.internetworldstats.com/stats/ [Accessed date: 30th may 2014]

Khemthong, S. and Roberts L. M. (2006) Adoption of Internet and Web Technology for Thailand, *Journal of Business Systems, Governance and Ethics,* 1(2), pp.47-66.

Kimilogu, H. (2004) The "E-Literature": A Framework for Understanding the Accumulated Knowledge about Internet Marketing, *Academy of Marketing Science Review,* 6, pp.1-36.

Law, R. and Jogoratnam, G. (2005) A Study of Hotel Information Technology Applications, *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management* , pp.170-180

Litvin, S.W., Blose, J.E. and Laird, S.T. (2004) Tourist use of restaurant web-pages: is the internet a critical marketing tool? *Journal of Vacation Marketing*, 11 (2), pp.155-161.

Main, H. C. (2001) The Expansion of Technology in Small and Medium Hospitality Enterprises with a focus on Net Technology, *Journal of Information Technology and Tourism*, 4, pp.167-174.

Murphy, J., Forrest, E. J., Wotring, E. C. and Brymer, R. A. (1996) Hotel Management and Marketing on the Internet, *Cornell Hotel and Restaurant Administration Quarterly* , pp.70-78.

Ngai, E. W. T. (2003) Commentary. Internet Marketing Research (1987-2000): A Literature Review and Classification. *European Journal of Marketing, 37* (1/2), pp.24-49.

Peterson, R. A., Balasubramanian, S. and Bronnenberg, B. J. (1997) Exploring the Implications of Internet for Consumer Marketing. *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science* , pp.329-344.

Porter, M. E. and Millar V. E. (1985) How Information give you Competitive Advantage, *Harvard Business Review*, 63(4), pp.149-160.

Salem I.E.B, El-Said O.A. and Nabil M. (2013) Determinants and Effects of Applying Electronic Marketing in Alexandria Hotels: Current Status and Future Trends, *Journal of Tourism and Hospitality,* 2(2).

Schibrowsky, J.A., Peltier, W.J. and Nill, A. (2007) The state of internet marketing research: A review of the literature and future research directions*, European Journal of Marketing,* 41(7/8), pp.722 – 733.

Sri Lanka Tourism Development Authority (2013) *Annual Statistical Report*. Colombo: Sri Lanka Tourism Development Authority

Strauss, J. and Frost, R. (1998) *E-Marketing.* Prentice Hall

Turban, E., King, D., McKay, J., Marshall, P., Lee, J. and Viehland, D. (2008) *Electronic Commerce 2008*: *A Managerial Perspective*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson Education, Inc.

Varadarajan, R. and Yadav, M.S. (2009) Marketing Strategy in an Internet-Enabled Environment: A Retrospective on the First Ten Years of JIM and a Prospective on the Next Ten Years, *Journal of Interactive Marketing*, 23, pp.11-22.

Zafiropoulos, C. and Varna, V. (2006) A Framework for the Evaluation of the Hotel Websites: The Case of Greece, *Information Technology and Tourism* , pp.239-254.

[07]

EYE TRACKING ONLINE FASHION RETAIL EXPERIENCES OF 55+ YEAR OLD CONSUMERS

Phoebe R. Apeagyei, PhD & Sam Chandrasekara

Manchester Metropolitan University, UK

P.Apeagyei@mmu.ac.uk

S.Chandrasekara@mmu.ac.uk

ABSTRACT

The emergence of e-commerce and online shopping has fundamentally transformed markets and the way consumers buy into fashion brands, products and services. More than ever, older consumers are becoming more fashion conscious and savvy shoppers, due to emerging trends, discretionary income and the impact of new technology on lifestyle patterns. In the UK, more than 15.5 million people are aged over 55 and this figure is estimated to rise to 21.6 million by 2022. The UK fashion retail marketplace has become highly competitive and there is a persistent drive to be innovative and current. As a result of consumer demands and increasing competitive pressures, it is paramount that retailers review how best to attract and connect with specific market segments. The burgeoning success of pure player online retailers demonstrates that the online marketplace has become a sovereign business channel, holding substantial retail market share. This study focuses on how over 55 year old female consumers engage with online shopping for clothes, providing a deeper understanding of fashion shopping habits of this budding target market group. It analyses the attributes of fashion retail websites targeting this rapidly emerging market; and depicts the psychnomics of this significant consumer segment using digital eye tracking research and a survey. The research establishes motivation, determines patterns of behaviour, and provides an impetus for further research.

Keywords: online shopping, digital eye tracking, retail market, fashion, 55+ women

AN EMPIRICAL ANALYSIS OF CONSUMERS' ATTITUDE TOWARDS FACEBOOK ADVERTISEMENTS; WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO YOUNG CONSUMERS IN COLOMBO CITY

Sampath, W.D.R.P[1], Rathnayake D.T[2]

[1]*The International Institute of Knowledge Management*

[2]*University of Sri Jayewardenepura*

pradeep@tiikm.com, dilan@sjp.ac.lk

ABSTRAC

The rapid development of information Communication Technology in recent past has accelerated the phase of change and has paved the way for new dimensions of marketing communication. Social Network Sites are typically a collection of user profiles where members of the sites are enable to place, share information with others. FaceBook has gained a massive popularity among young Sri Lankan Consumers even though there are other social network sites such as Twitter, Google+, LinkedIn. With the popularity, marketers have been given an opportunity to place advertisements on FaceBook user isnterface. Hence, the effectiveness of FaceBook advertising greatly depends of the users' attitude towards advertisements and several factors can be identified as determinants of users' attitude towards Facebook advertisements. Thus, the aim of this study is to identify factors affecting the attitude towards FaceBook advertisements with special reference to young consumers in Colombo city, Sri Lanka. The research model of this study is based on an existing model developed by Yaakop et al. (2012) and Alsamydai & Khasawneh, (2013) consists of six factors, namely perceived interactivity, entertainment, advertising avoidance, credibility, informativeness and privacy. Unit of analysis was individual user. Convenience sampling teqhnique was employed to draw the sample. The reliability of the measurement scales was tested using Cronbach's Alpha and test-re test reliability. Rigorous literature review ensured the content validity and factor analysis was performed to test the construct validity of the data. . The results denoted that Credibility factor does not have a significant impact on dependant variable. Thus perceived interactivity, entertainment, advertising avoidance, informativeness and privacy had a significant impact on users' attitude towards FaceBook advertisements.

Key words: *Advertising Avoidance, Credibility, Entertainment, Facebook Advertising, Informativeness Interactivity, Perceived Privacy*

[09]

THE IMPACT OF E-WORD OF MOUTH COMMUNICATION ON BRAND PERSONALITY; WITH REFERENCE TO THE MOBILE PHONE INDUSTRY IN SRI LANKA.

Panawala, D.I[1], Rathnayake D.T[2]

University of Sri Jayewardenepura

dinalipanawala@gmail.com, dilan@sjp.ac.lk

ABSTRACT

Now a day Sri Lankan consumers have been greatly influenced by social media and it is observable that social media has a direct impact on their behavior. The Social Media phenomenon has definitively hit Sri Lanka with brands jumping on the bandwagon by starting to acquire consultancy from specialists and dedicating a budget exclusively for Social Media. Social Media has taken over the Sri Lankan online population with no doubt, with a majority of them spending increased amounts of time on Facebook, followed by other social networks. Since modern marketers have extended their marketing efforts and programmes to the social media platform in order to grab the attention of virtual communities, it has been paramount important for organizations to examine the role of brand development strategies in virtual environment. A brand personality is something to which the consumer can relate, and an effective brand will increase its brand equity by having a consistent set of traits. This is the added-value that a brand gains, aside from its functional benefits. Thus brand personality is a much powerful concept for marketers and e-WOM communication plays a critical role in developing high level of brand personality. This research addresses the e-WOM and its impact on brand personality of brands in the Sri Lankan mobile phone industry. Sample was selected using convenience sampling technique and data collection instrument was self-administered questionnaire. Reliability was ensured by calculating Cronbach's Alpha and validity of measurement properties were ensured through factor analysis. Findings of the study depicted that there is a significant impact of e-WOM on brand personality in mobile phone industry. The study suggest strategy makers to use different dimensions of e-WOM to effectively to develop brand personalities of mobile phones and findings of the study can be used to determine the prioritization of e-WOM content dimensions.

