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SOCIAL MEDIA MARKETING:
IT'S EFFECT ON BUSINESS CONSUMER RELATIONSHIPS

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ABSTRACT

Since the explosion of the social Internet in the early 1990's, the world has seen rapid growth and change in a way humans never imagined or experienced. The rapid transmission of data, information and communication has changed the way people interact, and also the way world economies thrive and operate. One major facet of this revolution has come in the form of Social Media. This thesis looks to examine and analyze how industries have taken to social media to form a new sector of their businesses and strategies: Social Media Marketing. Through the analysis of Social Media Industry reports, and case studies of two different businesses that have adopted such social marketing campaigns, I will provide evidence of the accelerating dichotomy of traditional marketing and social media marketing campaigns. This thesis will provide answers on the effectiveness the changes social media marketing has brought upon our marketplace, in terms of consumer to consumer, and consumer to business relationships, as well as the ability to rapidly transmit information to an unlimited geographic. It will also highlight the positive effects social media marketing has had on the traditional marketing strategies that have been trusted by marketers for decades, and prove the importance of using social media marketing and traditional marketing strategies together to create a well-rounded and efficient marketing plan.

Table of Contents

Introduction	1
Opening Remarks	1
History of Social Media	3
Introduction to Social Media Marketing	8
Academic Literature Review	18
Social Media Marketing Industry	23
Growth Analysis	23
Advertising Effectiveness	24
Benefits	27
Case Analysis	31
Otomix	31
Pawpons	37
Final Discussions	40
Conclusion	40
Reference	46

Introduction

Opening Remarks

The Internet has allowed the world to connect, share, and transmit information, data, and communicate in a way past generation's never imagined. The culmination of evolution the Internet has undergone in the past years has reached a level of transparency and connection society would never have been able to reach traditionally. Today, our society embraces what was once referred to as a fad. This new medium the Internet has supplied us with is simply titled: social media. What was once considered just another facet of social communication through Web 2.0, is now an important and integral part of our world economy, as it has become one of the largest tools business have looked towards in order to market their products and services to an audience that spans the globe.

Webster's dictionary offers the definition of social as, "devoted or pertaining to the interaction of groups or individuals within a community." The same dictionary offers the definition of the term media as, "the means of communication through a wide variety of mediums that reach or influence people widely." Thus, social media is simply a platform through which individuals are able to communicate and spread information to influence groups and individuals. A major key to social media is the massive audience it has the potential to reach through real time updates, massive social networking, and information's ability to go viral through the use of the Internet and its ease to span geographical borders otherwise not privy to such information.

Assistant professor of business management at Lal Bahadur College, Sisira Neti, quotes “The explosion of the social media phenomenon is as mind boggling as that and the pace at which it is growing is maddening.” (Neti, 2011). Social media marketing has opened doors for businesses to inherently skip the middlemen of advertising, lowering costs, and targeting consumers on a more direct and personal level than ever before. Given the state of the world’s economy, and the rapid changes the world has seen it is now more important than ever for business to establish open communication relationships with consumers; giving them the opportunity to earn loyal customers, and let consumers provide them with feedback more directly than they have had the ability in the past.

History of Social Media

This paper will provide readers with statistics, data, and facts regarding the social media marketing industry, it is important to provide some knowledgeable background of how it began:

Early on, computer technology was centralized towards use only by businesses, but the 1990's brought new technology and inventions that would shift computer use to the masses. This form of media was new, and the Internet was an untapped frontier of data transportation, information sharing, and social connection that people had never experienced before. In 1991, a young company named America Online, created an Internet software client that allowed people to send electronic mail messages to each other and connect via the Internet. This groundbreaking invention paved the road to the world we live in today. While America Online's creation started the slew of data transfer and connection, it was not until years later that the true form of "Social Media" we know today came into play. (Nickson, 2009)

In 2002, Jonathan Abrams created a website called Friendster.com. This creation was something the public had never experienced before. It allowed members to create a digital profile of themselves, projecting their lives, stories, and pictures to those they were connected with and/or wanted to be connected to. "I created it to be a dating website, without the dating," said Abrams. (Nickson, 2009). Abrams opened the door to the true realm of social media connection. Within the first year of the website's creation, it had over 3 million active users. Shortly following the creation of Friendster, Chris DeWolf and Tom Anderson bought the domain name MySpace.com, and the popularity for this type of connection only continued to boom.

Friendster and MySpace were crucial steps in creating the world of social media we live with today. However, they are no longer the dominant forms of social media consumption.

Throughout this thesis, my discussion of social media will be based upon three different forms: Facebook, Twitter, and LinkedIn.

