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B2B Branding on Social Media

Is the B2B organization ready to become the social organization?

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Abstract

Artiklen undersøger, hvordan en B2B-virksomhed kan benytte sig af branding på sociale medier med henblik på at skabe og vedligeholde stærke kunderelationer. Emnet er fundet interessant, da tidligere undersøgelser påpeger adskillige muligheder for B2B-virksomheder at brande sig på. Mange værktøjer kan bruges, men det er især værd at fremhæve mulighederne via interaktive teknologier i takt med internettets dominerende position. På trods af de mange muligheder, viser det sig, at de fleste B2B-virksomheder oplever barrierer med implementeringen af sociale medier i deres brandingstrategi, hvilket er resultatet af manglende viden inden for området. Denne artikel bidrager til en forståelse af et organisatorisk perspektiv på sociale medier, men fokus vil være på, hvordan en B2B-kunde opfatter vigtigheden af sociale medier i en B2B-kontekst, da gode kunderelationer er altafgørende for en B2B-virksomhed. Den empiriske data er opsamlet direkte fra en casevirksomheds egne kunder i form af et udsendt spørgeskema via egne sociale kanaler, hvilket er blevet analyseret og diskuteret i et sammenspil med B2B-branding og teorier og undersøgelser inden for sociale medier. Resultaterne bidrager til en ny forståelse af, hvilke overvejelser B2B-organisationer burde gøre sig, når det kommer til at inddrage nye markedsføringsformer, og hvilken effekt dette kan have på deres fremtræden og forhold til deres nuværende og potentielle kunder.

INTRODUCTION – THE DIGITAL ERA

The past decade has been dominated by a digital transformation, which has driven marketing professionals to communicate in different ways with current and potential customers (Lacka & Chong, 2016). Formerly, organisations were in control of their own brand, but concurrently with the multidirectional sharing of information on the internet, consumers are now given more options to voice their praises or complaints towards organisations as well as the space for the exchange of *electronic word of mouth*. (E-WOM) (Cawsey & Rowley, 2016) Today social media is the source of information that consumers find the most trustworthy. Therefore, the platforms are now used to gather information about organisations' products and services (Foux, 2006). However, consumers are now more likely to trust each other than the organisation, which had led to organisations losing control of their brand and the information that exists about them (Michaelidou et al., 2011).

The change in communicating online has replaced the traditional “push” information model with the “pull” experience model, since people are now immune to pushy sales messages, but are more likely to seek the information they need themselves (Mihalcea & Savulescu, 2013). The age of social media has brought the consumer in the centre, why organisations should prioritise the need to listen and be aware of the consumers by engaging in dialog and discussions as well as showing honesty and transparency by communicating openly and humanly (Karjaluo et al., 2015). Therefore, organisations have increased their online appearance rapidly due to the popularity of social media (Michaelidou et al., 2011). Even with the digital change, several businesses still hesitate to adapt to the digitalization. However, it is not a question of work approach, but the state of mind that needs to be changed (Damsgaard, 2017).

FORMER RESEARCH

Research shows that many *business-to-consumer* (B2C) organisations have adapted to the change of communicating, but *business-to-business* (B2B) organisations are left behind with doubts about the utilisation of social media (Damsgaard, 2017). This bears witness to that while various organisations are present online, still several experiences barriers when adapting to the conditions of social media. Research of organisations on social media has mostly been directed towards the B2C market, when research remains limited in regard to B2B organisations' use of social media (Lipiäinen & Karjaluo, 2015). According to Habibi et al. (2015) it is caused by the general latency of implementing social media in a B2B context. However, as more customers rely on social media as their source of

information, research indicates that B2B organisations could benefit from an online presence, because they have the ability to streamline their marketing activities, engage with the potential and current customers directly and strengthen the relations (Andersson & Wickström, 2017).

Conversely, B2B activities on social media are more appropriate for soft marketing, for instance *brand awareness* and *brand building*, instead of a sales channel (Järvinen et al., 2012). Building an online brand presence is now increasingly important for B2B organisations, since a two-way interaction with stakeholders is an indicator for success in the digital arena (Cawsey & Rowley, 2016). The online brand activities have been found to give the buyer a greater feeling of assurance of the product, which leads to trustworthy brand and a greater confidence of a long customer relationship (Glynn, 2012). The main purpose of the online presence for B2B organisations is to create *brand awareness* in order to attract new customers and maintain current relations, which relates to a new shape of relationship marketing in the digital arena. Consequently, the B2B organisation has to transform into the *social organisation* in order to create a successful appearance on social media and should value conversation more than traditional communication (Have, 2013). Therefore, it is interesting to look deeper into the correlation between *relationship marketing* via *branding* on social media in a B2B context.