Key Words: e-WOM, Brand Personality, Facebook

[10]

IMPACT OF A BANK'S DEMOGRAPHIC FACTORS ON SOCAIL MEDIA AND CUSTOMER RELATIONSHIP MANAGEMENT IN THE SRI LANKAN RETAIL BANKING SECTOR

W.L.N. Fernando[1], G.D Samarasinghe[2]

[1]Common-Wealth Executive MBA Program, Department of Management, Open University of Sri Lanka, Nawala, Sri Lanka

[2]Department of Management of Technology, University of Moratuwa, Katubedda, Sri Lanka

[1]lalindra.fernando@gmail.com, [2]dineshs@uom.lk

ABSTRACT

Social Media is fast becoming a must have tool in every organization. The retail-banking sector in Sri Lanka is no exception to this phenomenon. Although it has been a sensation the world over in almost every industry including the banking industry, the use of Social Media has not reached a satisfactory stage in the Sri Lankan retail-banking sector. With commercial banks contributing heavily to the country's gross domestic product and customers having increased access to internet and becoming ever more internet / social network savvy, there is ample opportunity for the banks to exploit in this domain. The demographic factors of a bank go a long way in attracting the right kind of customers as well as sustaining the business. On this ground, the purpose of the study is to explain if the demographic factors of a bank namely, nature if ownership, years in existence, size and asset base have an impact on Social Media and Customer Relationship Management (CRM) the Sri Lankan retail banking industry. It was hypothesized that demographic factors of a bank has an influences on the Social Media and CRM. Structured questionnaires were administered to a random sample of bank customers of selected commercial banks in Sri Lanka. The demographic factors of the banks were also obtained through published reports. A one way ANOVA revealed that demographic factors of a bank, namely, nature if ownership, years in existence, size does not, but the asset base does have an impact on Social Media and CRM in the retail-banking sector of Sri Lanka. The findings have implications that Sri Lankan banks should actively use social media (namely forums and communities, ratings and reviews and referrals and recommendations) to enhance their marketing activities. This should be carried out as a strategic initiative under a social media implementation plan in order to achieve and sustain their competitive advantage in the Sri Lankan retail-banking sector.

Keywords: Demographic factors, Social Media, Customer Relationship Management, Retail Banking Sector, Sri Lanka

INTRODUCTION

Background of the Study

Post war Sri Lanka is on a development trend. With the rapid developments in Information Communication Technology, the availability of Internet for the Sri Lankan users is also on the rise. Use of Social Media in Sri Lankan businesses especially banks; do not seem to have reached it maximum potential yet. Although there is ample opportunity to exploit, banks seem to be reluctant to

venture into this new area due to various reasons. Further, the amount of research carried out on the impact of a bank's demographic factors on social media is not very common. Therefore this research aims to explore this area and identify if demographic factors of a bank has a significant impact on the Social Media and CRM in the Sri Lankan Retail Banking context.

Research Problem

According to the annual report published by the Central Bank of Sri Lanka (CBSL) the service sector contributes 58.5% to the national economy. Within the service sector, the financial sector contributes a 8.9% to the national economy. The Banking sector's share in total assets of the major financial institutions is 70.6%out of which 48.2% %(CBSL, 2013) is from licensed commercial banks. Therefore, banks play a major role in driving the economy forward and fund the growth opportunities of the nation. Out of these banks the private banks play a major role in providing financial services.

Some statistics on Sri Lankan Internet and Facebook usage are as follows

Population by mid 2012			
0 – 14 years	**14 – 65 years**	**65 years and above**	**Total**
5.4 bn	14 bn	1.3 bn	20.7 bn

Period	Cellular Mobile Telephones	Telephone Density - including Cellular (Telephones per 100 persons)	Internet & E-mail (b)
2012 (c) 2nd Qtr	19,272,324	111.68	1,145,587
2013 (c) 2nd Qtr	19,533,274	108.76	1,475,626

(a) Except SLT lines   (b) Including mobile broadband services   (c) Provisional

Figure 1 – Demographic data (Source - CBSL, 2013)

1,515,720 Facebook subscribers on Dec 31/12, 7.1% penetration (Miniwatts, 2013)

Currently we do not see this very much in the private banking sector in Sri Lanka given the increasing number of Internet users in the country. Sometimes demographic factors become a hindrance in order to venture into new domains such as social media. According to the social media analytics website (Socialbakers, 2013), only a very few Sri Lankan Private Banks have an official facebook page. Based on the above understanding, the study formulates the research problem as follows; *do demographic factors have an impact on social media and customer relationship management in Sri Lankan Retail Banking sector?*

Objectives of the Study

In order to address the above research problem, the study presents its major objectives as,

1. Identify to what extent does the nature of ownership of a bank impact social media and CRM in the retail banking sector in Sri Lanka.
2. Ascertain to what extent does the no. of years in existence of a bank impact social media and CRM in the retail banking sector in Sri Lanka.

3. Identify to what extent does the size of a bank impact social media and CRM in the retail banking sector in Sri Lanka.
4. Ascertain to what extent does the assets base of a bank impact social media and CRM in the retail banking sector in Sri Lanka.

LITERATURE REVIEW, CONEPTUAL MODEL AND HYPOTHESIS OF THE STUDY

What is Social Media?

The medium (e.g. social networking sites such as facebook, twitter) used to do this type of networking is called social media. (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010) define social media as "a group of Internet-based applications that build on the ideological and technological foundations of Web 2.0, and that allow the creation and exchange of user-generated content.

Facebook, Orkut, MySpace, Google+ - mainstream social networking sites. LinkedIn - professional networking site. Blogs like WordPress, Blogspot – used for broadcasting and publishing data. YouTube - video sharing website. Twitter-micro-blogging website where one can post only 140 characters at a time are some examples for social media.

Social Media in Banks

Pioneers in social media marketing are also emerging in the industry of retail banking. US banking organizations such as Citibank, Bank of America, ING Direct and USAA demonstrate active presence in social media, oriented toward building rapport with customers and providing interactive online service support via Web 2.0 tools and channels (Cocheo, 2009a; Cohen, 2010; Klimis, 2010; Stone, 2009).ICICI Bank, HDFC Bank and Axis Bank are among the top 10 Banks with Social Media presence as per a survey by Financial Brand in July 2013. Further as per (IDRBT, 2013) Social Media is a rich source of information about existing and potential customers for Banks.

Social Media, although not fully utilized in the Sri Lankan Retail Banking sector, a few Private Banks maintain official Facebook and / or Twitter pages. It can also be noted that some banks had carried out a few customer surveys on their respective facebook pages. The initial problem for banks in the social media space is the same problem they have had forever, knowing your client (KYC). (Colwell G., 2013)

The financial impact that banks can expect from the use of social media can include the reduction of retention and acquisition cost of customers, increase in deposit generation, increase in marketing return on investment, reduction in churn rate and thereby increased contribution margin per customer. Facebook is already being used by some banks to set up 'virtual branches'. (Bearing Point, 2011)

CRM in Sri Lankan Retail Banking Sector

It can be noted that the nature of the Asian / South Asian buyer behavior is very much dependant on trust. Further, referrals, recommendations from trustworthy individuals often result in customers purchasing those particular products or services. Many Sri Lankan private banks offer the facility of a relationship manager for personal customers as well. This helps the bank to have a strong relationship with the customer as well as generate income from the customer over the total lifetime of the customer relationship.

Social Commerce Constructs

Literature suggests that the next generation of online businesses will be based on communities to attract new customers (Bagozzi and Dholakia, 2002, Ridings and Gefen, 2004). Therefore, it is important for businesses to have a business model adapted to social commerce (Lorenzo et al., 2007, Liang and Turban, 2011). Some research has shown that potential consumers are more interested in other people's recommendations rather than merely vendor generated product information (Ridings and Gefen, 2004). can best be achieved by online rating, recommendation and voting in an online context (The Nielsen Company, 2007). Inkeeping with the above veiw, the follwing social commerce constructs were proposed by Hajli, 2012

Forums & Communities

A person can be motivated to contribute valuable information to the group, by expecting to receive useful help and information in return (Graham and Hall, 2004; Smith and Kollock, 1999, p. 227). This can lead to a culture of sharing knowledge and expertise (IBM, 2007).

Ratings & Reveiws

By welcoming freinds and collegues to join their social networks, the members can improve their own ratings as to being loyal memebers of that particular network. As for reveiws, the customer reviews available on social networks are a good form of information for potential buyers of any product in order to make an informed decision.

Referrals & Reccomendations

Consumers are increasingly using social media to gain recommendations, reviews and opinions from friends, family, experts and the collective social community. Once they access this content, the impulse to purchase immediately can be strong. (Baird, 2011)

Specifically, a consumer's attitude towards a certain brand is likely to become more upbeat when that brand is referred to positively by a favorite blogger. (Emerald, 2011)

E-business Ontology

One of the models proposed is the e-business model ontology introduced by Osterwalder et al.(2002) An ontology is a more rigorous building-block-like methodology that defines the essential concepts in e-business models and shows the relationships between them. This model has been founded on four main pillars, namely, products and services, infrastructure and network partners, relationship capital and the financial aspects.

The customer relationship pillar will be discussed further as it is very relevant in terms of CRM in e-business. The main components of the customer Relationship according to this model are as follows.
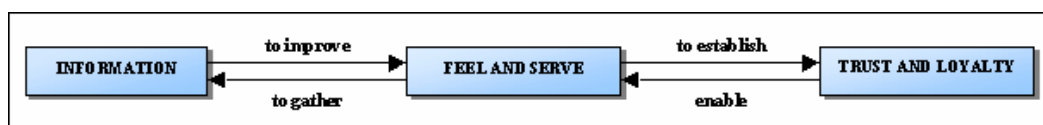

Figure 2 – Customer Relationship Variables (Osterwalder et al., 2002)

Information Strategy

The objective of information strategy is to gather information about customers, use the information in order to excel in customer relationship (through personalizing, profiling etc.) and use the information to discover new profitable business opportunities as well as satisfy the customers.

