

Tailoring Social Media for Business

How social media fits different business models

Y I L I



**KTH Computer Science
and Communication**

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Master's Thesis in Media Technology (30 ECTS credits)
at the Media Management Master Programme
Royal Institute of Technology year 2011
Supervisor was Robin Teigland, SSE
Examiner was Alex Jonsson

TRITA-CSC-E 2011:032
ISRN-KTH/CSC/E--11/032-SE
ISSN-1653-5715

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Tailoring Social Media for Business

--How Social Media Fits Different Business Models

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Abstract:

The purpose of this study is to research on the relationship between different business types and social media platforms, when social media are used as business marketing tools. Researcher chose case study to be the main research method, in order to identify the differences across businesses in their choice of social media activities for online marketing. Some successful social media marketing samples from various industries and business types provided rich and strong evidence for research. In the second step, this research explained why certain business types choose certain social media activities, and also revealed the potential connection of business type and specific social media tools. Besides of the significance on theoretical level, this research can also be used as a guideline in business social media marketing Strategies.

Key words:

Social Media, marketing, B2B, B2C, product, service

Contents

1. Introduction.....	1
2. Background.....	2
3. Theoretical background and development of research question	7
3.1 What is marketing	7
3.2 Difference between business to business and business to consumer.....	7
3.3 Difference between business providing products and business providing services	9
3.4 Social media types	10
3.5 Research question	12
3.6 Framework	13
4. Methodology	15
4.1 Choice of method	15
4.2 Choice of sample and data collection	15
4.3 Limitation.....	16
5. Case Study	18
Case 1 National Geographic	18
Case 2 Ford	19
Case 3 Amazon.com	22
Case 4 Air France-KLM.....	22
Case 5 Intel	25
Case 6 Serena Software Inc	26
Case 7 ShipServ.....	26
Case 8 American Express OPEN.....	27
6. Analysis.....	29
6.1 Social media measurement:	29
6.2 Case analysis.....	30
7. Findings and discussion	34
7.1 Discussion	34
7.2 Finding	36
7.3 Implication.....	37
7.4 Further research	38
8. Conclusion	40
9. References	42

1. Introduction

The World Wide Web, the first and current networked global implementation of a hypermedia computer-mediated environment, is increasingly being recognized as an important emerging commercial and marketing environment (Hoffman and Novak 1996). Social media, such as blog, forum, online community, and later comer social media type, for example--Twitter, have already been used as mediums in businesses' marketing strategies and campaigns.

For individual users, different social media types have various functions and features. For instance, users share videos on YouTube; they connect with friends on social networking sites—one famous example is Facebook; they discuss and follow each other's update on Twitter. Hence, companies start to pay more and more attention on these platforms, where they can reach a big number of potential users.

One of the main social media utilizations in businesses is that companies choose different social media applications for their specific marketing campaign. Some companies choose to use YouTube as an efficient channel to release their new commercial and blogs to present their new product; some other companies prefer to construct their own online communities in order to gather customers and provide information and support as to customers.

This research was based on several successful social media marketing cases, and tried to identify the difference between businesses when companies used various social media tools in their marketing strategies; furthermore, researcher also went depth and found out what makes the difference when those companies chose social media tools; and then the finding was extracted to be a new theory on the connection between different social media types and business types. The finding in this paper is meaningful for both theory research and practical use in business environment.

2. Background

In the beginning chapter, researcher described the social media and its fast growth; especially how it has been used in business's marketing strategy.

Some investigation data showed the fast growth of social media. Facebook, one of the most popular social networks has more than 400 million active users with more than 5 billion pieces of content shared each week (<http://www.facebook.com/press/info.php?statistics>).

This growth has caused some changes. Businesses started to involve social media into different sections in the whole business process, for example, making social media based marketing strategy. Companies started to use social media as a marketing tool; even some businesses totally rely on social media campaign in marketing strategy. A survey from Duke University (2009) revealed the variety of social media utilization in marketing strategy. The table below shows the frequency of each social media type when they were used for social media marketing in 2009:

65.4%	Social networking (e.g., Facebook, LinkedIn)
52.3%	Video and photosharing (e.g., YouTube, Flickr)
50.9%	Blogging
44.4%	Microblogging (e.g., Twitter)
24.8%	Podcasts
23.4%	Forums
17.3%	Product reviews
15.9%	Social bookmarking

Table 1: The usage of each social media in business marketing (Duke University, 2009)

In the research conducted by Duke University and American Marketing Association (2010), companies in survey, in general, showed the fast-growing spending exceeds August 2009 levels:

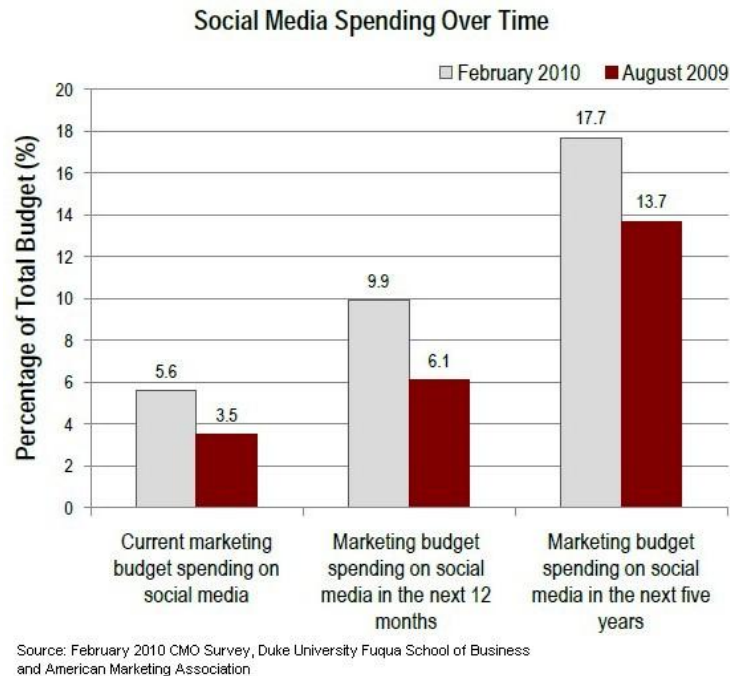


Figure 1: The budge of social media marketing (CMO Survey Company, 2010)

The reason why more and more businesses started to use social media as marketing tools can be found in social media's definition. Kaplan and 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". To be specific, social media has many different types, which includes blogs, social networking sites, communities, video or photo sharing sites, and so on.

Antony Mayfield (2008) identified social media from customers (users) perspective: social media is best understood as a group of new kinds of online media. And he believed that main social media types share most or all of the following characteristics:

- (1) Participation: Social media encourages contributions and feedback from everyone who is interested. It blurs the line between media and audience.
- (2) Openness: Social media encourages voting, comments and the sharing of information. They are rarely any barriers to accessing and making use of content.
- (3) Conversation: Social media is better seen as a two-way conversation or catalyst for it whereas traditional media is about broadcast and a one-way communication from a media broadcasting company to mass audience.
- (4) Community: Social media allows communities to form quickly and communicate effectively.

Brain Solis and Jesse3 (2008) brought us a “conversation prism” (figure 2) showing the online conversations between the people that communities as well as the networks that connect the social web. This prism listed a lot of main social media sites and gave people a big picture about social media types.

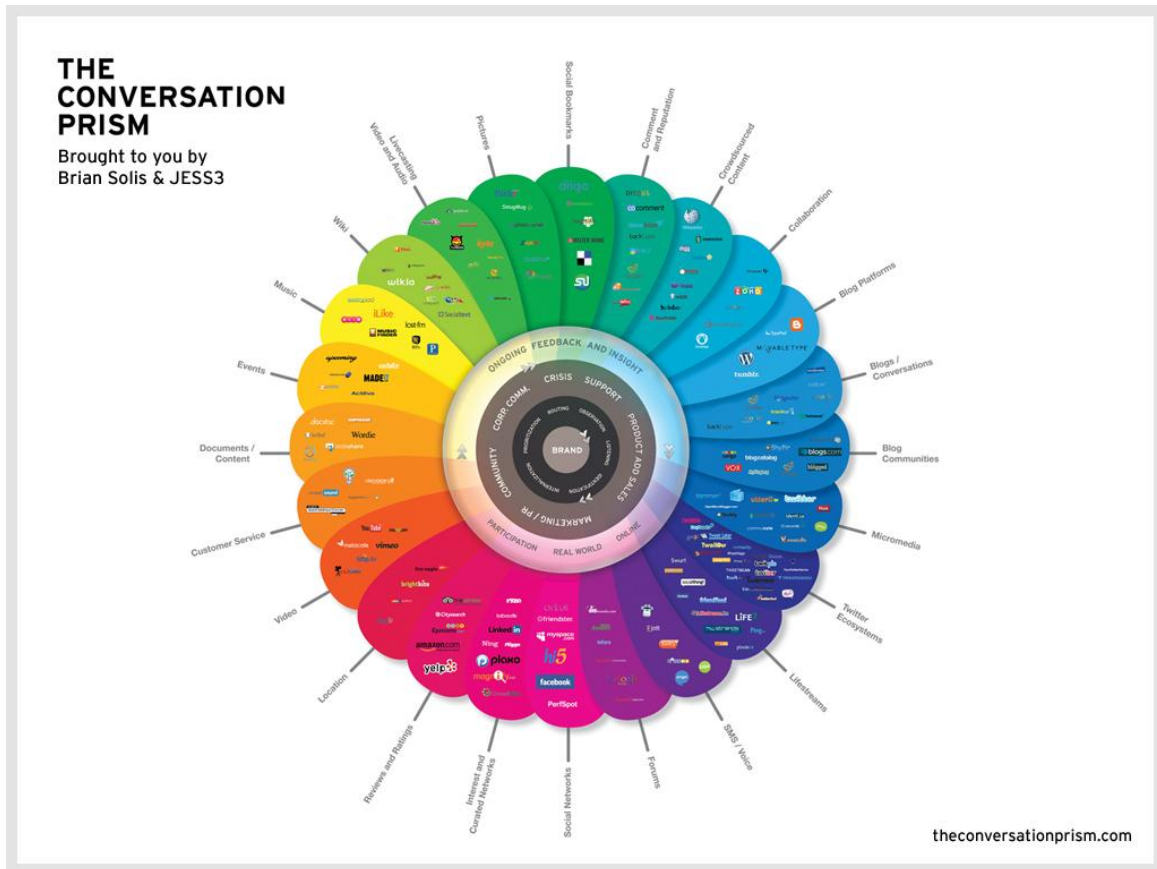


Figure 2: Social media “conversation prism” (Brain Solis and Jesse3, 2008)

Social media marketing, like traditional marketing, can also help business achieve marketing goals, such as customer engagement, customer communication, and brand building etc. These could be shown in the data from an early research from Marketing Executive Networking Group (MENG) (figure 3):

**Main Benefits of Using Social Media Marketing
According to US Marketing Executives, October 2008
(% of respondents)**



Note: n=137

Source: Marketing Executives Networking Group (MENG), "Social Media in Marketing" as cited in press release, November 6, 2008

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www.eMarketer.com

Figure 3: Main benefit of using social media marketing (MENG, 2008)

This investigation data showed that marketing executives had an agreement of high customer engagement. And almost two thirds participants agreed with a direct customer communications, which means an unblocked communicating channel could be offered within social media to customers. In addition, speed of feedback or results and learning customers' preferences were also highly rated. Another obvious advantage give by social media marketing is a low investment in marketing activities.