Facebook

In 2004, Harvard student Mark Zuckerberg made the code for the website that dominates social media today, Facebook.com. The website has undergone a massive amount of evolution and development since its start in 2004, but the main point of Facebook, and other channels, will always be set in concrete: allow users to share, interact, and connect over the web. Istrategylabs, a website that monitors and tracks social media statistics has been monitoring Facebook since October of 2007. Since then, the website has experience massive growth. In the year of 2009, Facebook experienced over 145% growth in their active users. (Istrategy, 2010). Facebook's user database spans across the globe, and it is currently the most visited website on the Internet. (Burbary, 2011)

According to SocialMediaToday.Com, Facebook currently has 629, 982, 480 active users. Of these users 51.2% are male and 48.2 are female. Of these demographics, 18-25 year olds, and 26-34 year olds are the biggest consumers, making up 25.8% and 26.1% respectively. Facebook has been unbelievably efficient at penetrating the market and grabbing users, in most United States over 50% of the population has a Facebook account. (Burbary, 2011). Today, Facebook is a clear and dominant force not only in the social marketing world but in our economy as a whole. As of February 1, 2012 the company filed for its initial public offering, valued anywhere from \$75 to \$100 billion dollars. (Bosker, 2012)

Twitter

For several years, Facebook dominated the social media world as the primary form, however in 2006 Jack Dorsey created a server that would put the world's thoughts into 140 characters or less. What some may conclude is eerily similar to Facebook's status update feature, this service, titled Twitter, allows users to create a profile in which they can "tweet" their thoughts to the people who choose to follow them. In turn, a user is able to follow others and see their tweets on their own timeline, making for an interactive thought sharing process. Shortly after its creation, Twitter experienced a 3 year explosion of popularity. The platform currently boasts over 465 million users who in the past 4 years since the platform's creation have sent on average 175 million tweets per day. Twitter's revenue stream comes mostly from advertising which has sky rocketed from five million dollars five years ago, to a projected 259 million dollars in the year 2012. (Bennet, 2012)

The use of twitter spans every aspect of daily life in real time. Ranging from politics and the economy, to sports and celebrity rumor, to pointless social connection between friends. Twitter's reach and capacity to relay information is without bounds. Twitter has allowed its users to constantly check their timeline for the latest news and information. Its connection to the sports industry is unfounded, as hundreds of professional athletes, teams, and sports organizations own Twitter accounts used daily. While consumers are able to use twitter to reflect a variety of views, its connection to consumer empowerment is quite strong. Twitter allows for concise, and quick consumer to consumer communications, empowering them to send messages, reflect brand loyalties, and spread information faster than ever.

Blogs

Throughout the rise of social media, one channel of communication has stuck out from the pack, blogs. Blogs are different because they do not necessarily use their own platform as Facebook, or twitter does, but rather a blog can simply be a forum or discussion post on a company's website. Blogs are very important for the realm of social media marketing, as they are perhaps the most important facet of the new two-way communication channels marketers must accept into their social media marketing plans. Blogs are usually based off of interests, or hobbies, and marketers are able to use them as a tool to group consumers by their different interests or contact points. These blogs allow for an open form of communication from consumer to consumer, as well as consumer to corporation and can be easily grouped into different categories. Since the 2009 Social Media Examiner reports, it is clear that social media marketers are recognizing blogs as an important tool. The 2011 survey shows that a whopping 75% of the businesses surveyed stated they will increase their blogging efforts in the next year (Stelzner, 2011). Another interesting point indicated by the survey is that 80% of those who are self-employed will increase their blogging activity (Stelzner, 2011). This shows that marketers are most certainly becoming wary of the importance of two-way communication, and they see that blogs are an efficient way to facilitate positive discussions between consumers and their business.

LinkedIn

LinkedIn is the most professional of the social networks, as it does not provide the mediums for a more social experience. The site is the Internet's largest professional network, boasting over 150 million members in over 200 countries (<http://press.linkedin.com/about>). Used

as a professional network LinkedIn's members include all executive from 2011 Fortune 500 companies. The website provides users with an opportunity to connect with colleagues, managers, and executives, and provide them with a resume, academic and professional background, as well as any extra experiences or awards.

Overall, social media has permeated our society's everyday routines and activities. What began is a simple form of communication has now become the staple of an industry. Companies, manufacturers, and the most famous brands recognized by our society have grabbed social media by the throat and introduce social marketing to the world. Social media has become larger than many people imagined, as it is now used regularly by business to market, promote, and contact consumers in a more personal way and benefit from instant feedback, allowing positive changes to be made in their business strategies.

Introduction to Social Media Marketing

Since the explosion of social media in the late 1990's and the early 2000's, businesses and organizations across the globe have taken to a new form of marketing and campaigning for their products and services; social marketing. Social marketing involves corporations in the multiple social networks of hundreds of millions of people and is ability to increase their business exposure, revenue and ad generation, reduce marketing costs, and increase the overall traffic and use of their operations. In 2012, the question facing corporations is not: "is social marketing worth investing in?" but rather "how are we able to expand, measure, and improve the social marketing platforms working in our favor?"