Feel and Serve

This refers to the channel strategy that must be defined, through which the company intends to reach its customers, (direct, indirect, third party etc.) in order to deliver its value proposition. The purpose of a channel strategy is to make the right quantities of the right product or service available at the right place, at the right time to the right people. (Pitt, 1999).

Trust and Loyalty

Customer loyalty can be understood as the outcome of the customer's trust and satisfaction (Osterwalder et al., 2002) Their loyalty is attitudinal, not just behavioral. If things go well, they become advocates. The core driver of this relationship is trust. (Greenberg P., 2010) In a study carried out on Malaysian banking customers it was concluded that Malaysian bank customers tend to be loyal if the bank is trustworthy, committed to service and reliable and efficient in communicating (N. Ndubisi, 2007)

Effectiveness of CRM

In a study carried put by Padmavathi et. al. (2012) on retail banks of India, the following elements were identified as the key factors of the effectiveness of CRM as customer satisfaction, customer loyalty and cross buying of products. The ultimate result of a satisfied, loyal customer was that he / she would purchase other products / services of the company as well.

Demographic Factors

Demographic factors refer to the attributes / features of the bank's profiles. These can be measured in various ways. At times the demographic factors become a strength or weakness for a bank to adopt social media. Large, well established banks seem to be extra cautious when venturing into this domain whereas new and medium / small sized banks prefer to adopt more innovative tactics and therefore are more in favor of utilizing social media. Mitic M. & Kapoulas A., (2012) stated that were deemed more appropriate for smaller or younger banks seeking innovative ways to capture market share. According to a study carried out by Hitachi Consulting, (2010) both large and small banks are trying to use social media to build relationships with their customers. Further, it was identified that for banks aspiring to embark on the voyage in Web 2.0, collaborating with online communities could be used as starting point in designing social media strategies for relationship marketing. The demographic factors studied in this research are as follows.

Nature of ownership – The nature of ownership in terms of being a locally owned organization or it being an organization with foreign principals was studied.

No.of years in existence – The no. of year the particular bank was in existence in Sri Lanka was researched

Size (No. of Employees) – The no. of employees in each bank was researched to measure it's size.

Asset Base (Rs Mn) – The total assets value in the bank's statement of financial position was referred to in order to measure this variable.

Table 1 – *Demographic Factors of Banks*

Demographic Factors	Bank A	Bank B	Bank C	Bank D	Bank E	Bank F
Ownership	Local	Local	Local	Local	Local	Foreign
No.of years in existence	15	27	44	35	45	122
Size (No. of Employees)	2,000	3,049	4,604	1,583	4,730	1,700
Asset Base (Rs Mn)	140,762	215,160	510,310	201,258	607,192	326,159

Source: CSE, 2014

Conceptualization and the Conceptual Framework of the Study

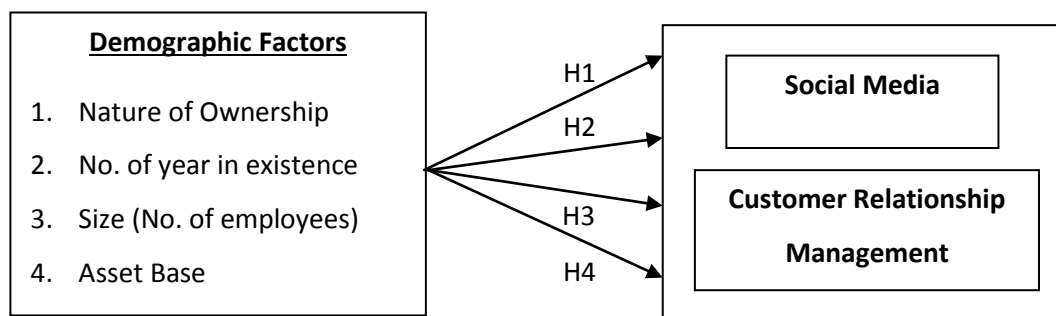The conceptual framework of the study is shown below.

Figure 3 - Conceptual Framework (Researcher Developed)

Propositions and Hypotheses of the Study

The following main Hypothesis will be tested in the empirical study.

H1. A bank's nature of ownership has an impact on Social Media and Customer Relationship Management

H2. A bank's No. of years in existence has an impact on Social Media and Customer Relationship Management

H3. A bank's size has an impact on Social Media and Customer Relationship Management

H4. A bank's asset base has an impact on Social Media and Customer Relationship Management

METHODOLOGY

Following the positivistic research tradition and the quantitative research approach, a survey research strategy was adopted.

Population and Sample of the Study

Questionnaires were distributed to random customers of banks both public and private. However the following private banks were chosen especially in order to carry out the survey. They will be referred to as Bank A, B, C, D , E, F to maintain their anonymity. This was as these banks had a presence on one or more of the main social media networks and therefore can be studied under this research and also due to the difficulties in obtaining information from other banks. Out of the 185 customers approached only 119 have responded to the questionnaire. This shows a 64 % response rate, which is sufficient for a field survey. Further, the demographic factors of the respective banks were obtained through published in the Colombo Stock Exchange website.

Operationalization, Reliability and Validity of the Constructs

The social media scale consisted of a composite measure of three factors adapted from the research by Hajli (2012). CRM was measured using a composite measure by adapting four items developed by Osterwalder et al (2005) and Padmavathy et. al (2012) which consists of namely information strategy, feel and serve, trust and loyalty and cross buying of products. Self-Administrative Questionnaires consisting of five-point Likert scales were used to collect the predetermined data. As depicted in the table:1, Cronbach's alpha was calculated to measure the reliability / internal consistency of the measurement scales. If the value is >= 0.7, the scales were sufficiently reliable (Nunnally, 1967) The face / content validity of the scales was assured through experts' reviews and literature survey. In order to test the dimensionality of the measurement constructs, an exploratory factor analysis was performed.

Table 2: *Reliability Analysis*

Variable	No. of Measures	No. of Indicators	Cronbach's Alpha
Social Media	3	9	0.891
Customer Relationship Management	4	12	0.907

Source: Survey Data

Data Analysis Strategy

Data analysis strategy in the study consisted of an inferential statistical analysis. The hypothesis test was carried out using one way ANOVA. The Statistical Package for Social Sciences (**SPSS[R]**) version 20.0 was used for data analysis.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

A one way ANOVA was carried out. The results are given in table 2:

Table 3: *One way ANOVA Significance factors (p- values)*

Demographic Factor	SM	CRM
- Nature of ownership	0.33	0.46
- No. of years in existence	0.37	0.11
- Size (No. of employees)	0.44	0.06
- Asset Base	0.28	0.05

Source: Research Data

Table 4 – *Demographic Factor Means*

Ownership		Mean	No. of Years of Existence		Mean
Social Media	Local	3.1867	Social Media	0 - 20 Years	3.6481
	Foreign	3.3286		21 - 30 Years	3.1889
Customer Relationship Management	Local	3.3650		31 - 40 Years	2.9444
	Foreign	3.4610		41 - 50 Years	3.1389
Asset Base		Mean		Over 100 Years	3.3286
Social Media	100,001 - 200,000 Mn	3.6481	Customer Relationship Management	0 - 20 Years	3.8611
	200,001 - 300,000 Mn	3.0972		21 - 30 Years	3.5000
	300,001 - 400,000 Mn	3.3286		31 - 40 Years	3.5139
	Over 500,000 Mn	3.1389		41 - 50 Years	3.1786
Customer Relationship Management	100,001 - 200,000 Mn	3.8611		Over 100 Years	3.4610
	200,001 - 300,000 Mn	3.5052	Size (No. of Employees)		Mean
	300,001 - 400,000 Mn	3.4610	Social Media	1,000 - 2,000	3.2851
	Over 500,000 Mn	3.1786		2,001 - 3,000	3.6481
				3,001 - 4,000	3.1889
				Over 4,000	3.1389
			Customer Relationship Management	1,000 - 2,000	3.4670
				2,001 - 3,000	3.8611
				3,001 - 4,000	3.5000
				Over 4,000	3.1786

Source : Research Data

According to the results above, there wasn't a statistically significant difference in all the demographic factor groups except in the asset base determined by one-way ANOVA ($p = 0.05$ for CRM). A Tukey post-hoc test also revealed that there were no statistically significant differences between the groups of any of the demographic factors.

In testing the hypothesis depicted the conceptual model, the one way ANOVA revealed the following results as shown in the table: 3.

Table 5: *Hypothesis Testing Results*

Hypothesis	Result
H1	Rejected
H2	Rejected
H3	Rejected
H4	*Partially Accepted

Source: Survey Data

*H4 is accepted for CRM. It was rejected for social media.