More and more businesses have seen the advantages to do marketing over social media in recent years. According to the study of the Society for New Communications Research (SNCR) and Financial Insite, Fortune 500's use of blogs, online video, and podcasts continues to increase, and Twitter was the social media channel of choice in 2009. This report is the outcome of a statistics of the Fortune 500, which showed some changes of those businesses internet or social media based marketing activities over past two years:

- 22% (108) of the primary corporations listed in the 2009 Fortune 500 have a public-facing corporate blog. This represents a six percent increase over the 2008 study.
- 86% of these blogs (93) link directly to a corporate twitter account, a 300% increase over the 2008 study. (Note: More Fortune 500 corporations have Twitter accounts, but do not link directly from their blogs.)
- 35% (173) of the Fortune 500 have active Twitter accounts (a post within the past thirty days); and nearly 50% of the top 100 companies (47) have a Twitter account.

- 80% — four of the top five corporations – Wal-Mart, Chevron, ConocoPhillips and General Electric – consistently post on their Twitter accounts. The number one ranked company, Exxon Mobil, does not have a Twitter account.
- The insurance industry has the most Twitter accounts (13).
- 19% of the 2009 Fortune 500 is podcasting, a three percent increase over the 2008 study
- 31% are incorporating online video into their blog sites, a 10% increase over 2008

(<http://software.tekrati.com/research/10741/>)

These changes reveal the growth of those companies' attention and investment on social media marketing; and also it happens across companies with totally different business types and models. The survey from Duke University (2010), again, shows that the spending growth from different business types:

		Aug-2009 (%)	Feb-2010 (%)
Current social Media Spending	B2B-Product	2.5	3.4
	B2B-Service	3.9	6.5
	B2C-Product	5.3	6.7
	B2C-Service	2.9	6.9
	Overall	3.5	5.6
Social Media Spending in the next 12 months	B2B-Product	4.5	7.4
	B2B-Service	6.5	11.0
	B2C-Product	7.5	11.6
	B2C-Service	8.8	10.7
	Overall	6.1	9.9
Social Media Spending in the next 5 years	B2B-Product	12.6	15.3
	B2B-Service	13.5	18.9
	B2C-Product	15.0	18.9
	B2C-Service	15.4	18.5
	Overall	13.7	17.7

Table 2: Social media marketing for different business types (Duke University, 2010)

The reason of social media marketing fast growth in business environment can be found in social media's unique features. Basing on internet, social media helps companies build up a two-way-communication channel with customers, which means, companies now can "talk" with customers in different ways and also customers can also learn about companies from new angles.

3. Theoretical background and development of research question

This chapter established the base for research, which contains the purpose of marketing; the differences of across business types in marketing process; types of social media with features. At the end, research questions for this study were also raised.

3.1 What is marketing

According to American Marketing Association's definition, marketing is "an organizational function and a set of processes for creating, communicating and delivering value to customers and for managing customer relationships in ways that benefit the organization and its stakeholders". This definition unveils the core part of marketing process—customer relationship. The precondition is to make customer know about the brand and products-- in another word, brand awareness. Also, marketing work includes building up the relationship with customers. Marketing is concerned with exchange relationships between the organization and its customers. Quality and customer service are key linkages in this relationship (Christopher, Payne & Ballantyne, 1991). Stone, Woodcock and Wilson (1996) defined the effort on customer relationship in marketing process as "the use of a wide range of marketing, sales, communication, service and customer care approaches to: (1) create a relationship between the company and its customers that stretches over many transactions; and (2) manage that relationship to the benefit of the customers and the company." These statements, on the other side, reveal that to build up relationship with new customers and keep the relationship in future contact are also a part of work in marketing process.

Marketing strategies normally will end up in the step of advertising; in which, companies use different channels to exposes the product to audience. It brings the product visibility to potential customers. In traditional media, advertising modes includes print medium, such as newspapers, magazines, yellow pages, posters, etc.; and TV& radio. And now, social media start to be treated as another marketing channel, which co-exists with traditional marketing mediums.

3.2 Difference between business to business and business to consumer

In order to find answer for research questions, businesses need to be divided into several business types. One way to categorize businesses can define them as (1) business to business (b2b), commerce transactions between businesses, and (2) business to consumer (b2c), activities of businesses serving end consumers with products and/or services.

Marketing is concerned with exchanges between and among buyers and sellers, and as such it is an attempt to match supply with demand. The subject of this exchange could be in many types, such as goods, services, technologies, business systems, people, information, concepts, or ideas. When this is the case—where both parties to the exchange are organizations—our focus becomes industrial marketing, which is also referred to as business-to-business marketing or organizational marketing, B2B in this research.

In B2B business type, buyer-seller interactions tend to be of longer duration, with a good probability that the customer today will also be the customer tomorrow. Today, the objective of marketing is the management of mutually beneficial relationships (see Mogan & Hunt, 1994)

Industrial marketing (B2B) can thus be formally defined as the creation and management of mutually beneficial relationships between organizational suppliers and organizational customers. In the language of today's marketing, this means that organizations have to make decisions about the acquisition of customers and on the retention of these customers (Blattberg & Deighton, 1996). Acquisition of customers means that marketers must find ways of creating value for them; retention of customers implies that this value be sustained and enhanced.

Because of those features in B2B type, the essence of business to business marketing is creating value for customers with goods and services that address organizational needs and objectives. And customer satisfaction should be viewed as the means toward long-run profitability goals. Drucker explains, "The aim of marketing is to know and understand customers so well that the product or service fits them and sells itself" (1954, p. 65).

The orientation is especially critical with business to business customers, because the goods and services they buy have an impact on the performance of day-to-day business operations. The buyer-seller relationship tends to involve mutual interdependence, with each party attempting to satisfy organizational objective through the other.

Basing on those theories, the major differences between B2C and B2B can be summed up as:

(1) The products and services being marketed

In B-to-C market, the extensive focus placed on consumer good in marketing texts is partly due to the fact that most people can easily relate to the relevant properties of these products, for example, brand name, style, color, performance, etc,. All of us have extensive daily experience with consumer goods. Products in B-to-B market tend to be more complex, and the relevant properties are typically more technical in nature. As Webster (1984) explains, "The same man who, as a consumer, settles for plan shaving cream if he cannot find lemon lime, will be unwilling as an industrial buyer to accept a bolt with 30 threads to the inch when his specifications call for 28"(p. 15).

(2) The nature of demand

Industrial goods contribute directly or indirectly to the manufacture of consumer goods is another difference between B2B and B2C.

(3) How the customer buys

The most important point of departure between consumer and industrial marketing is buying behavior. , In industrial marketing, a given buying decision might include inputs from the people in engineering, production, finance and other departments. Thus, the purchase process can be more complex and the decision to purchase a product from a given industrial supplier may take a long time to make.

(4) Communication process

Given the complexities of industrial products and organizational buying, the communication process between seller and buyer also differs from that typically found with consumer products—much less if any media advertising is used. Personal selling becomes the thrust of one's promotional efforts. In fact, frequently the seller goes to the buyer. And these contacts are supported with many promotional tools. Two-way interaction between buyer and seller over time will determine the outcome, with the sale taking on the appearance of a social negotiation process. Further, different media may be more or less effective.

Hence, B2C companies can more easily draw customers' attention with a clear brand. B2B purchase is generally more complicated than B2C, which is decided by different factors in the process and the communication between seller and buyer organizations plays an important role.

3.3 Difference between business providing products and business providing services

The marketing mix consists of four basic variables: product, price, promotion, and place. (See McCarthy, 1978.) "Product" refers to the conception, design, development and servicing of products and services. Some discussion and literature centers around the debate concerning whether the marketing of products is similar to or different from the marketing of services. Basing on those studies, Cowell (2007) extracted some differences between products and services on functional lines, which also make the differences of their marketing strategies:

- Services cannot be stocked
- It is impossible to separate the consumer from the production process with services

Also, with McDowell (1953) and Parker (1960), the difference has been extended by other writers (e.g. Wilson, 1972). More distinctive characteristics were defined by Cowell (2007):

- Tangibility—services are intangible and cannot be touched, tasted, felt, etc.
- Perishable—services are perishable and cannot be separated from the person providing them.
- Heterogeneous—services present problems of standardization.

With those different characteristics from product, services limit the marketing strategy into another direction differing from product marketing. As Levitt (1981) wrote:

The most important thing to know about intangible products is that the customers usually don't know what they're getting until they don't get it. Only then do they become aware of what they bargained for; only on dissatisfaction do they dwell... in keeping customers for intangibles, it becomes important regularly to remind and show them what they're getting so that occasional failures fade in relative importance. (p. 100)

And Berry (1995) claimed that effective relationship marketing should help a company capitalize on its investment in service improvement, because "relationship marketing allows service providers to become more knowledgeable about the customer's requirements and needs".

Loverlock and Wirtz (1996) explains that “As service companies grow larger and make increasing use of technologies such as interactive websites and self-service technology, maintaining meaningful relationships with customers becomes a significant marketing challenge”. Berry (1983, p.25) also states in the services marketing area, “Relationship marketing is attracting, maintaining and—in multi-service organizations—enhancing customer relationships”.

To discern the differences between services and physical products, Booms and Bitner (1981) suggested the extension of the 4Ps framework to include three additional factors: People, Physical evidence and Process as marketing mix variables for services marketing:

People: in Booms and Bitner’s 7Ps services marketing framework, people are all people directly or indirectly involved in the service encounter, namely the firm’s contact employees, personnel and other customers.

Physical evidence: it refers to the environment in which the service is assembled and in which the seller and customers interact, combined with tangible commodities that facilitate performance or communication of the service.

Process: it is referred to the procedures, mechanisms and flow of activities by which the service is delivered.

Three more Ps described the feature of service which differentiates business providing service from business providing physical goods—customers are always involved in the whole business process. This also reveals that the relationship with customers is even more important for businesses providing services.

3.4 Social media types

In FredCavazza.net’s social media landscape (see figure 4), different social media types were sorted into different groups by their functions, which include publication tools, such as blogs, wikis and citizen journalism portals; sharing tools for videos, pictures, and slideshows; social networks such as Facebook and MySpace; virtual world, massively multiplayer online games and some other social media types:

Social Media Landscape



Figure 4: Social media landscape (FredCavazza.net)

Likewise, Kaplan and Haenlein (2009a, 2009b) classified social media into six main types (see figure 5) -- wiki, blog, social networking sites, content community, virtual social world, and virtual game world. Different social media types have different features. In which, wiki is the joint of many actors, and its effort leads to a better outcome than an individual achievement by any single actor; thus, although not everything written on Wikipedia may totally be correct, it is still believed to be true by more and more people. Blogs are special types of websites that usually display date-stamped entries in reverse chronological order (OECD, 2007).

Blogs represent the earliest form of social media type. Due to blogs' historical roots, they mostly have text-based content, and they also started to take different media formats. Many companies and organizations are already using blogs to update or release information to their employees, customers and shareholders which they consider to be important or worth. Google publish more than 10 articles on its official blog, which owns more than 630,000 readers all over the world.

Another common media is content communities. Its main objective is the sharing of media content between users. According to Kaplan and Haenlein's classification, content communities exist for a wide range of different media types, which includes text (e.g., BookCrossing), photos (e.g., Flickr), videos (e.g., YouTube), and PowerPoint presentations (e.g., Slideshare).