Social Media Examiner, Inc. conducted a survey that included 3,342 participants, included 33% self-employed workers, 30% of people who worked for a company including over 100 employees, and 19% of those employed in large business employing 100 or more workers. The survey included half of business to business (B2B), and half business to consumer (B2C) oriented companies. While this is still considered a young industry, as 50% respondents reported having less than one year of experience, 74% of the survey participants were between the ages of 30-59, giving proof to the fact that this explosion of social media use is expanding and reaching the older nice of society. (Stelzner, 2011)

Another social Marketing software company, Awareness, also completed a survey of 320 marketers including 38% executive or senior managers, 27% mid-level managers, 27% of marketing support professionals, and 8% of unidentified employers and employees. The survey focuses mostly on B2B corporations, but also provides in depth analysis to B2C as well. The majority of the companies surveyed by Awareness reported yearly revenues of less than \$1

million (36%) but ranged to companies reporting over \$100 million as well (15%) (Zanghi, 2012).

What Platforms Are Marketers Using?

The Awareness and Social Media Examiner's surveys provide valuable insight into exactly which platforms social marketers are taking advantage of Facebook, Twitter, and LinkedIn, or "the big three" of social marketing were noted by both surveys as the industry monsters in 2011, where 90% of companies reported to using Facebook, 84% using twitter, and 74% using LinkedIn. Facebook is the clear winner as Social Media Examiner shows that only 3% of the marketers surveyed do not intend on using the platform, and overwhelmingly small number (Stelzner, 2011). An interesting statistic by Social Media Examiner shows that companies just starting social media efforts are more likely to use LinkedIn then those already established (Stelzner, 2011). Awareness reports that over 50% of LinkedIn's users are decision makers or executive management for their companies, allowing less experienced social marketers to establish and maintain communication with those of vast knowledge in the field. (Zanghi, 2012)

However the big three of social marketing are not the only platforms used by companies, as the realm of social media is already enormous, and continuously expanding. Social blogs are an example of a type of social media gaining rapid attention in 2012. These blogs, concentrated in almost any subject matter, provide marketers with valuable information, as well as another way to efficiently grow social engagement and connection. Social Media Examiner reports that over 75% of their respondents will increase their use of blogs (Stelzner, 2011). Awareness's survey delves deeper into these statistics, showing that blogs are most utilized by those who are

already established in the social marketing world. More than 90% of the social marketing leaders responded to using blogs, and interestingly enough, 80% of novice social marketers reported planned use in 2012. (Zenghi, 2012)

Another platform expanding its social marketing use in 2012 is Youtube.com, the extremely popular website that allows users to upload and share their own videos. Social Media Examiner reports that 77% of their respondents plan on increasing Youtube use, and 82 % of big businesses (1,000+ employees) believe that Youtube social marketing is a key growth area for 2012. (Stelzner, 2011) Similar to use of blogs, Awareness reports that the more experienced social marketers surveyed outweighed novice social marketers in use of Youtube at a rate of 3:1. (Zanghi, 2012) The use of Youtube will provide social marketers with a valuable connection that Facebook, Twitter, and LinkedIn might not be able to provide. While in using those three marketers are able to post words, information, and links, marketers using Youtube are able to produce videos of their product, company outreach, and a more personal experience through video sharing.

What Are The Surveys Questioning?

The results of these surveys are incredibly helpful to social marketers in any industry by providing insight to some of social marketing's most useful questions. Since this field of marketing is fairly new, it is constantly changing, growing and evolving. The Social Media Examiner states that since 2010's survey, marketers are increasingly interested in social media integration through all facets of the campaign. Some of the questions marketer's strived to answer were:

- How can social media efforts be integrated into an overall marketing plan?

- What tools can be used to integrate all social marketing accounts into one general HUB
- How can a social marketing mindset integrate our corporate culture and empower employees in order to be successful?

While integration was not the only facet of social marketing explored in the survey, it is most certainly one of the more pressing questions facing social marketers in a growing, unique business platform. The survey also looks into answering how can marketers measure, monitor, and efficiently track their true return on investment in social marketing activities, what are the current best practices in social marketing, how can customer engagement be improved, and how to master the use of all the specific social media platforms, among others. (Stelzner, 2011)

Awareness's survey shows that 58% of social marketers said monitoring their ROI was their top marketing challenge for the year of 2012. Other challenges included a lack of sufficient resources (77%), and managing and growing their social presence (42%). (Zanghi, 2012)

Measuring ROI

Measuring the ROI of any investment is incredibly important in any business matter to determine the success and worth of the business venture. In social media marketing, it is incredibly beneficial in determining how well the marketing campaign is reaching people, providing awareness, and creating conversation amongst consumers. Typically, marketers measure ROI on the basis of the cost of launching a product or service, and are able to generate measurable numbers and data to record their success. In social media marketing, it is way harder to find measurable numbers by which they are able to gauge their success, however as the industry develops, marketers are determining more and more way to do so.