According to the above analysis, hypothesized claims 1 - 3 is rejected as there is no significant evidence to conclude that the demographic factors, nature of ownership, number of years in existence and size has an impact on social media and CRM of the retail banking sector in Sri Lanka. However, there is a significant difference between the asset base groups when it comes to CRM. Therefore, there is evidence to suggest that the asset base of a bank has an impact on CRM of the retail banking sector in Sri Lanka. Thus, hypothesis 4 is accepted. Adding to the above findings, a study carried out by Emily Lange, (2014) irrespective of the size, the banks in the study had maximized the use of social media.

CONCLUSION

The findings empirically support that the demographic factors of banks do not have a significant impact on social media and CRM in general, in the Sri Lankan retail banking industry. However, it can be noted that the difference in asset base can have an impact on the level of CRM practiced by the Sri Lankan banks.

MANAGERIAL AND THEORETICAL IMPLICATIONS

The findings of this study would provide valuable insights to senior management of the banking sector that their inherent demographic factors would not be a hindrance for them to kick start social media marketing initiatives. Furthermore, the findings would assist to re-confirm the validity of the existing literature on a bank's demographic factors, social media and CRM using the scales used in this research. It would also provide a theoretical base for further research as well as implementation of social media initiatives in the Sri Lankan retail-banking sector.

FUTURE RESEARCH OPPORTUNITIES

Further research can be carried out to identify if other demographic factors (which were not considered in this study has an impact on social media and CRM of the Sri Lankan retail banking sector. The same study can be carried with the amalgamation of those remaining factors in order to

gain further insight into this domain as well as understand the overall impact of a bank's demographic factors on social media and customer relationship management.

REFERENCES

Bagozzi, R. P. & Dholakia, U. M. 2002. Intentional social action in virtual communities. Journal of Interactive Marketing (John Wiley & Sons), 16, 2-21.

Baird et al., 2011, From social media to Social CRM: reinventing the customer relationship, Vol. 39 No. 6, 2011, pp. 27-34

(Baird C., 2012) *From social media to Social CRM,* http://www-935.ibm.com/services/us/gbs/thoughtleadership/ibv-social-crm-whitepaper.html (last accessed on 15 April 2013)

(Bearing Point, 2011) Social CRM in German retail banks, http://www.bearingpoint.com/de-de/download/0615_WP_EN_Social_CRM_final_web.pdf (last accessed on 24 October 2013)

Bonso´n, E. and Flores, F. (2011), ''Social media and corporate dialogue: the response of global financial institutions'', Online Information Review, Vol. 35 No. 1, pp. 34-49, ISSN 1468-4527.

(CBSL, 2013) *Monthly Bulletin August 2013,* http://www.cbsl.gov.lk/pics_n_docs/10_pub/_docs/statistics/monthly_bulletin/Monthly_Bulletin_2013/bulletin_aug13e.pdf (last accessed on 25 September 2013)

Cocheo, S. (2009a), "Banks wade into new media stream", ABA Banking Journal, Vol. 101 No. 5, pp. 14-29

Cohen, L.S. (2010), "CT banks delve into social media marketing", Connecticut Banking, 1st Quarter, pp. 12-15.

(Colwell G., 2013) Enhanced Social CRM – Social Banking's First Step, http://www.corebankingblog.com/2013/02/enhanced-social-crm-social-bankings-first-step/ (last accessed on 24 October 2013)

(CSE, 2014) Colombo Stock Exchange, http://www.cse.lk/ (last accessed on 15 April 2014)

Emerald, 2011, Friends in online places, Vol. 27 No. 10, 2007, pp. 19-22

Emily Lange, (2014), It's In the Bank: Social Media Success Stories from the Financial Industry, http://blog.gremln.com/2014/02/07/its-in-the-bank-social-media-success-stories-from-the-financial-industry/, (last accessed on 15 April 2014)

Ernest & Young (2011), African Attractiveness Survey, available at: www.ey.com/Publication/vwLUAssets/2011_Africa_Attractiveness_Survey/$FILE/11EDA187_attractiveness_africa_low_resolution_final.pdf (last accessed 9 January 2012).

Graham, D. and Hall, H. (2004), "Creation and recreation: motivating collaboration to generate knowledge capital in online communities", International Journal of Information

Greenberg P., 2010, The impact of CRM 2.0 on customer insight, Vol. 25 No. 6, 2012, pp. 410-419

Greenberg, P., CRM at the Speed of Light, Forth Edition: Social CRM Strategies, Tools and Techniques for Engaging Customers, (McGraw Hill, 2010).

Hajli M., 2012, A research framework for social commerce adoption

Hitachi Consulting, (2010), Sizing Up Banks and the Social Media Marketplace, http://www.hitachiconsulting.com/files/pdfRepository/AR_SizeandSocialMedia_vFINAL.pdf, (last accessed on 15 April 2014)

IBM (2007), "Achieving tangible business benefits with social computing", available at: www.2dnet.co.uk/i/25/ads/whitepapers/IBM/yellow_fewer_new/socialnetworking.pdf (accessed 25 March 2008).

(Institute for Development and Research in Banking Technology-IDRBT., 2013)Social Media Framework - for Indian Banking Sector, http://www.idrbt.ac.in/publications/Frameworks/Social%20Media%20%20Framework%20(2013).pdf (last accessed on 24 October 2013)

Katsioloudes M., 2007, Social marketing: strengthening company-customer bonds, Vol. 28 No. 3, 2007, pp. 56-64

Klimis, C. (2010), "Digital marketing: the gradual integration in retail banking", EFMA Journal, Vol. 4 No. 226, pp. 16-19

Liang, T.-P., Ho, Y.-T., Li, Y.-W. & Turban, E. 2011. What Drives Social Commerce: The Role of Social Support and Relationship Quality. International Journal of Electronic Commerce, 16, 69-90.

Lorenzo, C., et. Al.. 2007. Impact of Web Experience on e-Consumer Responses E-Commerce and Web Technologies. In: Psaila, G. & Wagner, R. (eds.).Springer Berlin / Heidelberg.

Maoz Micheal, Jacobs Johan, Davies Jim, Thompson Ed(2009), Predict 2010: customer service meets Social CRM, Gartner RAS core Research Note G00172347.

McKay, Lauren. (2009), Strategy and Social Media: Everything's Social (Now), CRM Magazine.

(Miniwatts, 2013) Asia Marketing Research, Internet Usage, Population Statistics and Facebook Information, http://www.internetworldstats.com/asia.htm#lk (last accessed on 25 June 2013)

Mitic M. & Kapoulas A., (2012) Understanding the role of social media in bank marketing, Vol. 30, No.7, 2012, pp.668 - 686

Ndubisi N. O. et. al., 2007, Relationship marketing and customer loyalty, Vol. 25 No. 1, 2007, pp. 98-106

Nunnally, J.C. (1967). Psychometric Theory. New York: McGraw-Hill.

Osterwalder A., Pigneur Y., 2002. An e-Business Model Ontology for Modeling e- Business, Proc. 15th Bled Electronic Commerce Conference, Bled, Slovenia.

Padmavathi et al., 2012, Measuring effectiveness of customer relationship management in Indian retail banks, Vol. 30 No. 4, 2012, pp. 246-266

Pannunzio, C. (2008), "Leverage the power of social media", Journal of Financial

Pitt L., Berthon P., Watson R.T., "Changing Channels: The Impact of the Internet on Planning, Vol. 8, No. 6, pp. 6-8.

Ridings, C. M. & Gefen, D. 2004. Virtual Community Attraction: Why People Hang Out Online. Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication, 10.

Sashi C.M. (2012), "Customer engagement, buyer-seller relationships, and social media", Vol. 50 No. 2, pp. 253-272

Smith, M. and Kollock, P. (1999), Communities in Cyberspace, Routledge, London.

(Socailbakers, 2013) *TOP 100 Facebook Brands Social Media Stats*, http://www.socialbakers.com/ (last accessed on 15 April 2013)

Stone, M. (2009), "Staying customer-focused and trusted: Web 2.0 and Customer 2.0 in financial services", Database Marketing & Customer Strategy Management, Vol. 16 No. 2, pp. 101-31

[11]

SMART MARKETING ON THE GO

Indumathi.J[1], Anish A[2]

College of Engineering, Anna University

[1]*j.indumathi@gmail.com,* [2]*msgtoanish@gmail.com*

ABSTRACT

The rapid proliferation of digital devices, the detonation of the Internet of Things, optimization of digital technologies, Digital Marketing which integrates world-class solutions to help buyers run holistic campaigns across multiple channels have all ensued a paradigm shift in intelligent digital marketing transportation systems-the Vehicular Ad hoc Network (VANET). In this paper the proposed system runs in a Smart city with full communication amenities and uses broadcasting routing protocol for distributing commercial data among the vehicles. All applications, which run on top of TCP/IP stack can be deployed. The roadside infrastructure unit (agencies or advertiser to broadcast the digital content by 'wireless advertising') and node (vehicle) will communicate with each other for commercial application for the driver and passengers during their journey and keep them posted on various items of interest. All the Enterprises (shopping malls, fast foods, gas stations, hotels) set up stationary gateways to communicate marketing data to prospective customers who pass by. The general objective of this application is to improve passenger comfort and traffic efficiency via nearest POI (Points Of Interest) localization, current traffic or weather information and interactive communication. These services is integrated with electronic payments. The profound doles of the proposed 'Smart Marketing On The Go', are reduced cost, refinement of strategy, brand development, far greater exposure, non-intrusive, greater engagement with clients, greater digital visibility, digital refer ability factor, opportunity to meet the prospective customers, find employers on digital neighborhood, brand 24x7 on digital neighborhood media marketplaces. This paper also proposes a future Vehicular Cloud and an architecture for a Cloud enabled VANET to support data storage, processing and communication.