Social networking sites are defined as web-based services that allow individuals to (1) construct a public or semi-public profile within a bounded system, (2) articulate a list of other users with whom they share a connection, and (3) view and traverse their list of connections and those made by others within the system (Boyd and Ellison, 2007). Social networking sites are not only for people creating personal profiles and getting contact with friends and colleagues; they are also for some companies to release information. Warner Brothers created a Facebook profile to promote a Christmas comedy film, “Fred Claus”. On which, visitors can watch trailers, download graphics and play game.

Another social media format is virtual world, which was classified into two types by Kaplan and Haenlein, virtual game world and virtual social world. Both platforms are three-dimensional world replicas where users can act as avatars and interact with each other. Virtual game world requires users to stay in the context of a MMORPG (massively multiplayer online role-playing game), such as the most famous “World of Warcraft”; virtual social world, such as “Second life”, allows for an unlimited range of self presentation strategies, and it has been shown that with increasing usage intensity and consumption experience, users of virtual social worlds—or “residents,” as they prefer to called—show behavior that more and more closely mirrors the on observed in real life settings (Haenlein & Kaplan, 2009; Kaplan & Haenlein, 2009a, 2009b).

		Social presence/ Media richness		
		Low	Medium	High
Self-presentation/ Self-disclosure	High	Blogs	Social networking sites (e.g., Facebook)	Virtual social worlds (e.g., Second Life)
	Low	Collaborative projects (e.g., Wikipedia)	Content communities (e.g., YouTube)	Virtual game worlds (e.g., World of Warcraft)

Table 3: Feature of different social media type (Haenlein & Kaplan)

Besides of this classification, there are still other types of social media, such as Microblog, which was defined as a form of “communication in which users can describe their current status in short postas distributed by instant messages, mobile phones, email or the Web”, with the feature of “high degree correlation and reciprocity, indicating close mutual acquaintances among users” (Java etc, 2007)

3.5 Research question

In business marketing work, different social media types might play different roles for companies. And different businesses also choose different social media to serve their marketing campaigns in order to either fit into their business models or achieve business goals. Some companies chose to use blogs video channel to present new product and another group of companies prefer to use social networking sites to keep in touch with customers. For example, American pharmaceutical and consumer packaged goods

company--Johnson & Johnson uses blog to show another side of the company, with frequent video posts and interviews, which could be considered as a strategy that company uses to increase awareness and build up brand image; Visa launched the Visa Business Network application on Facebook to connect small business users and to help them promote their businesses to a larger community. Those are two good business examples focusing on different business goal. With different social media channel, companies can tailor their own marketing strategies.

This paper is aiming on to find out the connection between different social media and company's business model in terms of making marketing strategy. And with the precondition of "marketing strategy", this research goal can be broken down into several sub-questions:

- Are there differences across businesses in their choice of social media activities for online marketing?
- If there are differences, what can explain why certain business types choose certain social media activities?

3.6 Framework

In former research, there are two ways to divided businesses—Business to business and business to customer; business providing products and business providing services. Basing on the classifications, business can be defined into four blocks: B2C providing service, B2C providing product, B2B providing service, and B2B providing product. In which:

B2C providing service—first has the characteristics of B2C business type, which is product driven in business process. That means it might have a clear brand image or product image for most customers. At the same, as a service provider, it also needs to always strengthen the relationship with customers.

B2C providing product--B2C type of business and product providing type of business both have strong product image in their transaction process, which means this type of business can build up a very clear brand and product image on social media in its marketing plan.

B2B providing service—contrary to B2C providing service, this type of businesses more relies on relationship in its business transaction than businesses in other blocks. They can use social media as an extra channel to explore and strengthen relationship, or to use social media as a platform where clients can have better understanding of brand and service information.

B2B providing product--this type of business share some features with B2C providing product. Because they both provide tangible product, which means they can more easily deliver product image and information to clients; however, as B2B, they still need relationship-driven force in business process.

To sum up, four business types have two main goals in their marketing strategies: to build up brand or product image, which can increase awareness among customers; or to build up relationship with customers, which helps business in B2B transactions and increase customer's understanding of service content. Thus, those business types can be categorized into a 2X2 matrix (figure 5):

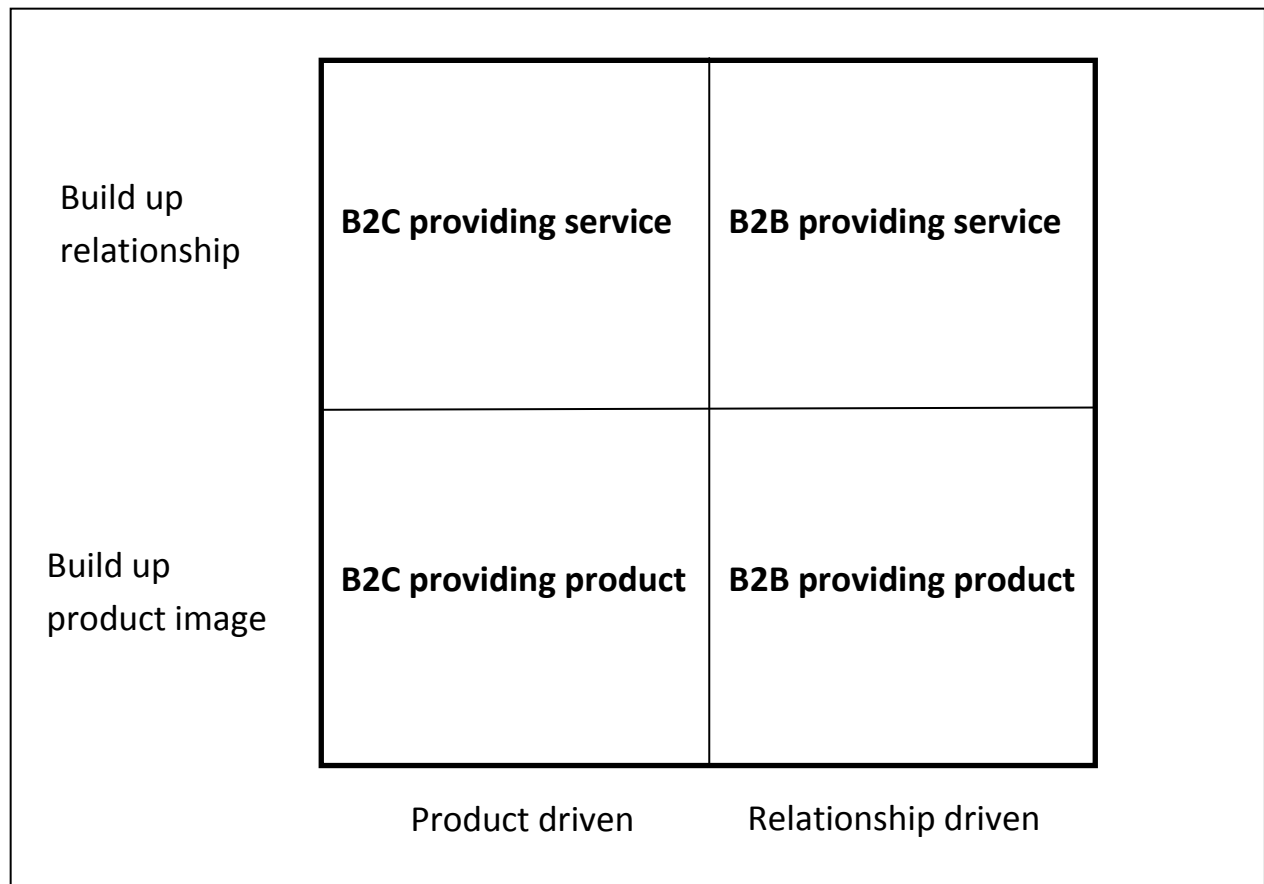


Figure 5: Research framework

4. Methodology

In this chapter, the method of this research was explained. The explanation started with the reason why researcher chose case study as main method; the choice of case samples; and also the potential limitation existing in this research.

4.1 Choice of method

Case studies can be used to accomplish various aims: to provide description (Kidder, 1982), test theory (Pinfield, 1986), or generate theory (Gersick, 1988). The nature of this research at this stage meant that intensive research methods were preferred. So due to the research topic and purpose of this thesis, it was deemed that qualitative approach is more relevant for this study. The case study is a research strategy which focuses on understanding the dynamics present within single settings (Kathleen M. Eisenhardt, 1989). A case study may be characterized as a detailed examination of an event (or series of related events) which the analyst believes exhibits the operation of some identified general theoretical principle (Mitchell, 1983). There are two main reasons to use qualitative research method for this thesis. One main reason is that qualitative method allows researcher to study on the situation where the link between the cause and effect (Yin, 2003). A qualitative research can also be useful for the research purpose since it allows researchers to gain deeper knowledge for the study object, instead of analyzing a number of subjects on the surface. This study is aiming to define the phenomena or find out the pattern about how businesses choose to use different social media types. The primary observation revealed that many companies are still in their experimental phase on utilizing social media for marketing and branding strategy, which means there can be both successful and unsuccessful cases in the market. This could directly affect the reliability of research result. Case study research is a very useful method as it allows expanding and generalizing theories by combining the existing theoretical knowledge with new empirical insights (Yin, 1994). Thus, to choose qualitative research method with several proper cases, the research can first go deep under the surface to find out the pattern and then grasp the main factors which can help business success in social media utilization.

4.2 Choice of sample and data collection

A case study is a description of a management situation. As such, it is the marketing analogue of the physician's clinical examination (e.g., MacLeod 1979). Case construction implicates multiple data sources. Like other qualitative methods, cases often rely heavily on verbal reports (personal interview) and unobtrusive observation as primary data sources (Bonoma, 1985). "The underlying principle that is common to all of these strategies is selecting *information rich* cases", that is, cases worthy of in-depth study (Patton, 1990, p. 181). In this research, businesses are classified into four main groups: B2B providing product, B2B providing service, B2C providing product and B2C providing service. Each group has specific features in terms of making marketing and branding strategy. Hence, the choice of samples needs to cover all four business blocks in the business type matrix. The choice of sample follows some principles:

1. To cover all four business types. As the classification mentioned before, the research defines businesses into four main blocks. So to find out the social media utilization pattern for each block, the

choice on sample should go across business types, from B2B to B2C and different companies providing products and services.

2. To give enough data for research. To have efficient research, two samples were used in each business type. As a sample company, it must meet all conditions in one block. For instance, the company in the block “B2C with service” must first be a company with its main business facing to end-users and have service as what it mainly offers to customers. And those two samples were chosen among hundreds social media marketing examples which were considered and proved to be successful in the market, with a lot of precious experience, and which can most present the social media marketing utilization pattern within the business type.

3. To use sample businesses with different type of products and services. Within one block, business providing similar products or services, competitors, in another word, might use similar or same social media tools in marketing strategy. This might happen between a market leader and a market follower. Once a company succeeded in a marketing strategy, some followers could immediately copy the strategy. So in the sample choice, this paper tried to avoid using companies with substitute products or service. Instead, all samples within same block only have totally different products or services.

4. In order to gather information about how each company uses social media in marketing strategy, most data was collected on company’s online marketing portal. For example, National Geographic uses many different social media platforms, blog, YouTube, MySpace, in its social media marketing process. Visitor number, times of view, number of comments and fans’ number were all chosen to be the proof of research. Another company, American Express OPEN mainly used its forum in marketing campaign, collection work of data and information was only focusing on this main platform—its forum. In order to provide enough evidence for research, eight social media marketing cases from different business types are given in details with several key points:

- (1) What was the business goal each company wanted to achieve in their marketing strategy and campaign?
- (2) What social media platforms and channels did each company use in their marketing strategy?
- (3) What did they do to achieve their business goals with social media tools?
- (4) What were the outcomes of their social media marketing strategy and campaign?