According to the results given by Awareness's marketing survey, barely half of last year's participants measured and reported the success of their social marketing efforts. However, as this becomes a pressing and more important facet of social marketing in 2012, 30% more reported that they planned on tracking and reporting sufficient, measurable data for the 2012 campaigns. Marketers use a variety of different ways to successfully track their ROI, however this is bound to change as the industry evolves. Last year's primary measure of ROI success was through their marketing reach, in other words, new fans, followers, or viewers their social media attained reported by 76% of the respondents. For 66% of the respondents, successful ROI was measured by how well their social media channels drove consumers to their owned media and products (websites, stores, etc...). Other success measures were gauged by the frequency at which they were "mentioned" throughout social networks, or their consumer's engagement (53%), as well as measuring how marketers reported and measured lead and sale generation (38%).

2012 holds many questions for social marketers, however one thing is certain: measuring and tracking the return corporations receive from their investments in social marketing campaigns is an important, if not the most important, way of tracking how successful their efforts are. The trend of 2012 in social marketing will most certainly look at different ways of tracking this ROI, as close to 50% of companies do not routinely measure, but stated that they are planning to in 2012. An interesting statistics provided by the survey shows that 100% of expert, established social marketing leaders measure and track specific numbers and data to report their ROI. These companies reports will set the industry standard in ROI measurement,

providing novice and intermediate social marketers with the proper benchmarks they will need to achieve in order to provide a successful social marketing campaign. (Zanghi, 2012)

An article in MIT Sloan Management Review's journal provides readers with an interesting strategy with efficient strategy marketers should take in measuring their ROI. As opposed to measurements of the past, Donna Hoffman claims that as social media is largely consumer controlled, in order to sufficiently track their efficiency, marketers should flip their thinking upside down. Social marketers should start by thinking about what marketing objectives they want their campaign to satisfy for their consumers. In other words, why do consumers want to visit the Facebook or twitter page, what kind of reaction will they have, and how can marketers engage them to discuss the company more. Hoffman says, "Consumer's behavioral investments in social marketing suggests that the return will not always be measured in dollars, but also in customer behaviors tied to social applications." (Hoffman, 2010). In looking at ROI from this perspective, marketers will be able to better understand their obligation and objectives for the consumer, and will have an easier time tying their social media marketing efforts into their traditional promotional mix. This figure from the MIT Sloan Management Review's article provides a unique insight.

Figure 1

Source: <http://cdn.mitsmr.com/files/2010/10/hoffman-s24.jpg>



This graph provides an excellent insight to Hoffman and Fodor's strategies on measuring social marketer's ROI. The four different categories depend on the manager's ability to measure social marketing campaigns effectiveness, on a scale of fuzzy to quantifiable, against the manager's subjective valuation of the effectiveness, on a scale of failing to succeeding. Let's analyze these a little deeper:

- **Dead End:** the manager has limited abilities to measure the campaign's effectiveness, and he believes that his efforts are not working the best they could be. The manager uses a "throw it against the wall and see what sticks

strategy.” (Hoffman, 2010) The marketer has little insight or idea of how to go about his social marketing campaign and it is likely the campaign will fail.

- Measure and adjust: a manager in this category has a better ability to measure and quantify the effectiveness of his social media campaign, however the numbers are proving that the campaign is not working. While this is a poor spot to be in, this spot provides hope that the manager’s will be able to use the numbers they have and change their social marketing outlook.
- Iterate for Success: this is the best quadrant for managers to be in. Here, they have the necessary capabilities of measuring and tracking their performance, and the results show their efforts are being successful.
- Naïve Optimist: a manager in this category has a limited ability to measure the effectiveness, but the outcome of their social marketing campaign is successful. Hoffman and Fodor believe that most marketers start here, saying “managers believe social media is worth the effort, but are not quite sure how best to measure their efforts” (Hoffman, 2010). A manager should strive to graduate from this level quickly after their start into social marketing media.

Their analysis on these different levels of social marketer’s ability measure their effectiveness provides marketers with a graphic image of how to gauge where exactly they may be in their social marketing efforts. Their theory examines the interactions between effectiveness and success, and while this may be one of the first to come in the young age of social media, the relationship between these two categories will continue to be researched, analyzed, and explored for marketers across industrial barriers.

Lack of Sufficient Resources

A successful social marketing campaign does not come fairly easy to all corporations, young or old. Establishing viable methods of social media to contact the consumer, and measuring such data requires a slight budget, man-power, and reliable insight into the social marketing world. 57% of social marketers in 2011's Awareness survey stated that they do not currently have a budget allocating for social marketing efforts. 18% of the marketers allocated anywhere from \$1,000 to \$10,000 and only 8% reported as allocating over \$50,000 per year. It is clear that companies with a larger social marketing budget are able to efficiently spend the money on tools and resources to improve the success of their campaigns. (Zanghi, 2012)

Man-power is another important aspect to successful marketing campaigns. Since the use of social media platforms today is fairly easy, it is definitely rare for a company to allocate a larger number of people to these efforts. 74% of marketers stated that they use a team of one to three people, where as 12% responded that more than five people were used in the efforts. Finding the proper number of employees for a social marketing division is important in the success. Too many people working on one project could lead to faulty communication, mistakes, and disorganization. With the right amount of people working together, the campaign will see an effective and organized management of their efforts.