Keywords: vehicular ad hoc network, roadside infrastructure, smart city

E- WORD OF MOUTH MARKETING FOR SELF IDENTITY

(A SPECIAL STUDY WITH RELATED TO SOCIAL NETWORK SITES)

H.P.Samanthika Gallage

Department of Marketing Management, Faculty of Management Studies and Commerce,

University of Sri Jayewardenepura

Samanthika.gallage@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

People preserve and maintain identities via symbolic possessions and consumption of symbolic meanings attached to consumer possessions provide an individual with the chance to construct, maintain and send messages of self-identity. The increasing popularity of E – Word of Mouth communication (eWOM) via Social Network Sites (SNSs) has taken consumers for a new landscape of identity creation as it helps consumers project an identity for a large group of people within a short period of time. Hence, researcher focused on the identity creation via eWOM in SNSs.

Author examined the motive of self-identity creation by adopting a qualitative methodology; netnography approach with six users and two brand pages. The data were analysed using thematic analysis. Data suggested that the need of creating an identity is a strong motive of consumers than any other secondary motives such as need to belong to a group, personal growth or need of altruism. This finding is on par with the symbolic consumption findings of consumer culture theory.

Keywords: E- Word of Mouth Communication, Self Identity

SUCCESSFUL TWITTER BRANDING CAMPAIGNS BY COMPANIES: A CASE STUDY

Hrim Shah

Pandit Deendayal Petroleum University

E-mail: hrim.shah@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

Online Branding and Marketing is rapidly becoming the cynosure of the attention of major companies who wish to engage and attract their real world consumers on a virtual platform, while start-ups are using it to increase their consumer case revenue and market share. Twitter, a social networking site, lies at the centre stage of the online branding phenomenon, with as numerous brands leverage its platform to gain traction and connect in a different fashion and extending their brand onto a different plateau. The paper lucidly explains the significance and the necessity of twitter branding through case studies of twitter campaigns with successful outcomes by companies and what forces and factors are required for a successful twitter branding campaign. The paper examines and analyses the aspects and facets that contribute to building the brand identity and trust online by using twitter and the various branding strategies adopted by the companies and organizations for building or maintaining their reputation on the virtual domain as well. The paper gives an outline for the ingredients required for the building a successful brand online through twitter.

Keywords: *Online Branding, Twitter, Brand Identity, reputation management Successful Branding Campaigns,*

INTRODUCTION

In the 21st century, the internet has now occupied centre stage among the basic necessities of mankind, and while it still remains inaccessible to almost one-third of the global population, it continues to thrive and expand at a burgeoning pace. Now the ways of communication, interaction, sharing, shopping entertainment and even financial transactions have undergone a paradigm shift in the past decade. A few of the Social Media is the cynosure of the entire landscape, which constitutes the major and the most dynamic facet of the virtual domain. Sites like Face book and Twitter have not only empowered individuals to communicate, share and synergize, but they also provide a great platform for companies and firms irrespective of their sector, location, size or niche can indulge in engaging, attracting and informing their audience by offering tangible value to them, create a potential market base online, secure their revenue sources and also form the Brand trust through establishment of long-term relationship with their consumers online.

Apart from Facebook, Twitter a social micro blogging site has dramatically changed the way companies do business and conduct their marketing. Due to its unique format and interpersonal connect that it offers, twitter has huge potential for the brands to interact and attract prospective customers and clients. Many large and small firms have successfully leveraged this platform to create massive awareness, popularity, demand and reverence for their brands, which has subsequently translated into immense increase in their revenues and brand equity in the real world.

Hence after realizing the vast potential that twitter holds many companies use it as a electronic word thus, micro blogging has significant implications for the success of advertisers, businesses, and products as a new communications, and understanding the ramifications of micro blogging is critical for these stakeholders. There are many ways online that companies can engage and entice their audience, but very few of these mediums come close to convincing them or providing them a platform to express their own trials and tribulations or opinions regarding the issues that they face on a daily basis. Social micro-blogging hence provides the much needed pedestal for the attention starved consumer to voice and project his views and get them noticed and reciprocated on a global scale from a plethora of other like-minded people as well.

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

This study mainly aims to highlight the growing significance and relevance of twitter and similar micro-blogging sites in the branding and marketing communications model while providing a great platform to interact and engage them. This study through examining and probing various instances of the successful branding practices undertaken by various firms and companies to further their brand awareness and influence consumers, gives the common factors that play a major role in this process. The study through case study method lucidly underlines the ingredients adopted by various firms for a successful and engaging branding campaign on twitter. This shall in turn help more brands to connect and resonate with the twitter users while also broadening their brand appeal.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY:

As mentioned in earlier, this paper is based upon secondary research and various published research journal articles as well as the statistics from the surveys and annual reports. The data and the collected information regarding the twitter dynamics and the branding practices/ campaigns of companies has been done after extensive analysis of their twitter track record and the response they received as well.

Using Twitter as a Branding Tool
With the rapid growth and reach of this platform among the various strata of net users and enthusiasts, many companies now use micro-blogging sites like Twitter using social communications for their electronic word-of mouth marketing [1].Micro blogging directly impacts communication because it allows people to share these brand-affecting thoughts (i.e., sentiment)almost anywhere (i.e., while driving, getting coffee, or sitting at their computer) to almost anyone "connected"(e.g., Web, cell phone, IM, email) on a scale that has not been seen in the past. While the shortness of the micro blog keeps people from writing long thoughts, it is precisely the micro part that makes micro blogs unique from other mediums, including full blogs, WebPages, and online reviews (Jansen, Zang, Sobel, Chowdury : 2009)

.These sites in turn offer a democratic platform to the users to voice their personal opinions, views and perspectives upon the various companies and their products, hence the consumer's electronic word-of-mouth becomes increasingly impactful on the virtual domain as it is wide-reaching, accessible and also in the written form which gives it more credibility (Hennig-Thurau et al., 2004, p. 42).Thus, micro blogging has significant implications for the success of advertisers, businesses, and products as a new communications, and understanding the ramifications of micro blogging is critical for these stakeholders. Hence, twitter has now become an increasingly popular virtual platform for brands to capture and rapture their consumer bases as well as manage their reputation in a very careful manner. Park & Lee(2009) reported that negative comments had a greater effect than positive comments.

This broad reach of twitter provides consumers tremendous power to influence brand image and perceptions(Reynolds, 2006; Urban, 2005). According to the Marketing Profs survey, Twitter ranks

behind only blogs as the social media tool that delivers the most value, and Brand Awareness was the most important activity that companies engaged in twitter, followed by networking and community building. In terms of brand management, companies can attempt to start their viral marketing operations (Wells, Moriarty, & Burnett, 2000),but once the word-of-mouth campaigns begin or are unleashed, they find it very hard to regulate and control this flow. Companies have to comprehend that brand management is evolving very quickly along with that of communication technology. Hence, in the near future micro-blogging will have an important aspect of a consumer expression of brand satisfaction and may have critical impact on a brand's image and awareness.