4.3 Limitation

Case study forms the core of this research. Although the case study method has many advantages, there are also criticisms. For example, the intensive use of empirical evidence can lead to overly complex, wide (Eisenhardt, 1989) and descriptive theory or a text without any clear focus or theory at all (Vissak, 2010). Depending on the number of cases, researchers might also face different problems. Single case studies limit the ability to generalize from the conclusions, models or theory developed from the selected case; thus, we cannot be sure that this is a typical case. Multiple cases, in the contrary side, might reduce the depth of the study, especially when the authors’ researches are constrained (Vissak, 2010).

The analytical explanation for each case is not enough for proving its success. To convince readers the samples are representative for each pattern, there should be some standards to measure the success in social media marketing campaign. However, the social media marketing result measurement standard is various for different social media types. From ROI, traffics, to customer engagement and retention, different companies choose different metrics to measure the marketing campaign result. Besides, most companies have a portfolio of marketing strategy including social media efforts, offline campaign activities and advertisement on traditional media, such as TV, newspaper and radio. So the outcome of marketing campaign is a combination of all efforts and cannot be divided into separate part. This also raises the difficulty of social media marketing measurement. Hence, how to choose an appropriate measurement standard becomes to be the important factor in the research.

Also, a criticism of the case study method is that it might suffer from a lack of rigor and an excess of bias. Diamond (1996) observed that the case study could suffer from “crippling drawback”, because it might be “curbing one’s tendencies to stamp one’s pre-existing interpretations on data as they accumulate”. However, it was already retorted by Flyvbjerg (2006) that case study has “no less strict than the rigor of quantitative methods”, and the advantage of it is that “it can close in on real-life situations and test views directly in relation to phenomena as they unfold in practice”.

5. Case Study

Successful business cases contain a lot of experience and proof which can be used in this research. Eight social media marketing examples across industries and different business types were given in this part.

Eight cases which met those principles were chosen across industries. And sample companies' names were listed in the following form and categorized into different business types:

Business type	Sample Company 1	Sample Company 2
B2C with product	National Geographic	Ford
B2C with service	Amazon.com	Air France-KLM
B2B with product	Intel	Serena Software Inc
B2B with service	ShipServ	American Express OPEN

Table 4: Social media marketing samples

Case 1 National Geographic

National Geographic, like how it claims for its mission, “Inspiring People to Care about the Planet”, promotes its brand and products over different social media channels. On National Geographic Facebook Fan page, it has been touting an impressive number—more than 1,000,000 fans (by May 13th 2010, see figure 6). This page becomes to be the platform to share its news and new coming events with fans; besides, it also offers open Facebook page links for each separate product.



Figure 6: National Geographic Facebook page

The Traveler Magazine Facebook page also owns more than 14,400 fans (by April 13th 2010) and delivers the information about the “distinction between tourism and travel, and stress inquisitive not acquisitive trips” (National Geographic Traveler Magazine Facebook page). On this page, the new “fan” can subscribe to Traveler magazine with a “member price”. Fans also can easily reach its online special issues over this page. It also informs its fans about every exciting new event, such as its Nature & outdoor Photo Seminar. Visitors on this page can also find an easy entry for its blogs.

The National Geographic MySpace profile pages focuses on the National Geographic Channel video content by housing videos on MySpace videos. National Geographic keeps this page fresh by consistently adding new videos for their more than 10,000 friends (by April 13th 2010). This profile page seems trying to function itself to be a branded page for National Geographic.

National Geographic has loaded on their YouTube page with a lot of great content for 29,172 friends (by April 13th 2010) on YouTube and 264,860 subscribers (by April 13th 2010). They have organized those contents by category, so users can easily choose interesting playlists. This can help users find content according to their interest and has resulted in ranking on some of YouTube’s “Most Popular” lists.

National Geographic has very clear purpose on Twitter page—to share new photos and new content to its 134,654 (by April 13th 2010 and keep growing) followers with the link to its webpage.

With the group pool on Flickr, National Geographic has its almost 5,000 fans (by April 13th 2010) involved, with 69,200 photos (by April 13th 2010) contribution. This is a good way to build up and spread its brand image by encouraging fresh, user-generated content.

The National Geographic blog, “Inside NGC Blog” is buried deep in the TV section of the National Geographic Web site and is updated two to three times a week with content related to various National Geographic Channel TV shows. It is another channel to deliver its content to internet users.

National Geographic uses almost main and popular social media platforms and patterns in this online marketing campaign. With this wide range cover on internet, it can reach different type of potential users and loyal readers. Up-to-date photos and TV programs are sent to its readers also by RSS subscription. Users can receive strong brand information by each click on an exciting TV show or an interesting photo. National Geographic delivers its brand awareness and image to all readers with a sophisticated social media portfolio.

Case 2 Ford

Scott Monty, as the Head of social Media at Ford, who has only been working for Ford since 2008, put in place a social media strategy including multiple social media channels including Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, and Flickr, to build up brand image and promote products. They started a social media campaign “Jewel in the Crown”, which is the Ford Fiesta Movement involving to select 100 socially vibrant individuals who were provided with the European version of the Ford Fiesta 18 months prior to it officially being manufactured and released in the US market. Within this movement, those socially media aware fanatics are encouraged to try the new car and then share their driving experience with Ford

Fiesta over a period of 6 months on their blogs, Twitter, Facebook, Flickr and YouTube accounts. Then Ford marketing team gathers all photos, videos and all other digital feedback onto official portal sites-- www.fiestamovement.com.

As a result, Fiesta Movement drove large amount of traffic to its sites with:

- 11 million social networking impressions
- 5 million pieces of sharing and receiving information on social networks
- More than 11,000 videos and more than 13,000 photos posted
- 50,000 hand raisers who have seen the product in person or on a video
- 38% awareness by Generation Y about the product, without any monetary investment on traditional advertising (data by October of 2009).

And the investigation data given by a social media tracking service company “Trendrr” shows the fast growth of Ford Fiesta sharing and forwarding on YouTube, posts on Twitter and the number of news and blogs on Google (see figure 7 and figure 8):

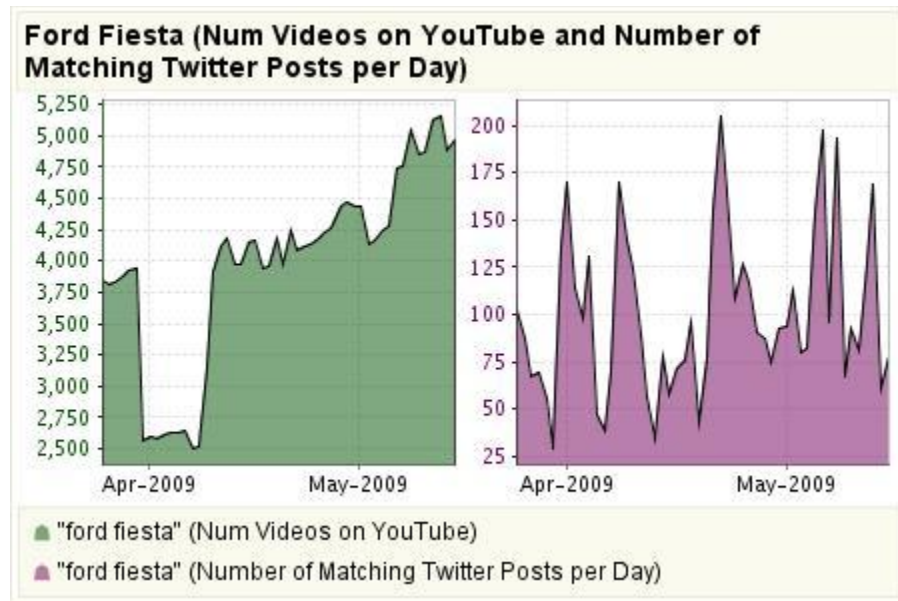


Figure 7: Ford Fiesta Twitter Posts per Day (Trendrr, 2009)

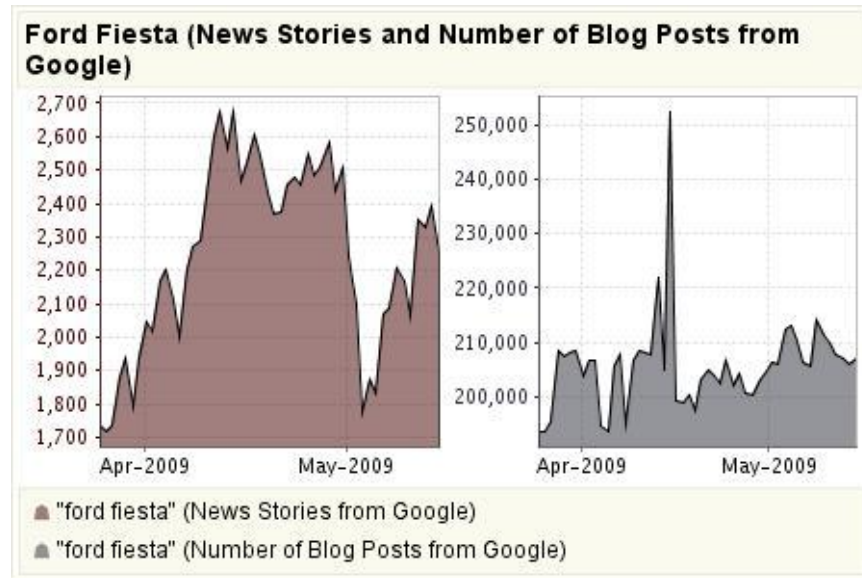


Figure 8: Ford Fiesta new stories and blog posts number, Trendrr

There are many possible reasons leading to Ford's social media marketing success. The most important reason is Ford team created an exciting activity which people are interested to talk about over internet and social media sites. Furthermore, participants in the event would like to enrich the content, which could draw even more attention. This "bandwagon" drove more and more followers into the event. The biggest benefit in this movement is that Ford received huge brand and product awareness for its new car "Fiesta". Some data can reveal the big success on building up brand image and awareness over social media and internet:

In the blogosphere, Ford is mentioned on average in 12,000,000 blogs since March 28th, the year of 2009, with Chrysler averaging less than half that at around 5,000,000—far behind it leading position (figure 9):

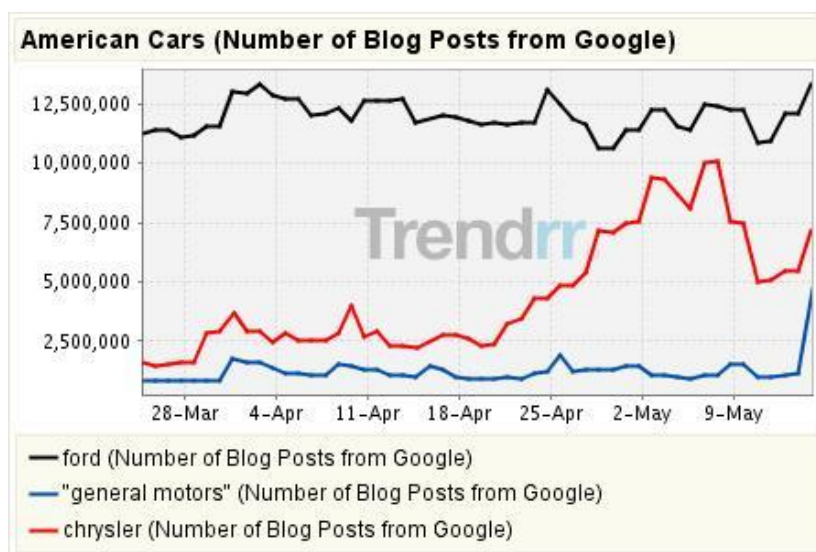


Figure 9: American cars blog posts number, Trendrr

Ford also led the buzz position on Twitter. Scott Monty, the Head of Social Media for Ford) works hard to give Ford a social media attraction. Mr. Monty has volumes more followers and is more active at updating and following back, whereas Chrysler for example is only listening to a small group of their followers.