CLARIFICATION OF CONCEPTS

The article contains various of concepts within communication and social media, which is why the most important concepts are clarified in order to provide a preunderstanding of the succeeding article.

Concepts	Clarification
Social Network sites	“Web-based services that allow individuals to construct a public or semi-public profile within a bounded system, articulate a list of other users with whom they share a connection, and view and traverse their list of connections and those made by others within the system (Boyd & Ellison, 2008, p. 211).
B2B	Business-to-business is rereferred to as B2B. B2B organisations sell products or services to other businesses in the industrial market (Gordon, 2013).
Content	When content is mentioned it is referred to as the <i>content</i> that organisations create and share on their social network sites.
Shares, reach & hashtag	When shares and reach are mentioned it is with a view to social media if a user has shared the content and how many people the post has reached on social media. A hashtag is “a word or phrase preceded by a hash mark (#), used within a message to identify a keyword or topic of interest and facilitate a search for it” (Dictionary.com, n.d.).

Awareness	Awareness is mentioned in relations to brand awareness, which refers to people's knowledge of a brand.
E-WOM	Electronic Word-of-Mouth is referred to as E-WOM. WOM marketing on social network sites provides venues for the customers to share their views, preferences or experiences with others (Trusov et al., 2009).
Relationship marketing	Relationship marketing focusses on creating and maintaining valuable relational exchanges towards prospect and current customers, which is important to B2B organisations (Gordon, 2013).
Thought leadership	Organisations have the ability to position themselves as a thought leader, which is one of the benefits of social media. This is done through strategic use of social media where one should engage clients and participate in online conversations where the target group are online (Monesson, 2014).

Figure 1: Clarification of concepts

PART 1) RESEARCH BACKGROUND

CONTENT MARKETING

Content marketing is relevant to introduce, since digital content is important when creating a strong brand on social network sites in order to create positive relations to customers. Brand information on static company websites are history, and the current social network universe has replaced the traditional “push” information with the “pull” model in Web 2.0. The rise of the digital era now involves people in the content process, which they actively participate in (Mihalcea & Savlulesco, 2013). The social network sites as Facebook, Twitter and Instagram rely on the power of content, which is based on information sharing. Relevant and fascinating content encourages interaction and fan retention in the case of companies, which is essential when working with social network sites (Mihalcea & Savlulesco, 2013, p. 42). Digital platforms as social media have made content marketing a key element of inbound marketing, as an understanding of content is essential for engaging customers which provides higher levels of trust (Holliman & Rowley, 2014). The definition of content marketing is based on Holliman and Rowley's (2014) definition:

“The creation and distribution of educational and/or compelling content in multiple formats to attract and/or retain customers.” (Holliman and Rowley, 2014, p. 270)

The definition is made to capture the use of digital content by a B2B organisation as a means for drawing B2B customers to their online space, as website or social media presence to promote ongoing interaction and engagement with the brand community (Holliman & Rowley, 2014). Long-term relationships with customers are fundamental for B2B organisations (Kaplan & Sawhney, 2000), but the sales cycle is often long, complex and involves many participants. Qualities of valuable content contains frequency, quality and relevance as well as funny, newsworthy and inspiring, which many B2B organisations are missing, since they still consider content marketing as another way to communicate product-driven selling messages (Holliman & Rowley, 2014). Therefore, it is suggested that digital content should help the customer, build an authentic relationship through content that views it as an ongoing cultural stance, prioritise a trusted brand over sales and recognising valuable, compelling and relevant content which is useful for the customer. This is consistent with what Lipiäinen and Karjaluoto (2015) state about branding being honest, authentic and transparent. Customers desire a real relationship towards organisations, which is built through valuable and relevant content.

ENGAGEMENT AND DIALOG

In continuation of the benefits evolving from social network sites in a B2B contexts, research shows that engagement and dialog are central parts of practicing social media marketing, as it improves the relationship towards current customer relationships. Have (2013) mentions the term *engagement economy*, which is a new way of thinking compared to attention economy, which has been the mantra for the past couple of years. Engagement economy is driven through social media and technologies, which creates engagement, loyalty and cooperation. However, engagement is also the fundament of creating open source and mass collaborations, which will mobilise dedicated people in and outside the company. Organisations need to create engagement and that is what social media has prepared the ground for through this paradigm shift.

Consequently, through engagement economy, *the social organisation* is created, which adds valuable dialog to the organisations, for instance in the shape of communities. In social organisations various of ideas, talents and energies create a positive outcome and new collaborations with multiple stakeholders as partners, customers and suppliers. Social media helps the social organisation collect and link people and ideas, which leads to a whole new company culture (Have, 2013, p.41). Social media is beneficial for the social organisation as the organisation through communities is able to gather knowledge and expertise, strengthen the engagement around common interests and create actions and reactions on social media among many people worldwide. Finally, the social organisation

will through social media be able to create and maintain strong relations to customers and other stakeholders. Therefore, engagement is key in various of shapes when it comes to succeeding with social media in the digital era as a B2B organisation rely on customer relations.