Managing and monitoring social media is an important resource for campaigns, and is proved to be an increasing trend in 2012. According to the data, over 94% of respondents said they would monitor their social media at least a few times a week. The discrepancy between the expert and less experienced social marketers could shed light on some of the reasons a marketing

campaign could fail. 80% of the leading social marketers said they consistently monitor their social marketing efforts in the real-time, gathering the most up to date news, numbers, and statistics for the campaign. Only 20% of the less experienced marketers admitted to monitoring in the real time. This shows that a successful marketing campaign requires frequent monitoring and management in order to be successful. Data and news must consistently be refreshed in order for these marketers to effectively plan and execute the next step, or continuance, of the campaign. (Zanghi, 2012)

Social marketers must be current and up to date on all the news, trends, and climate of the social media world, and thus need the ability to access multiple different educational resources. As mentioned before, the Internet's blogosphere provides marketers with thousands of different forums to share ideas, communicate, and provide exposure for their own business. According to the Awareness survey, a massive 82% of marketers look to the blogs for information necessary to their marketing campaign. Another 59% admitted that using their peers as resources was their primary source of information gathering. The other three methods surveyed were industry conferences (43%), analyst groups (30%), other irrelevant sources (15%). (Zanghi, 2012) The social media world is like a growing child, it is constantly growing, and thus there is no main resource for marketers to tap into. However this growing realm is constantly providing more and more opportunities, as companies surveyed reported using over 180 different websites industry analyzing companies to gather information.

Academic Literature Review

While it is certain that the realm of social media marketing is incredibly new, for the last few years it has been catching the interest of professors, industry analysts, and market analysts all over. As it is a new and developing industry, there unfortunately are not a massive amount of studies conducted on the more technical sides of social marketing. However it is certain that throughout industries in our economy, marketers agree on its effects on business to business, business to consumer, and consumer to consumer relationships in real time, and have analyzed how they are changing the industry and the way business is conducted.

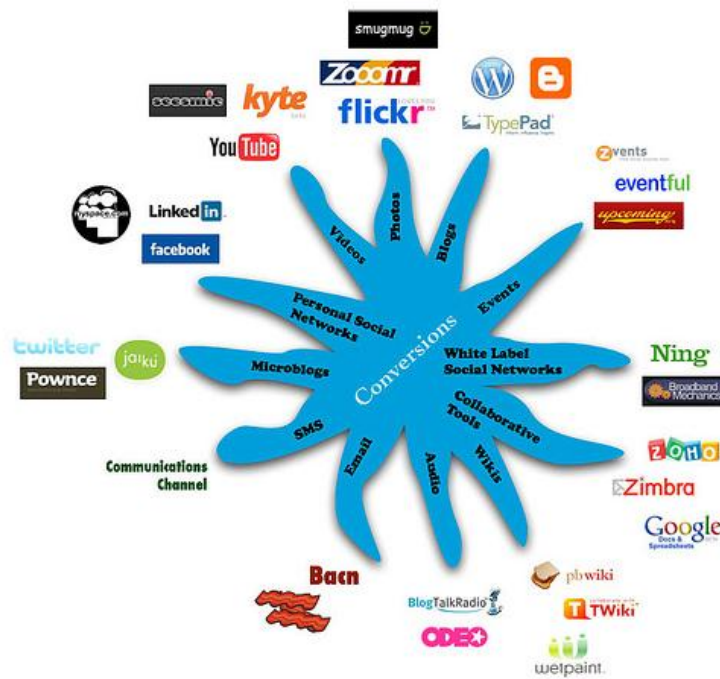
One article from Science Direct analyzes how the rapid on come of social media marketing is changing the traditional marketing mix: promotion, price, placement, and product. Mangold and Faulds have analyzed how marketers must accept social media as a hybrid into their promotional mix. Formerly, marketers were able to control and tailor the specific messages and ideas they wanted to communicate to their consumers. They are now losing control over content, timing, and the frequency by which they are able to contact their consumers (Mangold, 2009). These consumers demand control over the media they receive, and in turn are tending to turn away from the traditional print, radio, and television sources of advertisements (Mangold, 2009). Ideas communicated by other consumers have a vast effect on the purchasing decisions of other consumers. Mangold suggests that marketers using social marketing need to shape the discussions their consumers have with one another by providing networking platforms, engaging their consumers on positive trends, and providing a feeling of exclusivity. Mangold emphasizes that unlike in the traditional promotional mix, where communication was one way, using social marketing as a hybrid creates a two way communication stream. A two way flow of information is incredibly valuable to marketers in the way that they are able to receive feedback from their

consumers, but it also means that they need to proactively manage their campaigns to ensure that the flow of information is positive.

One major theory developed by academia in recent years is The Starfish Model of social media, developed by Robert Scoble. This theory states that the success of social media marketing depends on how effectively marketers are able to combine the traditional and new paradigms of the promotional mix. The figure below illustrates an example of Scoble's starfish model, and how all platforms of social media must touch the different aspects of the strategy. The majority of academic studies pertaining to social media marketing have an understanding of this concept, and more marketers are striving to find ways in which they can effectively integrate a new social media marketing strategy into their traditional promotional mix.