Scott Monty and its Ford marketing team took social media as main platform, merging with attractive offline events showed people how social networking sites can help with building up brand image, which could be finally converted into potential customers and sales number.

Case 3 Amazon.com

Amazon, as one of the biggest online retailer, sets its main business to be an online platform where customers can purchase different things from books, CDs, to jewelry and gourmet food with international shipping service. Thus, we can define it as service providing B2C business.

Amazon takes social media platforms as a part of its service to both promote brand image and build up customer relationship. Its shelfari is a place for Amazon book readers to build up a virtual bookshelf and share experience and recommendation with friends. As a separate social media platform, it contains the whole package of “personal page”—book shelf, interest groups, friends contact, blog with many interacting functions. But unlike many other competitors, the theme here is “book”.

Shelfari’s main feature is the bookshelf, wherer members can list the books they own, and also show the books they want to read. They also offer a Facebook application to share data with friends. It becomes a good social media platform for readers; readers can communicate with other people with same reading interest; it is also a two-way channel for both shoppers and buyers—one can do book promotion, while the other can learn more about books. On the other hand, Amazon webpage itself is a big social media arena. Customers can write reviews for each piece of product, and other later coming customers can (1) read those reviews for suggestion, and (2) comment on the review content, or (3) rate the review for other customers. Besides of text reviews, users can also upload video reviews for product, which is limited within 100mb for file size and 10 minutes for video length. With those two main types of user-generated content, Amazon keeps customers to have more involvement and closer relationship.

That’s not all things Amazon has for social media marketing campaign, it also has its own “product wikipedia” called Amapedia (<http://amapedia.amazon.com/>), where shoppers can share information about products in a wiki-based setting.

The whole social media package provides potential customers a preview for the shopping experience for Amazon and its service. With all social media function, customers are “encouraged” getting to know Amazon and its sale service.

Case 4 Air France-KLM

Air France-KLM is a European airline holding company, which was created by the mutually-agreed merger between Air France and KLM. They launched the “first social network in airline industry”, Bluenity, in November of 2008. After signing-up, members will be able to share tips on hotels,

restaurants and shopping at destinations across the world. One of the biggest attractions of this social media channel is that it allows members to make their travelling plans public—to show their flight booking with KLM or Air France, and then find other members on the same flight or in the same location of their flight destination. Members can also connect their Bluenity communities with their Facebook account, to show update information. There are some benefits with this tactic, just like what Patrick Roux, the Senior Vice President Marketing at Air France-KLM said, “This is a response to those customers who would like to be proactive on their trip, whether they are travelling for professional or leisure purposes. ... The 75 million customers, who choose our two airlines every year, will be able, by using Bluenity, to meet before, during and after their flight.” Besides of this, they also offer other online communities targeting into different groups of customers with extra benefits, such as KLM’s Club China, Club Africa and Flying Blue Golf. Normally, flight passengers always lose the contact with airline companies after they book the tickets until their check-in time. And they don’t talk about the airline company after their journey. Airline companies only can keep a very temporary “relationship” with their clients during the short journey. With those communities, customers can learn more about Air France-KLM and their service, and engage the online conversation. They keep customers “coming back” all the time.



Figure 10: Air France-KLM’s Bluenity page

Futhermore, KLM uses Facebook and twitter for another channel to solve customers’ problems and keep the relationship with customers. They are also used as billboard for updates. For example, Air France-KLM used Facebook to inform passengers the change of flight when many airports were shut down after Iceland volcano eruption.



Figure 11: KLM Facebook page

Air France-KLM also has smart strategies on building up brand image. A viral movie trailer was targeted with social media planning was launched with the name “Fly For Fortune”. A micro site was created with a very exciting branded game. Target audience can personalized their own plane and fly to a destination which they like most. The winner can get 2 tickets around the world. The challenge for this marketing campaign was to gain 150,000 new opt-in email addresses and increase online ticket sales among a “18 to 35 years old” target audience within 58 markets. They aimed on the social hotspots and influencers to participate, by sending a viral game trailer to blogs, forums, 200 local and global video sharing portals and social networking sites such as Facebook and MySpace. As a result, this marketing campaign gained 8 million clip views and 300 blog posting with a total PR value of € 300,000. Over 800,000 people generated more than 1 million records of this game. 210,000 new leads were created and online ticket Sales ROI was 1200% (Data from Viral Tracker, March 2007,). Data from MetrixLab showed that Air France-KLM also got 10% lift in prompt awareness.



Figure 12: Air France-KLM’s Fly For Fortune

Case 5 Intel

As the world's largest semiconductor chip maker, it pays a lot attention on the cooperation with computer manufacturers and program developers all over the world. This means it needs to both focus on building up a clear brand image and keep close connection with big buyers for good sale number; at the same time, it also needs to encourage developers and freelancers on technology innovation to keep its core competition power.

To achieve this goal, Intel sufficiently uses different social media types to spread and receive up-to-date information.

Intel's official blogs contain different information of business, core technology, company self. Research Blog, Technology Blog, CSR Blog, Inside Scoop, Policy Blog, and Jobs Blog, six categorized blogs are managed by people serving in different department in Intel, present company information from various angles and perspectives. Standardized blog design gives readers easy access to interesting information and news.

The slogan for Intel Software is "connect with developers and Intel engineers" (Intel Software Network webpage). Intel also has several official communities with the access entry on its website. According to the self-presentations within communities, each one takes different responsibilities in communication with users. For instance, the Mobility Community is "dedicated to providing mobile application developers the latest and most relevant information, tools and other resources, from Intel, and our community members." (Intel Mobile Developer Community webpage) Users can also learn more information from relevant Intel Mobile Blog and Take Five video site about how other developers work on their Intel tasks. The Mobility Software Forum is a platform for developers to find out more information on "developing for the Laptop or Mobile Internet Devices" (Intel Mobile Software Development Community webpage). Blogs, forums, video site, and communities with lots of downloading support constitute a platform to communicate with developers and technique support for clients.

Besides of interior social media system, Intel also adopts a lot of public social media platforms to promote its brand information into the market.

On YouTube, Intel's official profile—Channel Intel, carries on the brand design and uses blue as its main page color. The main channel page shows Intel's commercial directly; by the side of this page, Intel's playlists offer audiences quick entry to every content category, from its new product video presentation, science exhibition, to technology analysis, etc. Every video tells user the same story—Intel.

Intel also has page on Flickr called Intel Photos' photostream, sharing products and events records; and Intel Developer Forum on Facebook where "Intel and the ecosystem come together to share their latest innovations and vision for the future of technology." (Intel Developer Forum page on Facebook).

Case 6 Serena Software Inc

Serena Software released their “mashup” software as a service version of its business Mashup Composer in 2008, which allows clients to combine data and visual elements from multiple sources into a streamlined process-driven framework that can then be connected with multiple back-end or cloud-based systems. There was a problem because most people didn’t know what their product exactly was and what that meant. The company found that few in the marketplace understood what a mashup was, and as a result, more time was spent on description than actually promoting the product.

To increase product understanding and build product awareness, Serena Software cooperated with Brief Attention Span of Oakland, California to create a video as a part of marketing campaign talking about the product “mashup”, which was released on YouTube and the Serena Website in March 2008. This video was titled as “Just @\$% It!!What are they saying?” This video used a resembling scene of TV show “The Office” and bleeped out every time when they talk about the words “mash” and “mashup” to intrigue viewers. By now, this video has got almost 1.2 million views ((by April 13th 2010) and was the top one video on the site for 2 days. “We are big proponents of using video to get our message out, and we believe in viral tools and mediums to reach out to audiences”, said Michael Parker, senior director of global marketing at Serena Software.

Serena Software also created a page named “I’m a Super Masher!” on Facebook, with the application page linking to software download and company’s webpage for more information. On Facebook, “viewers could not only watch, share and embed the video, buy they could also join the Super Masher group and invite their like-minded business friends to join via contest to see who could get the most folks to join,” also said by Michael Parker. With this video marketing campaign, Serena won the OMMA (The Magazine of Online Media, Marketing & Advertising) 2008 award for Best Business-to-Business Integrated Online Campaign, and the video itself also was a finalist for the OMMA 2008 award for Best Online Viral Campaign.

In Serena Software, employees are encouraged to spend time on social networking sites, for example, to construct their channel on Facebook, which is called “Facebook Fridays”. Every Friday, more than 800 employees in 18 countries can have an hour for personal time participating in Facebook. They can build up profiles, play with applications, and contact with coworkers, customers and friends. They actually make Facebook as a part of their company’s intranet. Because, they believe, their employees’ activities on Facebook can lead to informal public relations.

Case 7 ShipServ

ShipServ is the leading maritime e-marketplace, helping the buyers and sellers of ship supplies to reduce the costs associated with doing business together. In the marketing campaign, they wanted to achieve some basic goals: to raise the awareness of the ShipServ brand among our target audience; to increase traffic to shipserv.com by 50% in three months; and to engage with the audience and start to build community. And marketers working for this campaign faced two main challenges, limited budget and conservative target audience.

ShipServ firstly launched the ShipServ Maritime Trading Network Group on LinkedIn in December 2008 to keep in touch with clients; then it joined five other maritime groups on LinkedIn; marketers also launched a ShipServ Blog as a container for opinion pieces; they also underpinned website with “lead nurturing” system (from Marketo), which is the process of building relationships with qualified prospects, helping create consistent and meaningful communication with customers and measure every interaction and optimize results; they developed six themes, each of which manifested itself into different orientations: a discussion posting on the LinkedIn groups, and a social media release, distributed via PitchEngine.

As the result, visitors on website went up by 59% (increase in quantity); page views went up by 70% (increase in quality); average spending time on site went up by 25% (increase in quality); LinkedIn and Twitter went from zero to being in top traffic sources; number of leads passed to sales increased by 400% (by August 2009).

This is a good example of using social media as a low cost marketing campaign platform and tool to build brand awareness and the relationship with clients, especially encourage engagement.

Case 8 American Express OPEN

American Express OPEN (AEOPEN) is the division of American Express with services targeting on small businesses and help them to manage their expenses, and the company also provides corporate cards for members. It opened a new online community, OPEN Forum, an online resource and networking site for business owners. This site was designed to build up meaningful business connections and provide practical, actionable information and insights from influential bloggers, industry leaders, and savvy entrepreneurs. Jason Rudamn, the director of strategy and marketing for American Express OPEN, unveiled the goal of AEOPEN in its social media marketing strategy when he was interviewed—this online community is to “engage business owner in a new set of experiences that increase loyalty, value perception, and relevance of our brand and continue to lead in the online engagement space to attract partners, so as to ultimately create additional compelling benefits for Cardmembers and convert prospects”.

The core part of the new OPEN Forum is the ConnectodexSM, a functional tool for AEOPEN Cardmembers that enables them to market their business, find vendors and build relationships. This ConnectodexSM makes OPEN Forum stands out from other competing social networking sites because it allows members to make meaningful business connections. The recommendation engine can help users find businesses with similar interests or similar geographies, and connect with members that may offer complimentary services and expertise. The site also includes a blog with frequently updated content, and a large collection of videos that users can rate and share via other social networking channels. Forum members can also contact with industry experts in the “Idea Hub”.