MONITORING AND LISTENING

Social network sites also provide a valuable tool for monitoring conversations around the brand on the specific platforms. By monitoring the social network sites of the company, valuable information about the product and services and how customers relate to them are gained. However, not only insights into the customer's perception of the brand is provided, but social network sites are also an ideal channel for monitoring the competitor's products (Mihalcea & Savulescu, 2013). In that way, organisations have the chance of becoming an active and valuable player in the network, if they succeed in monitoring and listening to the outside world and collecting customer feedback. Therefore, B2B organisations who are not using social media nowhere near adequately, are missing out of valuable benefits towards their brand, customer relationships and valuable insights (Mihalcea & Savulescu, 2013).

MAINTAINING CUSTOMER RELATIONSHIPS

According to Day (2000) relationship marketing is important, because loyal customers are more profitable than price-sensitive customers. Furthermore, Day (2000) points out that the ability to create and maintain relationships with valuable customers is a durable basis for a competitive advantage. Therefore, organisations should pay attention to relationship marketing, as relationships are hard for competitors to understand, to copy or to displace (Day, 2000, p.24).

With multiple of network technologies that enables interactivity, organisations have motives and means for getting closer to their customers. Relationship marketing is not only the marketing activities but is carried out by all employees and all others who influence the organisation's customer relations directly or indirectly. When many people have direct or indirect influence on customers, multiple of marketing opportunities are created. Every employee are part-time marketers outside the department of marketing, as they carry out the same activities but do not belong in the marketing department. (Gummesson, 1991) Therefore, relationship marketing is an important factor for organisations operating in the industrial market, since they rely on long-term customer relationships. Everyone needs to place the customer in focus and create and maintain the relationship.

THE CUSTOMER IN CONTROL

The digital era has formed new ways of communicating digitally via social media platforms. The digital era is supported by a new and more interactive and dialog-based perception on market communication; Now consumers see themselves as more influential and are able to be involved more directly in the organisations' branding process. The digital era has formed a new analytical construction, because we are now able to analyse the interaction that social media has created. People now have the opportunity to speak online in a community. The opportunity has led to people perceiving themselves as more active, because they are able to get involved. The rise of social media has therefore forced people to interact with one another. Digital communication is marked by a newer dialogue-based approach to communication as Grunig and Hunt's model. Here, senders and receivers are equal partners seeking a mutual understanding of one another and interaction is a central player (Helder & Nørgaard, 2016).

Therefore, in an organisational view, the digital era has led customers to become a part of the branding and communication process as they now have multiple voices in this many-to-many cocreation digital landscape. Accordingly, organisations have to adapt to new circumstances when branding themselves on social media, as they cannot determine the agenda of the perception of their brand, since this is now done in a correlation with multiple stakeholders having a voice on social media platforms. It is relevant to notice the importance of how business communication once was and how it has developed over time alongside with the arise of Web 2.0 along with new ways to communicate, collaborate and share content (Michaelidou et al, 2011).

B2B CUSTOMERS' USE OF SOCIAL NETWORK SITES

The use of social media has increased remarkably, which has also spread to the B2B sector. However, the studies related to social media in a B2B context from the customer's perspective are very limited, which create confusion of how customer organisations value the industrial marketing activities on social media. Keinänen and Kuivalainen (2015) argue that the customer's use of social media is determined by the perceived usefulness and easiness. Furthermore, B2B organisations need to plan which social media services would service their communication targets to reach customers. In order to succeed with the B2B customers on social media, the companies should give the customers a reason to engage on social media, where the first step is to listen to them, find out what they like to hear and talk about, enjoy and value. The corner stone of social media is active participation. Additionally, it is highly important to recognize which social media services that activates the customers to get the best out of social media. Kaplan and Haenlein (2010) mention that if customers only prefer social

media as a source of information, then some social media activities might as well be reduced to a blog. This strategy demands time but choosing the right medium for a specific purpose depends on the target group to be reached and the message to be communicated. Therefore, it is a necessity for B2B organisations to be aware of their customers, what they enjoy, what they want and where they are present and plan their social media activities accordingly as customer relations for B2B organisations are crucial.

PART 2) RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

CASE COMPANY

The case is based on a B2B IT company that was founded in 2005 in Odense. The B2B company is internationally due to their online software systems, which defies borders. With around 30 employees, the B2B company is a medium sized company. The B2B company has a huge community which involves all kinds of stakeholders, such as web developers, partnerships and customers, which is why the community is highly important to the case company, as the community has the effect to spread positive e-WOM and relations.