Greater number of brands hence is indulging in regular and planned tweeting strategies to engage and attract their potential audience. According to the Brand watch Report, (2012) 75% of brands use Twitter to both broadcast and engage their audience and that one-third of the brands have multiple accounts and have increased five-fold since 2011.The majority of brands still use a single account in twitter but their numbers are is shrinking [2]. The best thing about this micro-blogging phenomenon is that it is completely blind to the real –world size or the stature of the company and gives a level and a fair playing field to all the firms on its platform. Many celebrities, small-time breakfast establishments to even charities can build their brand successfully by leveraging the power of twitter carefully. More number of brands now admit to twitter being an integral and a central part of their social media strategy to draw in a greater number and kinds if consumers while increasing their brand awareness and presence across the virtual landscape.
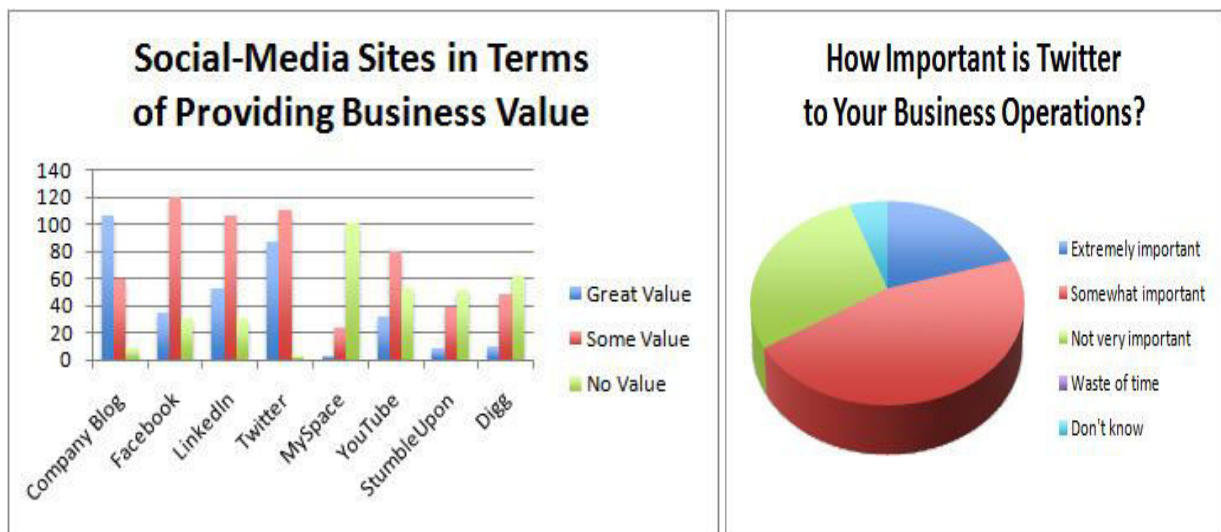

Fig 1 & 2: MarketingProfs Survey, 2009

Parameters for Brands to Engage with their target consumers online:
The Gensler Design Brand Engagement Survey (2013) provided a list of parameters that determined the emotional connectivity and relation of the consumer with the brand in question.87% say they choose brands that match their values, while 71% of respondents report avoiding brands that run counter to their values. Price , Quality and Availability formed some of the most lower-level parameters that the consumers preferred, but Across every age group, gender, and brand category, family always comes first; and in general, consumers feel most fulfilled where family is concerned too. Hence when the brand is very personal and resonates with the deeper and more individualistic values of an individual the brand engagement is greater and hence a trust is eventually developed.

When asked on how (platform) they were connected to their favorite brand around 14% said that it was through the brand's twitter account. More the personal touch increases between the brand and the consumer more the attachment and the long-term bond flourishes, the survey also proves that consumers are most probably feel brand loyalty towards the fashion apparels, Automotive, technology and food/alcoholic beverage brands as well. Delivering on the brand promise, declaring brand values with authenticity and authority and also delighting them personally with greater value offerings that the consumers cherish and reach the innermost sphere of emotions leads to brand loyalty and insistence. In a nutshell, personal engagement in an imperative if the brand is to resonate with millions of people and extend their brand value and equity to the masses **[3]**.

Marketing Objectives and Purposes of Brands on Twitter:

There are various objectives and aims with which the brands use twitter and other micro-blogging sites:

- Building Community—creating a strong community of followers that ultimately help drive business objectives and bring in new customers

- Customer Service—using Twitter to successfully engage with customers needing help

- Selling—driving online and offline sales by using Twitter to post promotions, discounts and offers

- Prospecting—creating demand and pinpointing potential customers needing the type of solution your product offers

- Branding & Awareness—employing Twitter in creative ways to increase awareness around a product, person (celebrity) or business

- Fundraising—using Twitter to spread the word about important causes

All these objectives and purposes are to basically cause an increase in their revenue, consumer base and also brand trust in the real world as well. These objectives can be used by any kind of firm to achieve their short term and also long term objectives.

Successful Twitter Case Studies and Practices Instances:
Many companies and firms have used twitter very smartly to serve their purpose and objectives **[4]**.

1) **Kogi Korean Barbeque Truck:** this service used twitter feeds in order to notify their hungry customers about their whereabouts and also to give them updates on what is going on the way to the concerned spot. This engages the local customers and keeps them in the loop about the locations where their favorite barbeque truck is parked. Hence they successfully leveraged twitter for community building.

2) **Zappos:** The E-commerce site which is famous for its **customer satisfaction** approach also leverages twitter. Following the suit of CEO Tony Hsieh, Employees soon began interacting with customers, answering product questions, helping with customer service, or just talking about the weather. Although Zappos has a customer care Team, anyone within Zappos is empowered and encouraged to help customers. One thing the company doesn't do is offer coupons or special offers through Twitter—just real conversation.

3) **Souplantation:** Souplantation launched its new Twitter feed in November 2008. RedDoor assigned a social media specialist to work with Garden Fresh to post news and trivia, answer questions, take feedback, post recipes, and offer coupons. In February, the company launched its first big marketing initiative on Twitter,a Valentine's Day promotion asking users to say, in 140 characters, why their "Sweetie was so sweet." Winners received free meal passes. The campaign was moderately successful, with dozens participating. In April, the company launched a trivia quiz playing off its in-store promotion of the month: lemon inspired menu items. Each day, the company would post lemon trivia and then ask followers for a bit of lemon trivia in exchange for a prize. These "quick engagements" were very effective.

4) **Fundraising: 12for12K Charity:**

Based in Toronto, 12for12K is a charity designed to raise a total of $144,000 for 12 different organizations over the course of 12 months. They created an avatar, started using hastags and also did a tweetathon to raise above 32,000 $ under three months.

Outline of a 'Trending' Twitter Branding Campaign:
- Whenever a twitter campaign is undertaken by a firm, their major and preliminary aim is to attract massive number of twitter followers to their campaign by engaging, involving and luring them. They do this by making a **'Hashtag' (#)** of their topic/campaign to become trending, that in twitter terms means popular and centre of attention of the twitter universe for that period. The more times the hash tag is tweeted and used by the followers, the more trending the topic becomes. They attract more twitter feeds in the topic by involving and engaging more and more twitter followers.

- There are a group of people on twitter who are the **'Influencers'** meaning they possess lots of twitter followers and favorites and are able to trend a topic rapidly with their connections and influence on twitter. They connect, address, inform and convince many other people to participate in the trending '**Movement'**. They utilize their goodwill, power/authority and tactics upon other users of their close-knit community in order to make a topic trending.

- Ultimately, a twitter campaign is considered to be successful if the expected number of comments, re-tweets, favorites and feeds is crossed, hence fulfilling the very objective with which the topic was initiated, that was to garner massive awareness, engagement and personal connect with all the people involved in the project. Usually many lucrative incentives, prizes and favors are included if such branding campaigns are to be successful and popular, otherwise they have to be really creative, personal and witty as well.

Case Study of Successful Branding Campaigns by Various Entities:
- There are many instances in the history of twitter regarding the successful campaigns and branding drives, however I have chosen different and memorable branding campaigns who have had the distinction of achieving a very coveted spot in the history, with their criteria being of Numbers of twitter feeds, magnitude of the trending, Global/ relevant Appeal, Impact on the viewers and also the Overall change in the brand perception in the public consciousness **[5]**.

  1) **Oreo Super Bowl Campaign:** Oreo's quick and playful twitter campaign on the blackout at the super bowl games was very pertinent, witty and humorous in only one hour Oreo's message was retweeted 10,000 times. Weeks after the Super

Bowl was over, more people were talking about Oreo's clever campaign than who won the game. This twitter specifically became a success because of its prompt and propitious timings and also the witty brand message encumbered in it.

2) **Starbucks Tweets-a-coffee:** Starbucks was very strategic with the timing of their @tweetacoffee campaign to coincide with the giving spirit of the holidays, a great way to strategize and spread the holiday cheer with some Java Chip Frapuccino. Twitter users had to follow just three simple steps to give away free coffee to their social media friends. Here's how they could do it: link your Starbucks and Twitter accounts, tweet a coffee to a friend using @tweetacoffee. Your friend receives a $5 eGift from you through Starbucks. This branding campaign was a success again due to the great and strategic -timing of the release and also the incentives that it offered to its followers along with the sentimental gift cards.

3) **Charmin's TMI Approach:** They started their #tweetfromtheseat branding campaign, using very innocent toilet humor that mimicked real life an being relevant, witty. Charmin's direct and playful approach has taken us where no other toilet paper has taken us before, making bathroom humor public and acceptable.

4) **UNICEF India :** A three month long social to promote UNICEF's ' Awaaz Do' Campaign , an effort to send eight million children to schoolThe #AWAAZDO hashtag received 1,525 mentions and the @UNICEFIndia Twitter account gained over 2000 followers. The campaign itself also received 60,540 impressions on Twitter, as it was calculated using Tweetreach. By the end of the campaign, the Awaaz Do website also got 203,248 signups of people interested in joining a good cause. This was a very successful campaign in terms of fundraising and had massive social appeal, this was partly due to the use of Bollywood celebrity use and also due to the strong social message that was branded very cleverly on the micro-blogging site.