To measure the success of OPEN Forum programs, they keep track on the engagement and soliciting feedback. The measure of engagement is on two dimensions—both content and the business interaction among Cardmembers. Besides, there are also a set of metrics to focus on monthly, such as unique

visitors, repeat visits, time spent on the site, new enrollments, etc.. Business owners can also receive the latest news from OPEN Forum by following them on Twitter.

The social site was considered to be successful according to its fast growth—it owns increasing unique visitors 525% over 2009—from 160,000 in December 2008 to nearly 1 million in December 2009.

With valuable information and meaningful business connection, AEOPEN keeps its customers (small business owners and entrepreneurs) to stay in OPEN Forum. In AEOPEN's social media marketing plan, the company stands behind its online community administration; instead, what they provides is the sophisticated and valuable services for most business owners and entrepreneurs.

Website www.VizEdu.com created a model which could explain the role OPEN Forum plays in AEOPEN's marketing strategy. With this forum, AEOPEN can easily build up brand equity; the more important effort is that it can help AEOPEN acquire new customers and customer's loyalty.

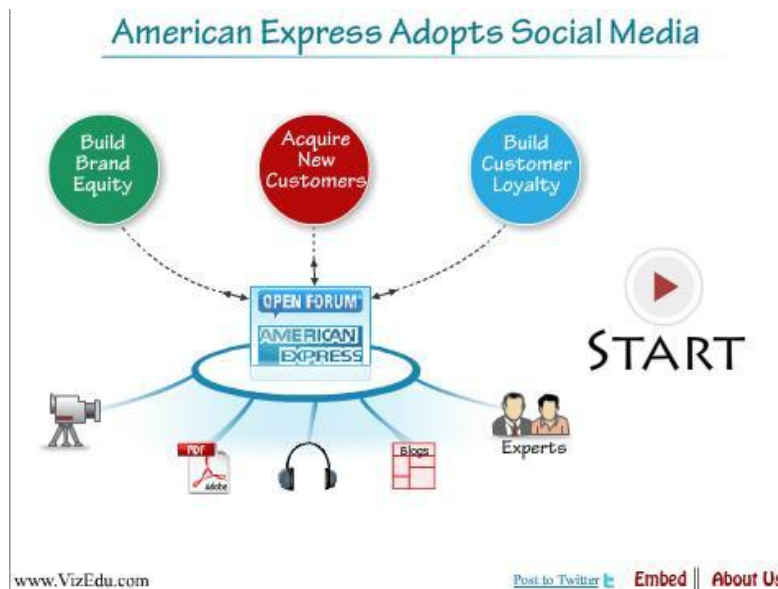


Figure 13: American Express Open Forum model (www.VizEdu.com)

6. Analysis

Basing on the presentation of eight cases, analysis within same business type group and across business types was executed to find out and verify the potential pattern existing in business social media marketing.

Eight social media marketing campaign cases were chosen across industries, in order to find out that if there is any social media utilization pattern within same business type—for example, which type of social media fits more in certain type of businesses marketing strategy, which will be identified from companies' successful marketing experience. To get meaningful result, first, we need to prove that all eight cases are the successful social media utilization examples.

In each story, company has different strategy when utilizing social media as a marketing channel. All marketing strategies were designed to reach its business goal. This makes it more difficult to measure the success of social media utilization.

6.1 Social media measurement:

There is still not any standardized way to measure the success of social media; however, many people tried to use some valuable metrics to in the success measurement:

1. Traffic

Traffic, as a social media measurement metric, normally means the visitors' number or web page hits number. With big number of visiting number, company gains brand exposure among potential customers. This is one of the obvious ways of measuring social media, because many marketers believe in that "quantity" often can beat "quality".

2. Customer engagement

Customer engagement is one of the most important of all metrics in business environment. Engagement can take place offline and online, both on business websites and social networking sites. Customer engagement can improve their understanding of the brand and business, and also build up customer loyalty. On social media, customers are encouraged to get involved into marketing campaign activities. At the same time, user-generated content is another method how customers engage into business marketing process. In addition, customers spreading marketing campaign information, transmitting video links to each other are also treated as a part of customer engagement. Thus, the active customer engagement is another metric to measure the success of marketing on social media. And the numbers of user-generated content, transmitted links and comments can be used to measure and evaluate the effort of social media marketing campaign.

Sometimes, in marketing measurement, different metrics can lead to different results. This divergence might cause a complexity when researcher wants to do a transverse comparison and analysis between different companies. Besides, within one company, its marketing strategy doesn't always rely on one channel; instead, company prefers to use a marketing portfolio including various channels, such as TV,

newspaper and internet, in order to reach more target group. This directly leads to that the return on one marketing channel cannot be separated from the total turnover. However, no matter which metrics were chosen to measure company's social media marketing strategy, there is still one thing which can be set down for measurement. When companies make social media marketing strategy, they always have a clear tactic about social media choice and the goal they want to achieve in this campaign. Thus, this goal could be an efficient metric to measure the marketing campaign. And marketers can also conclude that if they have success in marketing work. In this study, eight cases have different business goals—to expand customer relationship, to raise brand exposure, or to build up brand image, etc.. However, in each case, it was always considered to be successful by marketing team in company, which means that each marketing campaign at least reached the business goal. Hence, those cases could be considered as successful social media marketing examples.

6.2 Case analysis

Different business types need different marketing strategies according to their product or service types, and also their clients' types, which has been discussed in earlier research. Again:

B2C providing product— faces a big group of customers (end users). With the large number of users and physical goods as product, a clear brand and product image can increase brand awareness, which will lead to the increase of sales number. So this type of business needs to build up strong product and brand image.

B2C providing service—first, it needs to build up brand awareness to its large number of customer group; at the same time, with the feature of “service”, this group of businesses needs also to keep good contact and relationship with customers, thus, customers can have better understand of their service content.

B2B providing product—to compare with B2C providing product, this type of businesses can also build up a strong brand image to clients; however, since their business clients are also companies, the relationship with clients plays an very important role in purchase process. So they also need to focus on building up strong customer relationship in marketing strategy.

B2B providing service—this is the business type which has strong rely on customer relationship. So to build up strong customer relationship will be the goal in marketing strategy.

This research aimed on finding out the connection between social media type and different business types' marketing strategies: are there differences across businesses in their choice of social media activities for online marketing and if there are differences, what might explain why certain business types chose certain social media activities?

6.2.1 B2C companies providing products

In those cases, National Geographic and Ford are two companies aiming on end users, in another word, B2C, providing products. Two companies have some clear difference in terms of product types:

1. National Geographic provides TV programs and magazines as main products; most TV programs and some magazines can be spread over internet. The feature of its products differentiates its own business from Ford Company's product, car, existing as a tangible object.

2. Their products also have difference on price and purchase way. National Geographic's magazine has much lower price than a car, thus, its readers can be more easily to be convinced due to its low price. At the same time, magazine issues every month; that means readers could switch magazines every month if they are not satisfied with the content; and they can even buy more than one magazine in one month. Contrarily, as a car buyer, people always want to get more information before they decide to choose a product. And most car buyers only can purchase one car within many years, so they are more rational when they choose a car than they buy a magazine.

Due to those main differences on products, National Geographic and Ford need to make different marketing strategies to create their own brand to target customers. National Geographic chose to use social media channels such as Facebook, especially blog to build up its brand image. According to Kaplan and Haenlein's classification (2009), blog is a media channel with low media richness and social presence medium but with really high self-presentation and disclosure ability; YouTube and MySpace were used as main platforms to share TV programs with audiences; National Geographic also used the strong connection feature on Facebook to gather readers and spread its brand image. In its marketing strategy, What National Geographic reveals to readers is not a flat magazine; instead, they used various social media channels to expose its brand and product content, thus, more potential readers can learn about the brand, "National Geographic" and the content behind the brand over social media sites.

Ford Company also successfully created brand image in its social media marketing campaign "Jewel in the Crown". In the campaign, Ford used social media as the only channel and "word-of-mouth" as the key strategy to created big amount of buzz. Like the data showed before, "11 million social networking impressions (exposure)", "more than 11,000 videos and more than 13,000 photos posted", and "5 million pieces of sharing and receiving information on social networks". The new car brand, "Fiesta" was spread without any investment on traditional media channels. Many channels were adopted in that campaign, blogs, YouTube, Flickr, etc.. There is a common feature among those social media sites. They have strong functionality for users to do self-presentation and spread information.

6.2.2 B2B companies providing service

ShipServ and American Express OPEN are two B2B companies providing different services. Mainly, ShipServ provides an e-business platform, and American Express OPEN serves clients, which are mostly small business owners and entrepreneurs, with financial services. With the assumption, two companies both have the clear characteristics in the group of "B2B providing service". That means they rely more on building up relationship in their business, especially for marketing strategy. In another word, to build up more business contacts with new clients and keep firm relationship with current clients is a main part of marketing campaign.

In ShipServ's case, they find out that the big groups of clients are on social networking site LinkedIn; thus, they construct a platform, "ShipServ Maritime Trading Network Group" on LinkedIn where they can keep

efficient touch with clients. Within social media environment, they created conversation with target clients; in addition, they also used marketing optimizing system to help keep consistent and meaningful communication with customers. On the other side, American Express OPEN uses their forum as a platform where customers can communicate with business idea and ask for business suggestions. American Express OPEN expands customer relationships by the new membership enrollment and they keep customer retention by serving a good online business communication environment.

6.2.3 Comparison between different business types

Those two groups of businesses, B2C companies providing products and B2B companies mainly providing service, locate in two contrary blocks in the business model matrix, which means they have different concentration in marketing strategy. B2C companies, such as National Geographic and Ford, have clearer image for products, magazines and cars, which can easily deliver brand information to customers. On the other side, their customers are mostly end users of the products, who rely less on the relationship with salesman when they decide to buy products. What they care are the brand, reputation and their understanding behind the brand. This bond makes National Geographic and Ford have an inclination on building up clear brand and product image in marketing campaign. Ford's "Jewel in the Crown" aroused a large amount of "word-of-mouth" among potential customers. This is a process to create brand exposure and awareness, which will eventually become to be sales number. In this business process, social media such as blogs and YouTube can be efficient channel to spread out information. Beside, both companies used social networking sites such as Facebook in marketing campaign. Because customers have strong connection between each other, and "word-of-mouth" between friends is a strong drive force for most customers, such social media platforms can be assistant social media tools to build up wider brand awareness.

Compare to those companies, B2B companies providing services such as ShipServ and American Express OPEN chose different social media marketing tools in their strategy. Network group on LinkedIn, used by ShipServ; and forum, used by American Express OPEN, both are two-way-communication social media channels. In which, ShipServ's network focuses on expanding new relationships; and American Express OPEN Forum, on the other side, focuses on keeping contact with clients and improving online information service. This choice of marketing strategy and social media basically was decided by the feature of companies and the service they provided. Two companies are both located in the same block with strong relying on relationship in their marketing process; hence, "relationship building" focused social media platforms would fit better in their social media marketing strategy.

Those four cases unveiled a pattern when businesses use social media as marketing tool. When business needs to build up brand and raise brand exposure, they prefer to use social media sites which focuses on self-presenting and delivering information, such as blog, YouTube and Flickr; when companies' marketing strategies concentrate on expanding relationship with customers, social networking sites, such as LinkedIn and online forum, community are preferable options. In addition, social networking media such as Facebook, contains the usability on both dimensions on building up brand image and relationship. The reason can be explained with its feature. First, as a social network, it can help business to listen to customers' voice, and gather feedback; at the same time, because of its huge user base and the strong

connection between Facebook users, an interesting video clip, or a piece of exciting news can be easily spread up by “word-of-mouth”.