SAMPLE DESCRIPTION

To test the hypothesis, a survey was conducted in cooperation with the B2B organisation's own customers and collaborators. With the customer perspective on the survey, it was possible to get insights of how B2B customers experience social media activities done by a B2B company, which could help confirm or deny the suggested theory. The survey was conducted in English as the target segment consisted of the case company's B2B customers having operations worldwide. The questionnaire was pre-tested to validate both content, questions and format before the actual survey was sent out and conducted. The survey was tested by two employees from the case company, who had insights and stakes in questions and format. The sampling frame was discussed and received by the two employees from the marketing department, who supported in sharing the survey link on the company's own social network sites (Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn), in order to reach their customers on the social network platforms.

VARIABLE MEASUREMENTS, CONSTRUCTS AND METHODS

The data was collected in the spring of 2018 in a time period of three weeks. The respondents were reached by social network sites, where they were asked to complete the survey in order to help the case company making better content and getting to know them. In order to get the target segments to answer the survey, a blogpost was made and shared on the company's social network sites. The blogpost contained content as background for the study, purpose and questions as well as the link to the survey. The survey was answered by 108 key contacts from the customer companies of the case company. The survey was made in a way to balance between the hypothesis and used theories. The questions in the survey are a combination of factual, cognitive and attitudinal, which provide a broader spectrum of answers to be analysed (Harboe, 2013).

To avoid misunderstandings, the questions were formulated in a language everybody would understand and without academic terms and theories, for instance "social media" is used instead of "social network sites". The survey consisted of 13 questions maximum depending on whether the participant followed the case company on every social media channel, meaning if a respondents only selected Twitter, the respondent would not be exposed to questions regarding Facebook or Instagram. Likewise, the questions were combination of short and long questions, open and closed. The open questions were optional with the purpose to provide a more varied answer followed from the previous question. Conversely, the closed questions demanded answer as those questions were crucial for my analysis. However, I have aimed to avoid too many open questions as the purpose of the quantitative method is measurement and it would be too comprehensive to measure open questions, instead of more statistic questions. Furthermore, it has been highly important for me to distinguish between "nice-to-know" and "must-know" questions regarding my case study research. Therefore, it has not been a necessity to be informed of the respondents' demographic information such as age, gender and residence, but rather gather knowledge about their job position and the time period of their membership of the case company community to get an understanding of the respondents. The survey questions are therefore well-defined accordingly to problem statement and selected theories. Some of the questions are repeated, when the respondents are asked what they find relevant for whether Facebook, Instagram and Twitter.

PART 3) WHAT DO B2B CUSTOMERS PREFER?

In the survey, the respondents could either choose between Facebook, Twitter and Instagram or all of the channels as used platforms to follow the case company. Afterwards, the respondents were asked to mark three relevant statements that they found relevant for the case company on each social media

channel. The table below shows which of the social network sites the respondents follow and the heatmap illustrates which statements they find the most relevant for each channel in regard to the case company. The analysis of the heatmap is also supported by answers providing an understanding *why* the respondents follow the case company on these channels, which was asked through open questions in the survey.

Which following statements do you find relevant for the case company?	Facebook Instagram Twitter		
	Facebook	Instagram	Twitter
It is relevant that the case company create dialog and engage their followers	37%	40%	53%
It is relevant that the case company is transparent and honest	51%	56%	64%
It is relevant that the case company provides good customer service	20%	16%	38%
It is relevant that the case company appears personal	41%	64%	39%
It is relevant that the case company appears professional	46%	28%	32%
It is relevant that the case company shares useful, valuable content	80%	20%	78%
It is relevant that the case company's content is visually creative	22%	56%	13%
It is relevant that the case company's tone of voice is human and emotional	46%	76%	48%
It is relevant that the case company is an active player in the network	22%	20%	45%
It is relevant that the case company is an essential source of information	27%	8%	49%
Do not agree with any statements	2%	4%	2%
Total respondents	41	25	85
Percent	38%	23%	79%

RESULTS

There is limited research related to social media in B2B from a customer perspective, which creates doubt about how customers value industrial marketing activities in social media (Keinänen & Kuivalainen, 2015). The purpose of the questions was to clarify the B2B customers' behaviour regarding their use of different social media channels in business context. The total number of respondents was 108, where it was visible that 79% followed the case company on Twitter, 38% Facebook and only 23% of the 108 respondents followed the case company on Instagram.

On Facebook and Twitter, the respondents found it most relevant for the case company to share useful and relevant content and appear honest and transparent. This could be seen in line with that the respondents perceive these two platforms as source of information, news and announcements, which

is why the case company should provide quality content. Moreover, the content shared should be transparent and honest in order to remain useful and valuable to the respondents, as these social network sites has forced organisations to communicate effectively by being transparent and honest in their messages (Lipiäinen & Karjaluo, 2015).