Figure 2

Source: <http://scobleizer.com/2007/11/02/social-media-starfish/>



Another study by Matt Ramsay, featured in the Journal for Database Marketing & Customer Strategy Management expands on this new form of consumer generated media. Consumers are beginning to realize that they have more power than in the past in communicating about brands, and if businesses don't take an active approach in handling their consumer conversations, things could go sour. Ramsay says that there are certain guidelines companies need to take in engaging with their consumers depending on their message, tone, and language used. Ramsay specifically focuses on some examples of how consumer conversations via consumer marketing that led to a bad reputation being "spread like wildfire" (Ramsay, 2012). He provides readers with a certain lists of do's and don'ts:

- Do have a communications strategy
- Do develop a style
- Do strike the right balance between conversation and sales
- Do set limits for what is to be tolerated in any channel
- Don't use social media for corporate communications
- Don't be afraid to vary strategy per channel
- Don't forget to update content

These valuable insights to social media etiquette provide marketers with some guidelines. As Ramsay states, "there is nowhere to hide online and the viral nature of these channels means that bad news lasts forever and spreads quickly" (Ramsay, 2012) Overall, marketers need to establish strategies where they are able to take full hold of the benefits they can receive from

consumer communication, and make sure they are doing everything in their power to stay away from the negatives that can arise.

One of the most famous examples of social media gone bad occurred in 2009, when Toyota users started to complain of malfunctions with Toyota's Prius. Consumers were looking towards the forums and blogs on Toyota's website, but Toyota was not effectively managing their platforms. Their release of a corporate statement did not satisfy, nor help their consumers. Soon, thousands of consumers were outraged with the issues they had with their car, and with Toyota's detached response. Soon, Toyota faced the cost of the product recall, but besides business cost, the realm of social media exploded for months with negative sentiments to the company. Toyota estimates that these issues concluded with a loss of around \$34 billion to the company, not to mention the lasting poor reputation that may stick with the company (Ramsay, 2012).

Another interesting idea is that of social currency, as discussed by Mark Ralphs in the *Journal of Direct, Data, and Digital Marketing Practice*. The idea of social currency revolves around the idea that every single communication a business makes is a form of currency. Whether it be through traditional or social marketing, every outreach provides consumers with something else to measure. Ralphs says, "Social currency is the value you earn in a social engagement by being interesting and fun to be with" (Ralphs, 2011). Ralphs discusses that businesses need to look to use their social currency to intrigue and engage consumers in an online, social environment where ideas are transmitted faster and quicker than ever before. For example, in discussing cars, a person driving a Porsche could be quickly perceived as a high-class gentleman with a good looking car, or as stuck up and looking to show off their income. This example shows social currency is negative or positive, but it is still proof that their brand is

being discussed. Ralphs believes that marketers need to take this idea of social currency and apply it to their social media marketing efforts.

While Social Media Marketing is young, it is important that marketers learn about it now. As it has obviously captured the attention of our world, it is going to be an important tool for the future. More and more studies and research have and will begin to surface about social marketing, but the academic literature reviewed here proves that marketers and analysts are aware of what is going on, and are continuing to study and research social media marketing.

Social Media Marketing Industry

Industry Growth

Since social media marketing has exploded as a leading way of marketing, it is interesting to analyze the statistics dating back to the Social Media Examiner's 2009 survey. According to these surveys, in 2009 and 2010, 86% and 88% of the marketers reported to using Twitter as their main channel of social media marketing. While Facebook was not far behind in those years, in 2011 it took a monster lead over Twitter and other forms by an overall increase of 15% from 2009-2011 (Stelzen, 2009-11). This is clear proof of the volatility and evolution of the industry, and also shows that social media marketers are using the research at their disposal to stay with the times.

Another striking change between the years is the percentages of those who admit to using social media marketing. Since the 2009 survey, the number of marketers who have admitted to just starting using social media marketing in their business has increased by 12% (Stelzen, 2009-11). Social media marketing is catching the eye of businesses and its effectiveness is consistently being proven, thus encouraging more, and more marketers to join the realm. As time goes on and marketers and consumers become more accustomed and comfortable with social media marketing, there is no doubt that the industry will continue to explode; reaching more people than ever thought possible, and opening the doors for new business opportunities, and consumer relations.

Advertising Effectiveness

As mentioned, one of the biggest advantages of using social media marketing is the ability to control and measure an organization's use and return through different social marketing platforms. This is one of the most important items marketers mentioned in both the Social Media Examiner, and the Awareness company industry survey reports. Thus with the rapid explosion of this new form of market campaigning, metrics and parameters needed to be established in order to properly analyze and form conclusions from social media marketing campaigns. The Nielsen Company, a marketing research company that prides itself on measurement of market information, conducted a research report in April of 2010 exploring the different parameters of measuring social marketing campaign effectiveness specifically through the use of Facebook.