In other cases, such as Air France-KLM’s marketing strategy, this pattern can also be proved. Air France-KLM, as a service providing company, mainly faces private customers. According to former research, they need to both build up clear brand image and also keep good relationship with customers. So in the social media utilization, first they applied an online community, Bluenity, to provide customers chances getting to know more people who take same flight or go to the same destinations. For more information and better service, they also offer links to hotel online reservation and trip suggestion. With membership administration, Air France-KLM can learn more about customers’ behavior and need; thus, they offer customers better service as a return. This Bluenity is a portal where Air France-KLM can learn customers and build up long relationship. With more interesting connection with other members, customers can share, create content such as photos and videos, which is another way to increase customers’ involvement, and enhance customers’ retention eventually. Air France-KLM, as a company directly facing end customers, also pays attention on building up its brand image and awareness. Thus, they started another campaign with a branded game “Fly For Fortune”. Along with the widely spread game, its brand, which is embedded within the game, was also transmitted among potential customers.

There are two companies in computer and IT industry in those cases, Intel and Serena Software Inc.. Although both are B2B companies, they have different products—Intel provides tangible products, hardware; while, Serena Software Inc.’s products are relatively more intangible, software. Hence, they chose different strategies on the way building up brand image. Intel directly used blogs and video channel on YouTube to present the company’s update, new technology and innovation, which is “visible” for its clients. On the other side, Serena Software Inc also chose video clip as a tool to create brand buzz. Their product, Mashup, is obscure for potential customers, so they made an interesting video with beeping up all the key words, “mashup”, to draw mass attention. And this video gained high hits rate on YouTube and also was transmitted between blogs, which was also considered to be a successful brand building up case. Two cases, again, interpreted that self-presentation content on blog and video channel such as YouTube is a good way to build up direct brand and product image.

Amazon, a B2C company providing online shopping service, chose very similar strategy and social media tool with Air France-KLM, which was categorized into the same block in business matrix, and also Intel and American Express OPEN, which are located in two other different blocks. They all used online community (forum) as a main tool to expand and keep customer relationship.

7. Findings and discussion

New findings were revealed in this chapter, which is the connection between social media tools and online marketing strategies for different business types. Also, researcher explained the implication on both theory and practitioner; and his research ambitious in future.

7.1 Discussion

In the description of cases, we can easily find out the common part which companies share in their marketing strategies, as well as the difference on marketing focus. Some companies chose social media tools, such as blogs and video sharing channels to directly increase brand and product disclosure and exposure. The marketing campaign of Ford is a good example of this strategy. They didn't only use company's official site to raise product awareness; at the same time, thousands of "volunteers" helped them to create "buzz" and spread brand information over internet and social media platforms. On the other hand, companies try to increase customer involvement and interactivity. They build up a network, where customers can create, share contents, or get support from company. The online community from Air France-KLM and American Express Open can be convincing examples. Thus, eight companies can be categorized into three main groups in terms of emphasis on marketing strategies:

1. Building up product and brand image. Two B2C companies which provide products, National Geographic and Ford are in this group. And two companies both executed marketing campaigns and activities to increase the brand awareness.
2. Building up customer relationship. Two B2B companies which provide service to clients, ShipServ and American Express Open are in this group. Those two companies chose to provide platforms for customers where customers can have more interactivity with companies and communicate with each other. In another word,
3. Building up both brand image and customer relationship. B2C companies providing service and B2B companies providing product are in this group. In their marketing strategy, companies used social media tools to increase brands exposure and awareness; on the other side, they concentrated on the interactivity with customers.

This classification of marketing strategy type can be shown in following figure:

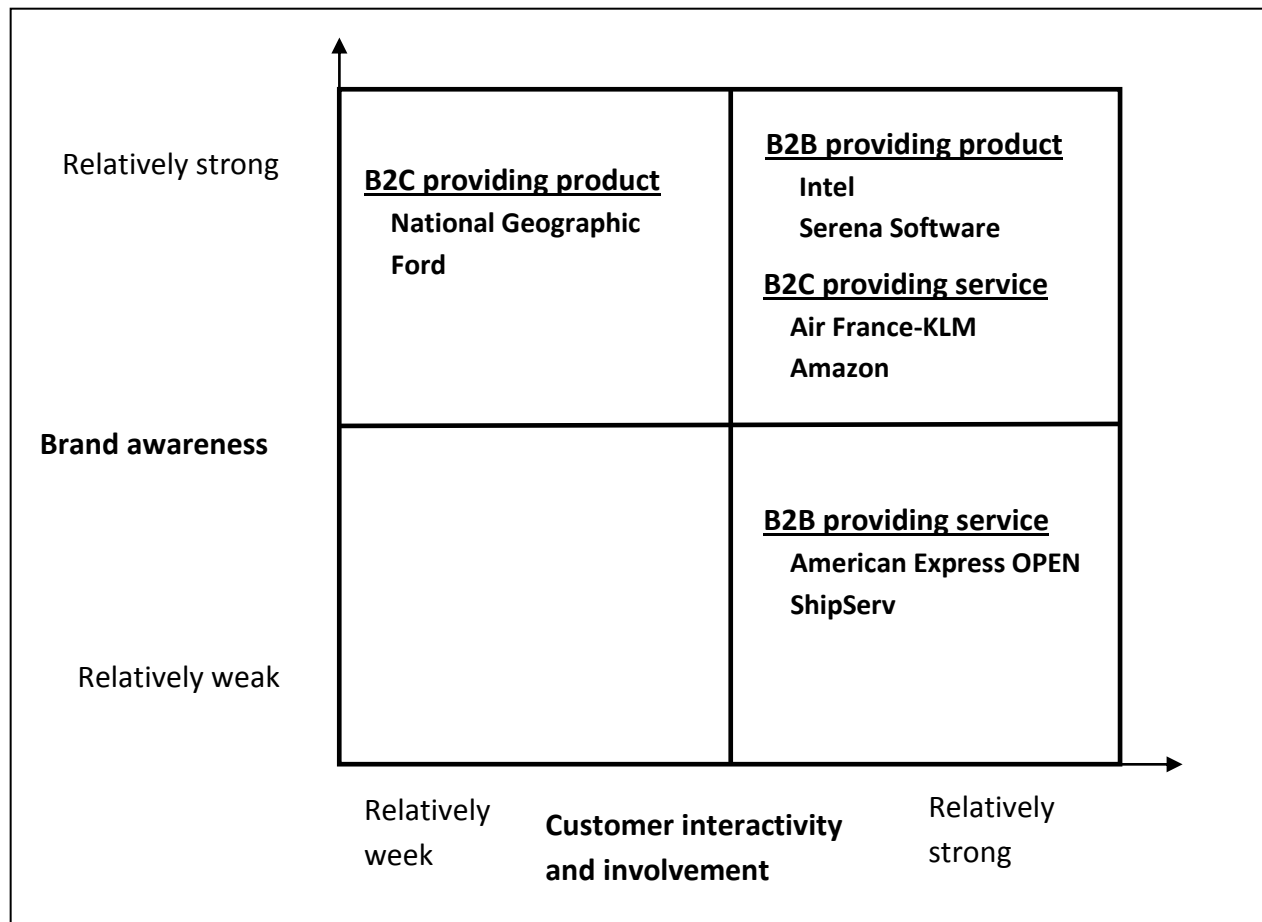


Figure 14: Marketing strategy classification of different business types

Different social media platforms also have different features, which has been explained before. In business marketing cases, social media platforms were used in different business strategies because of their features and functions. Hence, social media activities can also be categorized with those two axes basing on their functions—"brand awareness" and "customer interactivity and involvement". In those social media applications, blogs are mainly for self-presentation, which can be an efficient tool for companies to release information and create brand image. Communities and forums focus on providing users a place where to share experience, ideas and get support from companies, and also, companies can keep in touch and communicate to users. On social networking sites, users have strong connection between each other and easily spread information, and companies can build up a platform to gather fan users. Twitter provides companies a platform to release updates, where users can discuss and follow companies' news. YouTube allows users to upload self-made videos, where users can have high involvement and it also allows companies to post videos about new products. With different features, those social media types are located into different blocks in the following graph:

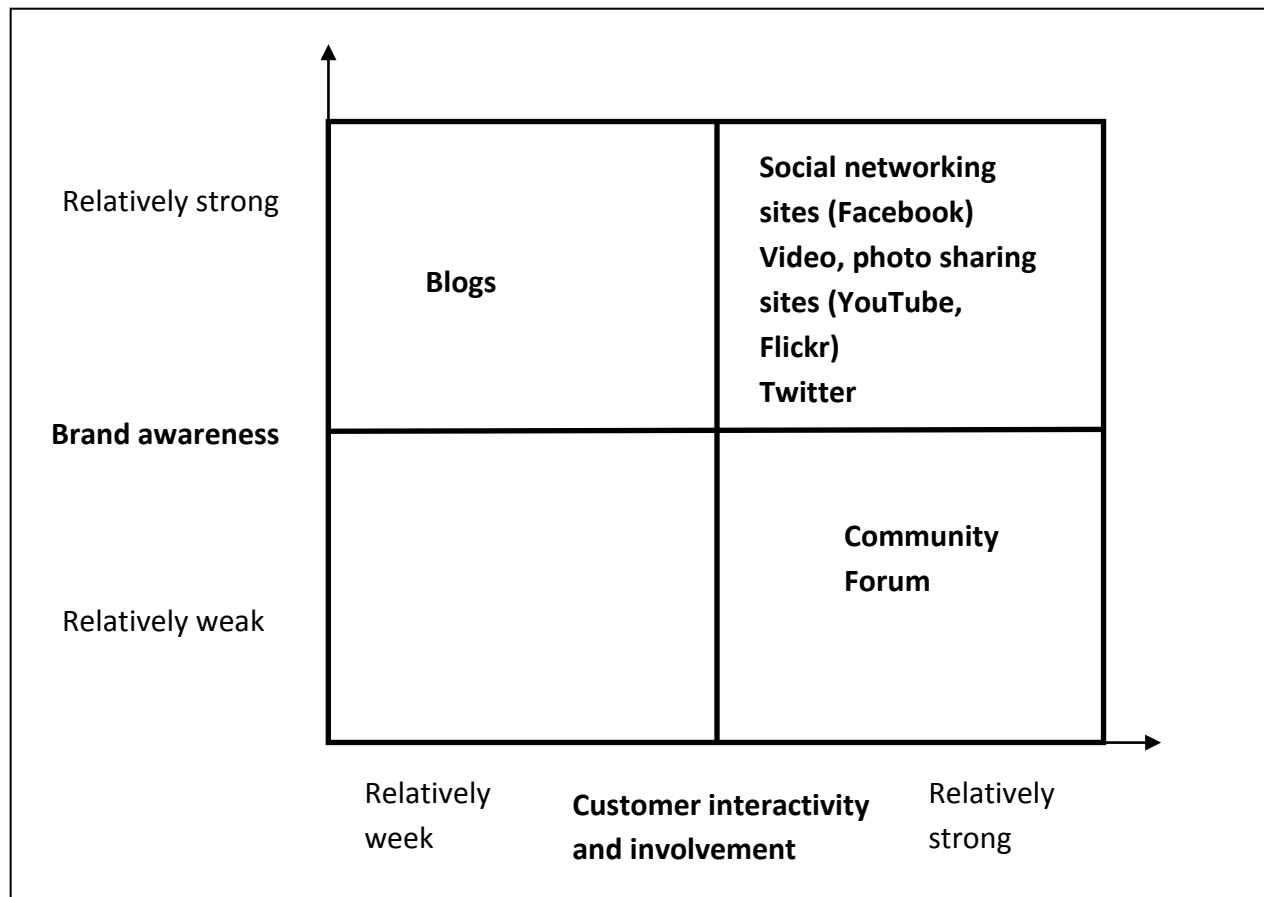


Figure 15: Classification of social media in business marketing

7.2 Finding

To combine two figures, the connection between different social media type and business types can be defined:

1. Companies which need to build up brand awareness can use social media which has strong function on “brand awareness”.
2. Companies which need to increase customer interactivity and involvement can use social media which has strong function on “customer interactivity and involvement”.