It was important that the case company created dialog and engagement on Twitter, which was not valued as much for the other social network sites. According to Sundstrom and Levenshus (2017), engagement have positive relational outcomes, and Twitter is a useful platform to perform user-practitioner interaction. They also recommend organisations to handle their username and hashtag to foster conversations and to build relationships. This is aligned with some of the statements, since many of the respondents use the case company hashtag to engage and communicate with other people who share the same the case company interest. Twitter invites for a social-interactive engagement and a more specific environment, where engagement fills the community uses and needs (Sundstrom & Levenshus, 2017). There was a difference when it came to the Instagram results, where 76% of the respondents found it relevant for the case company to appear human and emotional. Emotional content in B2B communication helps foster relationships, since it adds value to the product or services and leads to a sustainable differential advantage (Swani et al., 2014). It is arguable that when the case company shares human and emotional content, the community are more likely to engage as well as increasing the brand value according to Swani et al. (2014). The results also showed that 41% found the case company as a leading company within their field, where 45% did not know. This could mean that almost half of the respondents are not inspired by the case company's content, because the content is not valuable or engaging enough for their needs. This is consistent with some of the phrases regarding what the case company could improve on social media, where Facebook was mentioned a lot. Facebook seems to have been neglected, because of the lack of engagement and generic messages without an effort. Therefore, it is arguable that the respondents do not learn new things through the content, which affects their satisfaction with the case company on Facebook. Consequently, the survey shows that the community members have different priorities when it comes to the social network sites. Most of them found Twitter as the best used media, where Facebook was the media where the case company could improve. Various of the respondents missed in-depth content, which is important on Facebook. When the respondents feel like the case company is not putting an effort into every social media account, it affects their relationship to the customers, who are not on Twitter as they feel neglected. Therefore, it could be the reason that many of the respondents are in doubt when it comes to positioning the case company as a leading company within their field and 56% find their relationship to the case company slightly improved, instead of much improved. However, still many of the respondents' relationships to the case company are either improved a bit or a lot, which

indicate that the case company has done something well. This might be because of Twitter, where they get a lot of positive feedback, which is also their most used platform amongst the respondents.

PART 4) DISCUSSION

After having analysed the data material, I will in the following discuss how the case company responds to some of those norms that exist on social network sites and what the community expects in return from the case company. This is done to provide an understanding of the case company's actions in relation to the theory and examine whether there is an agreement between theory and practise. The discussion is based on the most notable analysis findings from both the interviews and the survey, which are compared to each other and with the applied theory.

ENGAGEMENT

An important part of online branding is engagement, since the rise of social network sites allows organisations to involve and interact with the customers. Also, the customers have the ability to influence the brand building process with their voice, which makes online branding multidirectional and uncontrollable for organisations today. Social network sites are important for B2B companies, because they can use social media to communicate with their customers and suppliers, build relationships and trust as well as identify prospect partners in terms of B2B selling (Michaelidou et al., 2011).

LISTEN TO THE USERS

Lipiäinen and Karjaluoto (2015) underline that the first step for organisations that want to build a trustworthy brand on social media is to be present on different channels and stay updated with the market and users. It appears from the interview analysis that the informants attempt to monitor the case company hashtag on both Instagram and Twitter with the purpose to listen to what is going on in the community. However, the case company does not use monitoring and listening as a goal to gain tactical input to their promotion or participate in the relevant conversations, which is argued to be beneficial to organisations. According to Swani et al. (2014), organisations that use for instance Twitter have the opportunity to follow their users, observe their conversations and induce two-way communication flows. They also have the ability to share information by sending tweets as well as using a hashtag to organise conversations around topics or a certain industry. In line with that it appears that the case company sees Twitter as their main platform, since it is easy to retweet and

engage with the users. In that way it looks like the case company has understood the benefits of Twitter, since they can get an insight of their community's activities. Likewise, the respondents of the survey find Twitter as the media, where the case company's activities are well-performed and is also the most used media by the users. This could be consistent with the case company appears more certain when it comes to communicating on Twitter. Thereby, the case company succeeds in satisfying the users' needs on that platform, because they actively participate with the users in that network, which creates a strong position and improved relationships (Guesalaga, 2015).