5) **Mercedes: You Drive Campaign: Mercedes** shared a 30 second clip of a car chase and then allowed the Twittersphere to vote for what happened next. The winning story was then aired during 'The X Factor 'the following week. By handing power to consumers and making the process more interactive, the advert generated an impressive amount of buzz. It was one of the first examples of combining TV advertising with social media to great effect. A great way to combine the various media campaigns and giving the power to the people to choose , involve them and let them decide, hence creating a holistic campaign.

6) **Coca-Cola:** During a soccer game in South America, Coca Cola turned tweets sent to the company during the game into confetti, which was then thrown out to the crowd. This was a great way to interact with customers in a current setting, with their own content. The company took a real-time event, where actual customers were in attendance, and brought the company to the people. Used a current event to their advantage. Here, coca-cola sent content in a fun and playful way, used creativity to connect with their audience and involved current customers at a live event

CONCLUSION

Common factors leading to a successful Branding Campaign:
If you want to stand out in the Twitter landscape, a few well-crafted campaigns can help keep you top of mind. The campaigns need to be clever, creative and well aligned with your brand message and most importantly spark conversation.

- **Genuine, Concise and Interesting Content**: this point cannot be stressed enough as, it remains true in a platform like twitter where you have only 140 characters to express your message and time threshold for viewing every tweet is very less, Content is the King. All the successful twitter branding campaigns have Original, Laconic, Witty/Intelligent, Interesting and Informative content that hooked the reader's attention for more seconds/minutes than he would have given otherwise. Outstanding and Concise Content will always get noticed and provide the much needed attention time to the brand to capture the viewer's imagination and turn them into a valued consumer.

- **Personal Connect:** there has to be a personal/ humanistic connection between the Branding campaigns. The attachment has to be there at a much deeper level between the witness and the advertisement, emotions and trust is involved. This results in the formation of a much stronger and a meaningful relation between the brand and the person by establishing a solid and a long-lasting bond through reaching out and providing hope. They also have to **Humanize the Experience** Doing so allows the brand to resonate and engage in a much more proactive fashion and earns the trust for the brand from the viewer.

- **Incentive/Prizes and Surprise Gifts:** Many successful brands on twitter have made it a point to pleasantly surprise their customers by gifting and rewarding them for their loyalty and even to prospective customers, this in turn results in unexpected pleasure as the brand had identified the unanticipated need for the customer and delivered it beforehand, hence resulting in creating and strengthening the bond between the brand and the consumer. Gifting through tickets, money/cash, vouchers, discount coupons or any other scheme results in the increase of brand loyalty and insistence in the future, while consolidating their relationship as well.

- **Celebrity Support for the Campaign:** Using the influence, popularity and Credibility of any kind of celebrity on twitter, also transfers some of the credibility to the branding campaign in turn, as the people associated with the brand now become the human face of the brand and attach their own set of values and ideals to that of the brand, hence making it more appealing and engaging. Often various celebrities from the world of Music, Movies or Sports are chosen as they have a large existing base of loyal supporters who shall unconditionally support any brand that their celebrity is associated with.

- **Democratic Approach:** The branding campaigns have to involve the various users by luring them in, and then letting them make a decision and call the shots by giving them a choice and options. This in turn results in huge trust building from the side of the users, but also gives a lot of credibility to the platforms and the marketer as being open-minded and tolerant. The democratic approach has known to attract and engage and involve a lot of twitter followers, hence resulting in successful branding for the company involved. They also have to emphasize on the **Being Timely** as the opportunities and the chances are very short-lasted and have to be capitalized upon very quickly and potently.**[6]**

- **Customer Delight:** The tendency of the branding marketers and the company to offer extra and unexpected services and freebies to their customers results in the formation of sudden positive liking and preference due to the element of surprise and exceeding their expectations of the service. On twitter these results in user satisfaction and followed by a word of mouth campaign through twitter that generates more buzz on the twittersphere.This trend is highly dominant on twitter. This obviously also involves knowing and being absolutely *familiar with the local crowds* tastes and preferences along with the demographics and other socio-cultural factors, they also need to tie up and collaborate with the top influencers who can really help to take off the campaign in no time with their influence.

REFERENCES

Twitter Power:Tweets as ElectronicWord of Mouth, Bernard J. Jansen and Mimi Zhang, AbdurChowdury, Kate Sobel: JOURNAL OF THE AMERICAN SOCIETY FOR INFORMATION SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY, 60(11):2169–2188, 2009

Brandwatch Report/Brands on Twitter /2012: Analysis of global brands' Twitter activity

The Gensler Design Brand Engagement Survey (2013)

TWITTER SUCCESS STORIES, 2009 MARKETINGPROFS

http://blog.digitalinsights.in/best-twitter-campaigns-2013/05120387.html

http://www.mediabistro.com/alltwitter/7-creative-twitter-campaigns_b54892

14

SOCIAL MEDIA: A PROMISING NEW PROMOTION TOOL FOR THE ENTERTAINMENT INDUSTRY

Geeta Mihir Dutta

Symbiosis International University/Symbiosis Institute of Computer Studies and Research

(Alumni)

mihika.dutta@gmail.com

Symbiosis International University, India.

ABSTRACT

The topic "SOCIAL MEDIA: A PROMISING NEW PROMOTION TOOL FOR THE ENTERTAINMENT INDUSTRY" aims at understanding how the entertainment industry is leveraging social media to connect with fans and promote its products. Movies, Videos, Sitcoms are social topics and therefore social media networks prove to be a perfect platform for campaigns involving promotion of movies. Social Media has emerged as a great avenue for the production houses, film-studios, film-makers and artists to connect directly to the target audience, engage audience, create viral reality campaigns and even directly sell tickets. The research includes study on involvement of social media platforms like Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, Blogs, Instagram, smart phone and Facebook applications, crowdsourcing and use of many such platforms and integrating them to make a multi-channel strategy for breaking box office records of the production. The paper features examples of successful campaigns conceptualized for creating great awareness and promoting some of recent highest grossing blockbusters.

Keywords: *Social Media, Campaigning, Movie promotion.*

INTRODUCTION

The theme "Social networking: A PROMISING NEW PROMOTION TOOL FOR THE ENTERTAINMENT INDUSTRY" points at seeing how the diversion business is leveraging online networking to associate with fans and advertise its items. A social networking service is an online service that concentrates on encouraging the building of interpersonal organizations or social relations among individuals who, for instance, share common interest, foundations, or genuine associations. A social network service comprises of a representation of every user, his/her social connections, and a mixed bag of extra services. Social media is the group of on-line correspondences channels committed to community based data, collaboration, substance imparting and coordinated effort. Sites and provisions devoted to forums, micro blogging, interpersonal interaction, social bookmarking are among the distinctive sorts of social media. Social networking is the act of extending the amount of one's business and/or social contacts by making associations through people. While person to person communication has gone on very nearly as long as social orders themselves have existed, the unparalleled capability of the Internet to advertise such associations is just now being completely perceived and abused, through web-based gatherings created for that reason. The paper has been written with the aim of understanding the concepts and tools of digital marketing that are used by the

entertainment industry today. The research includes following their channels and modes of promotion over the internet and studying their presence on social mediums.

SOCIAL MEDIA MARKETING TRENDS/MEDIUMS

Facebook is a well-known free social networking site that permits enlisted clients to make profiles, upload photographs and videos, share messages and stay in contact with companions, family and partners. As indicated by report from the Nielsen Group, Internet clients inside the United States invest more of a chance on Facebook than other available site.

Twitter is a free micro blogging service that allows users to share very brief posts called tweets. Twitter users can telecast tweets and follow other clients' tweets by utilizing various platforms.

Wikipedia is a free, community supported texts/facts/data and also by official representatives of the Wiki organization known as Wikipedians who make sure the content's quality is good. Anybody enrolled on the site can make an article for production; registration is not needed to alter articles.

Linkedin is a social networking site composed particularly for the business group. The objective of the site is to permit users to make and record networks of individuals they know and trust professionally.

Reddit is a social news site and discussion where stories are socially curated and advertised by site users. The site is made out of many sub-groups, known as "subreddits." Each subreddit has a particular subject, for example, engineering, governmental issues or music. Reddit users, otherwise called, "redditors," submit content which is then voted upon by other users. The objective is to send decently respected stories to the highest point of the site's main page.

Pinterest is a social curation site for sharing and sorting pictures discovered on the web. Pinterest also needs concise description yet the fundamental center of the site is visual. Clicking on a picture will take one to the first source, in this way, for instance, on the off chance that you click on a picture of a couple of shoes, you may be taken to a site where you can buy them. A picture of blueberry pancakes may take you to the recipe; a picture of a birdhouse may take you to the instructions of making it.