This pattern can be used as a guideline for businesses when they start to design for a marketing campaign or strategy, which is shown as (Figure 16):

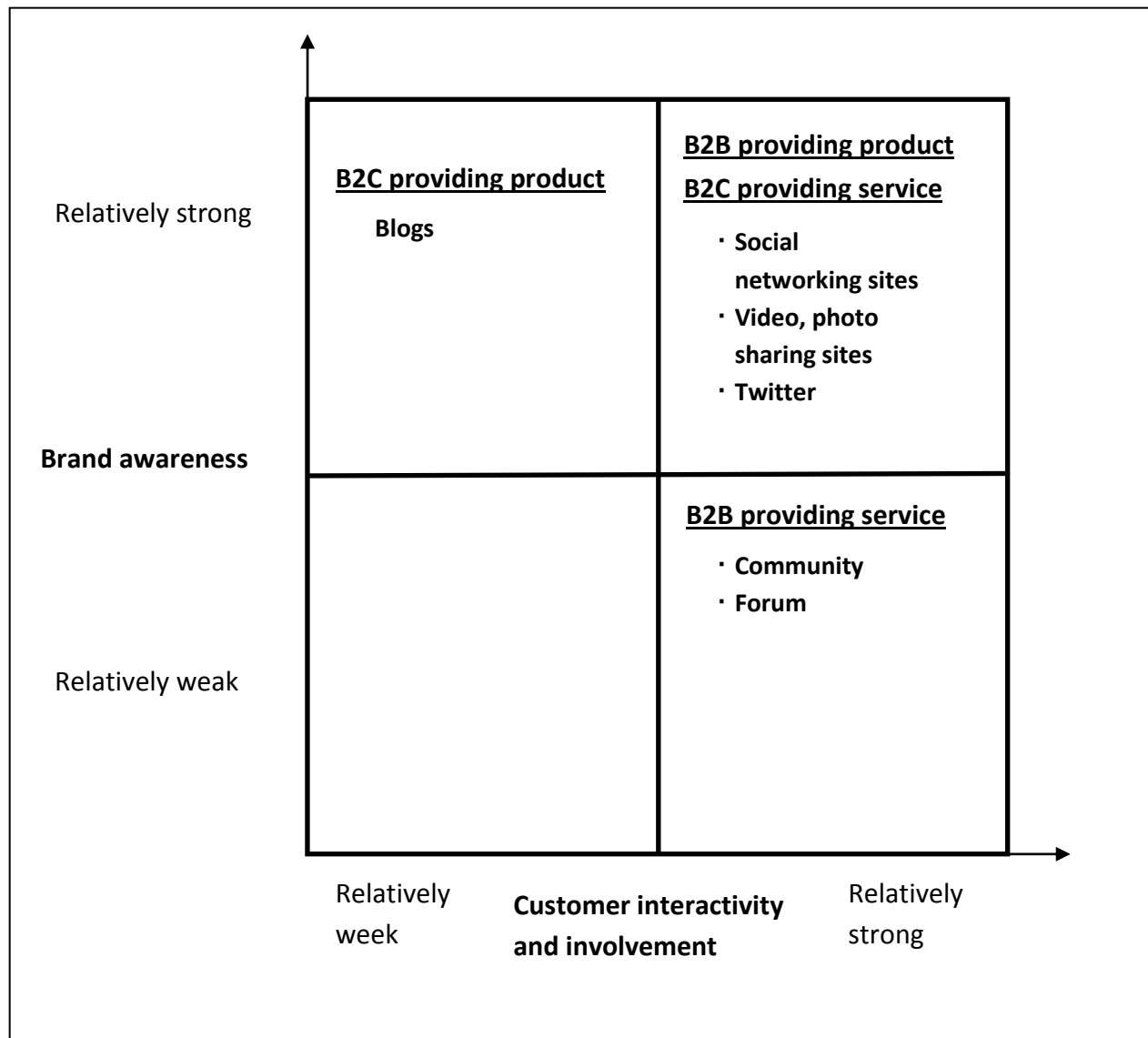


Figure 16: Model of different social media and business type

7.3 Implication

7.3.1 Implication for theory

Social media was always isolated by functions, such as blog, micro-blog, and social networking site and so on. The finding in this research connects social media with different business types. Different social media types are no more only defined by functions; instead, they were also grouped into two main classifications—to increase awareness and to increase interactivity and user involvement by their own function features. This finding enriches the classification theory of social media and also provides theory proof for the research on social media types in future.

7.3.2 Implication for practitioner

More and more companies start to use social media as marketing channel; and it is getting more often to see business marketing campaign and promotion no matter on Facebook, YouTube, or Twitter; however, many companies still fail to make a successful online marketing strategy to reach the right audience and business goal. The choice of social media has two main principles:

1. Using the right social media channel to reach target group of customers.

For example, in ShipServ case, if they did not build up the social network on LinkedIn, where their business clients stay and communication; instead, they chose to use Facebook as the marketing platform—although Facebook has much bigger number of users, their marketing campaign probably cannot reach as many audience as they achieved now; and they would not have an efficient business network. Social media platform is just a tool or a channel to communicate with customer; and choosing right channels to reach the target group is the first step on winning a campaign.

2. Using the right social media channel to cater to the business type.

Different business type has a different business model, which means companies with different business types have various focuses and goals in marketing process. As the description before, business having other business as customers (B2B) concentrates on building up more business relationship with clients and business which has end users as customers (B2C) concentrates on increase brand and product image exposure. Thus, they need to choose right social media channel for different purpose.

The research studied on eight successful social media marketing cases, and tried to find out if there is a pattern how social media can fit different business models in their marketing strategy. The finding can hopefully be used as a guideline by marketers and help them with the choice of social media platforms when they start to make business social media marketing strategy.

7.4 Further research

During the research, I find out a phenomenon with social media utilization across industries, that it seems businesses in certain industries have more interest than businesses in other industries, for examples, media or entertainment industry and high technology or IT industry. No matter how many successful social media marketing examples exist, there are still more and more new businesses starting to launch online marketing campaigns in the same industry. In contrary, some industries, such as construction mechanism manufacturer businesses, barely use social media as marketing tool. I assume the reason to be:

1. Product (service)

Because of the product, media or entertainment businesses, such as National Geographic or other music record companies can easily get rid of limitation on physical goods; instead, they build up an online purchase system where customers can browse, learn and buy products.

2. Internet

Social media marketing totally relies on the development of internet and computer. In some countries, social media is limited by the lag of internet construction, which decides that businesses cannot choose social media as an efficient channel for marketing strategy.

3. Customer

The more important reason is the customer—if the customers stay on social media. For IT and Airline industries, they have a big group of customers who are active on different types of social media sites. So businesses in those industries choose to go where their customers stay, instead of to gather customers to their main website. On the other side, some traditional industry business clients are not social media users, which means businesses cannot reach their customer over social media platforms. This makes the main reason why they don't consider social media as a good marketing channel; instead, they still focus on traditional marketing strategy to reach target customer group.

Because of those reasons, the finding in this research might not be able to be a standard across all industries. Still, it can be treated as a theoretical business model for new coming businesses. Social media and internet still show an increasing trend all over the world. So I believe along with its development, more and more people will get involved into different social media types sooner or later. Thus, businesses in some industries will have more options to make marketing strategy, to use social media, traditional media, or a combination.

Hence, in the further research, I am willing to find out how social media can affect more and more industries; if there is any change on the way how businesses use social media in marketing strategy; and if current finding still can be applied into all industries. And with further research, this study could be enriched then.

8. Conclusion

As the end part of this article, this chapter summarized the findings in this research, which might be used in business social media marketing strategy.

Social media, with its fast growing speed, has drawn more and more attentions. Thus, not just being used as a communication channel, social media is also being utilized for many other purposes, for example, marketing channel.

More and more companies have seen the big chance for marketing on social media, so they start to use social media as a part of marketing strategy portfolio, aiming to reach customers who stay on different types of social media platforms.

TV, radio and newspaper, as main tool in business marketing, has been existed for many years, which now are named as traditional media channels to distinguish from social media marketing type. Social media can suddenly draw so much attention from businesses because of its unique features. No matter the customer involvement or marketing process immediacy, social media makes businesses chances to create more various marketing strategy.

Businesses have made thousands of social media marketing cases all over the world. However, some were really successful and others failed to achieve business goals. This tells us that social media channel is not a guarantee for a successful marketing strategy. A company still needs to make research before they start to use social media as marketing tool. In various social media marketing types, marketers first need to choose the right platform in their marketing strategy. The match between social media and business is decided by two main factors: the type of social media and company's business model.

This study chose 8 successful social media marketing cases, and aimed to find out the potential connection between social media type and business model—the rule about how companies can use one or several right social media type to fit their business model in marketing campaigns.

The finding in this paper firstly explained different features of different business models, especially the key factor in marketing process. In those four identified business models:

B2B providing service—focuses on building up relationship.

B2B providing product—aims to build up a clear image for product and also the relationship which is important in B2B purchase process.

B2C providing service—builds up clear brand image to draw customers' attention and strong relationship to enhance customers' retention.

B2C providing product—tries to use strong and clear brand and product image to gain target customer group.

On the other side, different social media types also have different features, which have been proved in former research. Some social media has strong connecting ability between users, such as social networking sites and communities; and some social media, such as blogs and video sharing channels have the advantage to do self-presentation and deliver information to customers.

In cases, ShipServ and American Express OPEN are typical B2B companies providing services to clients. They used social networking site and forum as marketing tools, which can help company keep contact with clients and also build up relationship with new clients by bringing them extra benefits. National Geographic and Ford, as the representatives of B2C companies providing products, emphasized on blogs, video and photo sharing channels to disclose brand and product image. This social media utilization pattern can also be found in other four business cases.

In addition, social networking sites such as Facebook, because of its huge customer base and the strong connection between users, are always used by different companies for different marketing goals. Some businesses use social networking as a main platform to gain new customers and keep customers relationship; however, some other companies use social networking as an assistant tool in marketing strategy to spread information. The finding (shown in figure 16) unveiled the connection between social media tools and different business types. Businesses in future, can try to use this finding as a guideline on the choice of social media tool, in order to create more efficient and effective online marketing strategy.

A successful social media marketing campaign can help a company win both new market share and higher brand awareness. However, not every company could be successful and achieve their goal in marketing process. Companies need to match their characteristics, for example business type, with certain social media tools. Hopefully, the finding about “how social media fits different business models” in this article can contribute when businesses want to use social media in new marketing strategy or to adjust the existing marketing campaigns.

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TRITA-CSC-E 2011:032
ISRN-KTH/CSC/E--11/032-SE
ISSN-1653-5715