On the contrary, the case company does not use the monitoring and listening further as a strategy, even though Järvinen and Taiminen (2015) argue that listening should be used to collecting customer feedback in order to create better content and stronger relationships. This is in line with Cawsey and Rowley (2015), who suggest that monitoring and listening should be seen as a form of market research in the start phase of social media activities to learn about their customers' needs. As stated in the survey, various of the respondents felt the need to improve the activities on Facebook, because they had the perception that the case company did not put an effort into the presence there. This is in line with the informants, who find Facebook as a difficult media, because in their view it is more a B2C media and is not very social. The attitude towards social network sites is consistent to what many researchers (Michaelidou et al., 2011, Siamagka et al., 2015 & Wang et al., 2017), mention that social network sites are not appreciated by B2B organisations as much as B2C companies due to the uncertainty of the usage.

However, the case company listen to their users on different media in order to collect customer feedback, and thereby they would have known that many of their Facebook users are unsatisfied with their presence there (Swani et al., 2014). By listening to their users on every platform, they have the ability to add brand value and improved relationships. Also, the case company would have the ability to target other network actors, as decision makers, which would affect the e-WOM and position The case company as a thought leader. The case company misses out on opportunity to gain valuable knowledge about the industry and B2B customer's needs, which could be used in their branding and relationship strategies. Also, in line with listening to the customers, social network sites are an effective way to get to know the customers and their demands, which creates better relationships between customer and organisation. Therefore, a change of attitude of business communication is demanded in order to meet the customers' needs and demands (Damsgaard, 2017).

INTERACT WITH THE USERS

Organisations should not only monitor, but also engage by participating in dialogs (Lipiäinen & Karjaluoto, 2015). The case company's dialog is based on answering questions from the users, as well as engagement is seen as providing quality content (Cf. section 7.2.2.). Therefore, the case company does not make use of the opportunity to engage with the users on their social network sites, which indicate a reluctance to dialog on social media. Have (2013) suggests that social network sites have prepared the ground for engagement, which organisations need to adapt to as it improves customer relations and competitive advantages (Mälälaska et al., 2011). Compared to the statements, it seems like the case company relatively engage in dialog with users who address the company directly, but the case company does not voluntarily encourage to dialog. Have (2013) also mentions that through engagement the social organisation is created, which adds valuable dialog to the organisation, for instance in the shape of communities. The case company has a huge community, which is why they should increase engagement and intake the position as a social organisation according to Have (2013), so they can maintain their relations towards them. On the contrary to the suggested actions, the survey results show that the community have another view on engagement. When then respondents were asked what they found relevant on social media, only engagement was mentioned in regard to Twitter, which might be because of most of the users are present on Twitter. However, it could also indicate that user's value different activities depending on the social network site. This finding complements Siamagka et al. (2015) who suggest that organisations could adapt to a more focused approach where all the efforts focus on one platform in order to succeed with a more integrated use of social media. Keinänen and Kuivalainen (2015) also suggest that if users only see the social network sites as a source of information, then the organisation could limit down the amount of social network sites and focus on one. It could appear from the survey that the case company should either begin to focus on Facebook in order to create high quality content there as well, or stick to Twitter, because their activities seem to be well-reputed from the respondents' point of view.

In addition to the theoretical implications, various respondents implied that the case company could improve their activities on Facebook, especially in the shape of interaction. This could indicate that people also follow the case company on Facebook, but more are likely to follow them on Twitter, because the case company engages more with the community on that platform. This is in line with Mälälaska et al. (2011), who suggest that organisations should be active where the users are in order to enhance the brand visibility and customer relations. When the informants mention that it is difficult to target others than their developers, it might have something to do that their focus is on Twitter

where the developers are, and not on Facebook where the decision makers might be present but neglected by the case company.

In accordance to this statement, the case company should monitor and listen strategically to their users, since many of the users are unsatisfied with the case company's actions on Facebook. Therefore, the wish for improvement could be based on the case company's neglect of Facebook, since the users expect them to be present there as well. Therefore, it appears that the case company has misunderstood the value of a two-way interaction as online brand building strategy, despite the fact that interaction is what the online platform invites to. According to Mäläskä et al. (2011), the customer is the most important stakeholder for B2B organisations, and therefore interaction should be prioritised in brand building in order to create a trustworthy brand and valuable relations. Also, when involving the users in partaking on behalf of the organisation, the relations to the users become positive and the users will appear as ambassadors and create e-WOM (Damsgaard, 2017). This is in line with Swani et al. (2014) who suggest that through tweets, companies can foster relationships. It is arguable that the case company has not acknowledged all of the possibilities with the rise of social network sites, since they do not strategically listen to their users to gain industrial market insights as well as collecting customer feedback. Also, it appears that the case company only sees engagement as an action on Twitter, because they have the ability to retweet, but still does not engage to dialog with the users, because that is not prioritised. However, the case company's shortage of engagement could be caused by the lack of understanding of the utilisation and the uncertainty of the benefits for B2B organisations on social media, which becomes visible in interviews with the informants. Yet, it is still worth mentioning that the theoretical implications of engagement and dialog are not valued on every social media platform by the respondents. This might indicate that the case company's activities are acceptable regarding the respondents' expectations, which is shown in their answers regarding if their relationship to the case company has been improved due to social media. However, in order to target a more specific group of people as decision makers, who are valuable in a B2B context, the case company should improve the engagement economy on every channel, because people desire a social organisation today in order to sustain a trustworthy brand and maximise the customer lifetime value (Malthouse, et al., 2013).