The Nielsen report examined 14 different Facebook social marketing campaigns, from a variety of different industries including entertainment, retail, and others. By examining the three different types of Facebook advertisement, Homepage ads with and without social context, and organic impressions, the company was able to get metrics on the effectiveness of each of these three categories and its ability to create new loyal consumers and social advocates.

One of the newest parameters in the age of social media marketing is the concept of "earned media." Where as traditional advertisement or media, also known as paid media, consisted of buying ad space in newspapers and magazines, the radio, or the internet, earned media involves a company's marketing campaign and its ability to directly reach more and more consumers through social media interaction. While the company does not actually pay for the earned media it gains, the correlation between the paid media and the growth of earned media is directly correlated. The Nielson survey specifically looks to analyze this relationship's inner workings. The report states, "Many publishers are creating a hybrid of earned and paid

media...allowing the reach that can be gained through paid media impressions to be combined with the impact associated with an earned endorsement.” (Nielsen, 2010)

Since earned media shows marketers that their message was interesting, motivating, or captivating enough for someone to voluntarily pass it to someone else, it is a great measure of the effectiveness of the campaign, and the advantages of combining paid and earned media are extremely beneficial to any business. Firstly, through earned media, social marketers are able to control their message to consumers more efficiently. While use of a paid advertisement, say a commercial on television, may encourage one consumer to spread the word, the brand message through traditional word of mouth may be changed, or adjusted from mouth to mouth. Earned media through social marketing is an exact transfer of information from one user to another, confirming that the same messages and ideas are being conveyed. Since earned media on Facebook is a measurable metric, marketers are able to sense and report the trends of the social marketing world, allowing constant communication between brand and consumer.

One major finding the Nielsen study showed is the effect of social advocacy on Facebook advertisements. The study found that those homepage ads using social context, in other words, mentioning other friends who have also interacted with said advertisements or fan pages, had 6% more effectiveness in ad recall, 4% more effectiveness in awareness, and 6% more effectiveness for purchase intent when measured against those ads without social advocacy. (Nielsen, 2010). These findings are evidence to the virility of social marketing campaigns. As consumers see people their friends and people they are connected with become interested in some advertisement, they are more likely to show interest as well. This digital “word of mouth” marketing is an invaluable tool in helping business expand their reach in a world of social marketing that is becoming bigger and bigger by the day.

Nielsen's next analysis only provides more concrete evidence on the benefits social context can have on consumers. Through the examination of paid media homepage advertisements and organic impressions, or the newsfeed stories sent to a user's homepage when their friends interact with different advertisements. The study showed that users who were exposed to both a homepage advertisement and an organic impression from their friends experienced 20% more effectiveness in ad recall, 9% increase in awareness, and a 6% increase in purchase intent. (Nielsen, 2010) Social marketers should use these statistics to strive to gain as much earned media as they possibly can, as study after study has shown that consumers trust friends and peers more than any other entity when making a purchase decision.

Overall, Nielsen's studies provide social marketers with important information in conducting their social marketing campaigns. While tradition has it that paid media is the primary market strategy, in the age of social media marketing, marketers need to strive to use paid media as a stepping tool in order to earn more media. Earned media provides lasting impressions to their consumers, as they are able to see which of their connections are also interested in the same advertisement. Facebook's organic impressions are the goal for marketers, as they are able to reach the most amount of people and efficiently carry the brand message and advertisement to consumers across the globe.

This study provides a rock solid example of social media marketing's effect on the traditional media marketing strategies of the old. No longer can marketers pay for an advertisement and expect this method to be the most effective strategy to reach consumers. Rather they must embrace the power shift social media marketing has brought with it. Marketers must now strive to have their efforts reach that extra step, involving consumer engagement through social media platforms. It is not enough to simply reach a consumer with a paid

advertisement, but they must engage that consumer to share, like, or talk about the advertisement and in turn engage the millions of consumers they have the potential to reach on a social network.

Benefits

Social media is more than ever a part of marketing campaigns as in the past few years social marketing has been prevalent in politics and elections, public policies, national defense strategies, and across almost every facet of everyday life. The use of social marketing provides marketers with benefits they were formally unable to attain through the use of traditional marketing strategies.

Social marketing allows business to directly contact their consumers, and thus are more effectively able to communicate their brand message. Thus, business are able to create an identity of themselves for consumers to see them not only as a business providing services, but as a social entity that is able have a give and receive relationship from consumers and shareholders. (Neti, 2011). The ability of appearing as a “real” entity to consumers is an advantage coveted by businesses, as this opens new opportunities for the most personal of relationships with a their most important, as well as their most recent consumers.