Social Media and Movies

Indie Filmmakers generally utilize Facebook, in blend with a website and an IMDB page. They utilize Facebook as a part of a mixed bag of ways. Most common way for other movie producers, performers, makers, executives, executors, and other film industry experts have a Facebook page. So for indie filmmakers it all starts with a friend request to other big names in the industry whom they had opportunity to work with in the past and otherwise as well. Self-promotion by sharing articles, websites, and news about the activities they are dealing with, producers push their projects. By connecting to their IMDB page they make it simple for individuals to see their work and past projects. Most Indie producers, particularly screenwriters, additionally blog. Facebook permits them to contact book lovers, posting web journal articles specifically, and connecting through administrations like Networked Blogs. Moreover there are incalculable gatherings on Facebook that are identified with filmmaking and screenwriting. Producers join these groups to make inquiries, offer learning, and above all, to addition profitable criticism on their works in advancement.

For indie filmmaker bootstrapping is a difficult mission to achieve sometimes so using administrations like Kickstarter, non-mainstream producers connect with family, companions and different supporters on Facebook for a vast amounts of little gifts/ventures. Numerous have reached funding of 100-500k in a short span of time. For promotion indie Filmmakers make film pages and

advertise ventures on Facebook. Frequently an Indie producer is completely responsible for the promoting of his or her film, and the most ideal approach to do that on a micro plan is to manufacture mindfulness through social network. Probably the speediest route for a short film or a trailer on YouTube or Vimeo is through numerous shares and reshares.

Movie reviewing blogs/sites recent trends

IMDb has managed to create a de facto place in every movie buff bookmark for movie reviews and ratings curated and collaboratively contributed by the thousands of users over a span of more than 2 decades. Imdb is effortlessly the most complete film and TV guide on the Internet, and additionally a standout amongst the most vibrant social get-together places for film fans. Flixster thought it propelled months prior to IMDb, Flixster began encountering extraordinary development in 2007, and truly took off when it released its "Films" requisition on Facebook, which stays one of that platform's most well-known applications. Amongst others Rotten Tomatoes, I Heart Movies, Spout, Netflix, BoxOfficeMojo have made their mark in various communities of users accordingly.

EXEMPLARS FROM ENTERTAINMENT INDUSTRY

Movie - Paranormal activity

By letting customers play dissemination boss, and taking more than a couple of signals from the "Blair Witch Project" playbook. The $15,000 horror flick, directed by San Diego movie producer Oren Peli, initially picked up a faction succeeding over a year back in the wake of screening at the 2008 Slamdance Film Festival, eventually getting attention of Steven Spielberg. The blockbuster executive at first needed to control a huge plan for the remake of the film, utilizing the first cut as a DVD extra, yet rather brought the film to Paramount/Dreamworks, where it undertook another life of its own.

After screenings in Los Angeles and select school towns inspired uncommon measures of interest at the studio and at neighborhood theaters, Ms. Colligan and her co-president of marketing, Josh Greenstein, collaborated with Eventful, a client produced entertainment booking site of sorts, for a battle that goes far outside the traditional course.

Fans all over the nation could request - truly, it turns out, by hitting a "Demand" button on its site - that the film screens in their general vicinity. That, thusly, figured out which showcases Paramount would select for an arrangement of midnight screenings - all attained by utilizing an absolute minimum of select TV spots emphasizing response shots from Hollywood screenings and a sprinkling of online and radio ads.

This development of the film was determined exclusively by viewers. Paramount affirmed that if the film gained 1 million hits on the Internet where individuals "Requested It" for their town, they would discharge the film broadly. Paranormal Activity denotes one of the first movies to effectively utilize viral advertising and incorporate social networking into their promoting. Viral advertising is a kind of showcasing that uses informal communities and online networking to build brand/ item mindfulness. This sort of showcasing depends on people sharing data from individual to individual, "tainting others" so plans spread quickly, in the same way as an infection. The thought is that data will get more productive as individuals tell more of their friends and family.

To create this campaign, Paramount collaborated with Eventful.com, a site that permits fans to energetically take an interest in an online fan base. The "Demand It" feature on the site, www.paranormalactivity.com, permitted viewers to ask for the film in their general vicinity. This furnished Paramount with data about viewers' date of conception, and their area. With this data then,

Paramount could figure out which urban areas would likely have the best reaction to Paranormal Activity. Utilizing this kind of data, Paramount could figure out what urban communities would be included in the starting the restricted arrivals of the film. Paranormal Activity likewise utilized informal communication apparatuses, for example, Facebook, Stumbleupon, Digg, Delicious, Reddit & Twitter. Fans could even "tweet their shouts" specifically from the Paranormal Activity site.

The showcasing of these movies speaks to another pattern of Hollywood leveraging the fame of social media platforms like Facebook and Twitter to empower ticket deals.

Not just did Paramount convey an exceptional and client driven advertising battle, yet it additionally secured its bases by asking individuals to request the motion picture before heading off to the cost of putting it out there. That is the reason, in my perspective, this was an exceptionally witty, viable, and amazing film promoting campaign.

The achievement of the motion picture and its promotion has brought about Amy Powell happening to set up an expert division of Paramount to take a gander at movies that cost under $100,000 to make. In the period of ease, disposable content where the consumer is advertising for you, this has become a great move.

Television Series - Game of Thrones
Few TV shows are discussed to the extent that HBO's, Game of Thrones, cover of George R.r. Martin's "Song of Ice and Fire" television series has made waves for its stunning narration, particularly its affinity for consistently slaying off its most central characters, which has kept fans buzzing.

That being said, an extraordinary storyline isn't sufficient for building hype, and HBO has verified that nobody overlooks the fight for the Iron Throne. As the years progressed, the channel has moved waves of promoting crusades to keep everybody energized for months on end. HBO has been completely splendid in the matter of promoting "Game of Thrones." The network has advertised its hit demonstrate through print, online networking, TV and dare devil stunts.

In spite of the fact that you may not run a premium link channel, HBO and its accomplices can show you a considerable measure about promoting. We should take a gander at how word has gotten out about "Game of Thrones" and how you can adjust those procedures for advertising your business.

Online networking showcasing has been an indispensable some piece of HBO's battle for "Game of Thrones." Most as of late, the television network utilized Vine to fabricate buildup for the show's most recent trailer in front of its public release. The six-second clips emphasized a portion of the show's most mainstream characters, for example, Jon Snow and Tyrion Lannister, to whet fans' cravings. The features rapidly spread all around the Internet as fans imparted them on Twitter and inserted them on different locales.

Vine is a solid and compelling advertising device that can have a gigantic effect on your organization's online vicinity. The service makes it simple to film and alter short spots that you can impart on numerous stages.Advanced showcasing is unimaginably vital nowadays, heading numerous associations to desert print media altogether. In the meantime, HBO demonstrated that the medium is still a feasible hotspot for publicizing.

In 2013, Adweek noted that there was a two-page spread in The New York Times offering a mythical beast's shape, a Dragon. The promotion even offered fake articles to make book fans feel that one of Daenerys Targaryen's dragons were flying overhead.

The advancement worked marvels, and it wasn't simply restricted to the Times' crowd either. Pictures of the promotion rapidly hit Reddit, Imgur, Twitter and Facebook, uncovering armies of individuals to "Game of Thrones'" most recent promoting rush.

Information assembled by the statistics firm Crimson Hexagon, Game of Thrones, which disclosed its season 4 debut on HBO the previous evening, has been the most famous theme on Twitter with more than 493,500 tweets.

By examination, another recent popular –actor Mickey Rooney, who kicked the bucket yesterday–was mentioned in 198 thousand tweets. The volume for GoT related tweets topped when the show was really reporting in real time on the East Coast, presenting the case for a dual-screen experience. By the end of the airing hour there were more than 95000 tweets shared across the internet. Since March 1, the aggregate Twitter movement on GoT related points has topped 1.70 million.

Music Video - Kolavari di

In a span of three weeks of its airing on Youtube, the Kolaveri Di video earned 19 million views and shared by Facebook users over 6.5 million times. Grabbing more than 10,000 tweets day by day before the end of its first online week. Having collected in excess of 45 million views in this way, it has demonstrated with its immense success that viral promoting works in India as well. This research endeavor investigates what made Kolaveri the sensation it got to be and records the components that make up a perfect viral advertising battle in India.

What occurred was some piece of Indian music and viral showcasing history.Last time anyone checked in February-end, the video had enrolled in excess of 46.5 million views on Youtube and been downloaded by two million individuals on their mobiles.

Sony Music started by putting a link to the feature on its Facebook page, which has a million supporters. Next, it started releasing tweets about the video, making the #whythiskolaveri account on Twitter.

Jack in the Box, the advanced outfit from Bang Films, was named by Sony Music to push their substance on the web, and have seeded and viralized the 'Why this kolaveridi?' feature.The melody was initially transferred on Youtube, and afterward tweeted with the hashtag "#whythiskolaveridi?", and succeeding its ubiquity the hashtag changed to "#kolaveri" which was inclining in India and also in several different nations.Thus Kolaveri Di was India's very ideal viral campaigns that was well executed.

REFERENCES

Advertising Age - http://adage.com/

CoxBlue – http://coxblue.com

Mashable – http://mashable.com

Youtube – http://youtube.com

Forbes – http://forbes.com

Business Today –http://businesstaoday.com

Monitoring the projects' respective social media channels