Thereby the findings indicate that just because engagement is mentioned as being vital, it depends on the social platform and if the users' find it relevant as well. Therefore, it is important for an organisation to listen to and monitor its network in order to collect feedback and improve their activities, which will increase the brand perception and relationships towards customers. In some way, engagement economy should be prioritised whether the customers want to engage or not in order

to get to know the customers and their needs. However, the social organisation does not have to involve dialog constantly, if the customers are only online to gain information and not to participate.

BROADCASTING STORIES

When a B2B organisation make use of content marketing, they should make sure that the content is relevant, engaging and educational in order to create brand community dynamics associated with the website (Rowley & Holliman, 2014). Therefore, the organisation should provide content through storytelling, because users are more likely to engage with valuable content than broadcasted product-based messages. According to Järvinen and Taiminen (2015) the formats of digital content marketing often include blog posts and social media to promote brand awareness and customer engagement with the outcome of increasing sales through customer purchases.

The case company provides content to their social network sites, which are based on their blogpost, which is made to create awareness. It is discussable whether the case company's approach to their content is consistent with the theoretical implications, because the informants state that Facebook is used as a broadcasting channel, but on the other hand, they desire to "sell" their content as stories. The statements are inconsistent with each other, since they imply two different approaches. From the findings, it appears that the case company uses social platforms, because it allows the company to decide the content, which makes them in control.

According to Lipiäinen and Karjaluoto (2015), social media has led organisations to not be in control of their brand, because communication and influence are multidirectional. Therefore, it is discussable whether or not the case company has misunderstood the level of controllability of their social network sites, which also indicate that the case company has still not involved their users to partake in their content, which is in line with engagement above. The respondents of the survey stated that it was most relevant for them to see valuable and useful content on Facebook and Twitter, which is in line with Rowley and Holliman (2014) who indicate that content should be relevant. However, in continuation of a broadcasting method, the survey also showed that various respondents were displeased with the case company's Facebook activities, because of the content. These statements were a result of a lack of effort from the case company, which resulted in Facebook becoming an auto- broadcasting channel from the respondents' viewpoint. Even though the case company makes an effort with communicating the beneficial features in their content, they still need to make an effort with the content on every channel in order to avoid generic messages. This is in line with a statement by a respondent, who desired more differentiated content between Twitter and Facebook. Rose and

Pullizi (2011) state that different content is key in a brand process, both when it comes to differentiating from the competitors but also to intrigue the curiosity of the customers. In that case it appears that the case company does not differentiate the content from the respondents' view, even though the informants try to make the content personal. Therefore, the case company's content might be marked a little too much by a broadcasting approach, instead of meeting the users' needs and making an effort with posting different stories on their respective social network sites.

In the analysis, the informants emphasise the importance of creating valuable content for their customers, which is done by sharing case stories. According to Jussila et al. (2014), the B2B market is characterised by an objective criterion with the purpose of winning potential customers' trust. With every shared story, the case company desires to create a positive brand image by creating a trustworthy brand, which will attract future customers and partners and lead to sale. Malthouse et al. (2013) proposes that organisations use social media to provide valuable content with the intention of creating valuable relations, which will end in sales. In that way, the case company appears to be making use of their branding beneficially on their social network sites. This approach is also in line with what Swani and Brown (2011) state about B2B organisations should consider social network sites as a supplement to their overall sales process, which is done by providing valuable content with the purpose of selling products and services.

It appears from the analysis, that the case company tries to balance between delivering valuable content and wanting to sell their products, which could be a balance between the traditional push method and the new pull method. However, when the case company makes sure to highlight the benefits without clear sales propositions, their strategy is consistent with Brennan and Croft's (2016) argument about social network sites being appropriate for soft branding. In line with pull method, Leek and Christodoulides (2011) argue that B2B organisations should push their personality instead of focus on transactional values to appear more equal towards the customer, in that way the customers are in control of pulling relevant information towards themselves. However, based on the survey results, the respondents only valued a personal approach on Instagram, therefore it is discussable whether it is important to appear personal on every social site.

Therefore, the findings indicate that the case company makes use of a broadcasting method but with a storytelling approach, since they make the content useful for the respondents. The respondents also seemed satisfied with the content elsewhere than Facebook, which indicates that the case company's branding activities through content marketing is appropriate for their network actors. However, the case company should consider differentiating their content more on every social network sites, which would improve their brand and satisfy followers on both Facebook, Twitter and Instagram.

PART 5) CLOSING CHAPTER

CONCLUSION

Based on the empirical data, the findings show that the case company makes use of branding by sharing valuable content on their social media channels in order to build their brand and create brand awareness. In that way, the case company forms a trustworthy brand, which will attract potential and current customers. The research indicates that the case company has a sceptical view on social media activities, which leads to an uncertain performance, such as using social media as a one-way channel, instead of an interactional channel.

The case company understands the opportunities of creating an online brand presence, which is done through honest, transparent and personal content. In this way the case company's approach to branding on social media is consistent with the theoretical implications, since they are aware of differentiating themselves from other organisations on the industrial market. Therefore, their content is based on a pull strategy, which conveys beneficial messages without being pushy. The content is directed to update and support customers' decision processes, since the content on social media is not marked by sales messages. The case company provides free, educational content to the users, which has the purpose to win their trust. By winning their trust, the case company has the purpose to create and maintain customer relations to the users or the users' network through e-WOM. Therefore, brand building and brand awareness is an essential part of the case company's social media appearance, since they pursue to influence their own branding process by providing quality content, which demonstrates high level of professional competency and expertise. The quality is ensured through professional back-and-forth with inhouse specialists in order to convey the benefits of their services the best possible way to ensure user satisfaction. The aim is to reach decision makers as their target group, which is based on the view that e- WOM is the most trustworthy way for customers to validate a supplier.

However, the case company's view on social media as a communicative tool is still marked by a traditional way of thinking, which is caused by a lack of knowledge of the utilisation and relevance for B2B organisations. Despite of the opportunities to interact with customers, the case company does not prioritise dialogue in their branding activities, since they do not perceive the platforms as social. Nonetheless, the results based on the customer perspective show that the customers only value engagement on Twitter but find useful and valuable content as the most relevant activity. This indicates that engagement might not be the most important activity, but the case company should be aware of the different values on the different platforms. However, this knowledge can only be

collected by engaging with customers in order to collect feedback, which would improve their activities, brand and relations to current and potential customers. In continuation, the case company does not further use monitoring and listening as insights to establish and maintain relations, which indicate that the case company is very unsure about the strategic benefits of social media.

Therefore, the research illustrates that the case company as a B2B organisation perceives social media as a channel to broadcast knowledge and not to gain knowledge in return. The case company perceives social media as a supplement to their communication and sales, but not as the most important part of their communication activities.

However, the case company points out that their social media are appropriate for branding in order to let others understand what the case company stands for and who is behind it and to be present in the customers' search phase. The research also shows that the case company does not strategically focus on strengthening customer relations on social media, because the outcome is difficult to measure compared to website traffic. On the contrary, the case company sees a point in posting successful stories about partnerships, which sheds a positive light to potential and current customers and the case company as a company. Thereby, the case company aims to communicate their values and brand identity, which also reflects on the target group's values in order to create trust. Therefore, social network sites are a good tool for branding the company in order to create a positive image and attract customers. However, it is merely used to branding, as it is difficult to measure the value of it, why the case company only perceives social media as 5% of their communication. Despite the various barriers the case company meets in their work with social media, the research shows that they are open minded and experimenting with different features on social media in order to communicate with their network actors, which indicate that the case company is trying to adapt to the digital age.

In relation to the theoretical implications, a B2B organisation should act accordingly to what the customers expect from them, since their perception of the brand is the most important. Therefore, if the customers do not prioritise dialog but only use social media as a source of information, the B2B organisation should just seek to provide valuable information. Also, the B2B organisation should be present where their customers are in order to attain valuable knowledge and meet the customers' needs. The hypothesis of B2B organisations should engage with their customers on social media, really depends on the customers' behaviour and what behaviour they find relevant for each social network site. Therefore, there is not a how-to-guide for how B2B organisations should act on social media and use branding in order to create customer relations, because those activities are individual based on the customers' perspective. Consequently, B2B organisations might be ready to become the social organisation, but only if the customers are social as well.

FURTHER STUDY

The article had the purpose to provide an in-depth examination of how a B2B organisation uses branding on social media to create and maintain relations and especially what the B2B customers think of social media activities. The article is directed towards Facebook, Twitter and Instagram in a B2B context, therefore a further study could examine the potential of other social network sites related to relationship marketing. Especially LinkedIn was mentioned by the respondents in the survey as a platform where the B2B company could improve their presence, which would be relevant to study further. Last, it could have been obvious to make a comparison between how B2C and B2B organisations' use of social media and examine whether or not the conditions would appear differently between the two types of markets.

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