Another major impact social marketing has had for business is the idea of transparency across their business operations. This aspect has revolutionized the realm of public relations across the economy as a whole. “Public relations traces its origins to the days of hype, promotion, and propaganda and is often associated with negative perceptions and stereotypes.” (Matthews, 2010) However, given the transparency related to social marketing, businesses are now directly responsible for the information they provide on Facebook, twitter, LinkedIn, and

other social media platforms. Authenticity is now a measurable metric for consumers to form their opinion on a company, and influence their purchasing decisions. Industries across the economy are beginning to note a change in the functions of the public relations department. Traditionally, only through press releases and more formal mediums were company's public relations departments able to contact consumers, however with the creation of our society's vast network of social connections, more and more public relations departments are being assigned to social media outlets for their connection with consumers. Social media and public relations theorist Jason Falls says, "PR has taken on an entirely new role in the organization over the last two to three years. It's the most dramatic shift in the industry since the invention of email, but its happening faster and more dramatically" (Matthews, 2010). According to the 2009 Digital Readiness Report, public relations departments lead digital communications in 51% of organizations, and are directly responsible for social networking operations at 48% of the 278 marketing professionals surveyed (Matthews, 2010). Looking from the other end of this spectrum, companies are able to use their social marketing platforms to apologize for any troubles, and hopefully make a more lasting impact through this personal communication to consumers. For example, in 2007 a Dell employee released a blog post containing loads of inaccurate information, and providing troubles for thousands of consumers. Dell took to their social media blog at the time, posting a list of 23 of their confessions. Through the use of this blog the head of their blogging department was able to personally apologize to consumers and give a list of confessions of what they had done wrong and what they look to improve. (Mechaca, 2007).

One of the greatest benefits of social media marketing is its relatively low cost compared to traditional market research techniques. Formerly, business would have to pay millions of

dollars to conduct market surveys, research, and experiments with the proper target market. Today, signing up for a Facebook account is fast, simple, and the best part is that it is free. While it is understood that business will have to pay for advertising space on said platforms, the cost of this compared to former research techniques is miniscule. These techniques provide those smaller businesses with lesser budgets the ability to have top quality marketing research they otherwise would not have. Social media marketing allows business to generate more web traffic without allocating a significant portion of their budget to entice new consumers to do so. One interesting analysis of Social Media Examiner's survey over the past three years involves the respondent's overall marketing cost. It is interesting to see that the importance of this has decreased from 48% in 2009 and 2010, to 43% in 2011. Marketers are beginning to see how important and efficient social media marketing has become, and thus are willing to spend more money to help increase their efforts (Stelzner, 2009-11)

As stated, social media marketing has transformed the public relations realm of businesses. With this transformation comes the stimulation of tons of new jobs. According to the same Digital Readiness report stated earlier, 82% of respondents stated that in hiring new applicants, knowledge of main stream media relations was incredibly important to them. (Matthews, 2010) Students across America are beginning to realize the trend, as proficiency with digital media platforms is becoming increasingly important.

According to the past three years of the Social Media Examiner's surveys, the benefits of social marketing are uniform throughout. As over 80% of respondents from each year's survey claim their most important benefit of social media marketing was generating exposure for their business, and increasing traffic or subscribers was the second greatest benefit with over 60% of the respondents in the past three years (Stelzner, 2009-11).

It is clear that the benefits provided by an efficient social media marketing campaign are great for any business. Social media marketing provides marketers with a low-cost method to reach a global audience with the click of a mouse. No parts of the traditional marketing promotional mix allow for the rapid and easy spread of information provided by this new realm of marketing.

The extremely low-cost of social marketing, as well as its ability to create massive amounts of consumer generated media and awareness are the highlighting points of the changes social media marketing has had on the traditional marketing mix. Never in the past have marketers had the ability to reach so many people with such a low cost, and effortless process. Thus, it is important for these marketers to understand and include social media marketing into their traditional marketing mix strategies. The ability to produce consumer generated conversations can be invaluable in marketing a product, as proof was given to the massive effect consumer interaction can have on purchase decisions.

Case Analysis

Otomix

The first of the small businesses I will be analyzing is a company based out of Los Angeles called Otomix. Started in 1988 by former Tae Kwan Do World Champion, Mitchell Bobrow, the company looks to deliver consumers with athletic footwear, fitness apparel, and other martial arts gear. Starting in 1989, Otomix delivered its first issue of the Otomix catalog which allowed consumers to subscribe for monthly issues which delivered old items, new releases, and special monthly deals on new items.

Entering the age of the internet, Otomix caught on, and launched their website, www.otomix.com. The website opened a ton of new doors for the company, allowing them to consistently update specials, new items, and reach a larger target audience. Today, Otomix employs close to 100 employees and travels to put on road shows in cities such as Los Angeles, California, Scottsdale, Arizona, Las Vegas, Nevada, and many others in the Western United States.

Recently, Otomix has taken to the exploding approach of using social media marketing. While the company's first social media platform used was MySpace in 2003, in 2009 the company adopted new social media platforms by introducing a Facebook fan page, a twitter handle, and LinkedIn. As an important part of the company's social media marketing, they also have a presence in different martial arts, sports equipment, and manufacturer's blogs online.

I had the opportunity to interview Otomix's CEO, Mitchell Bobrow, who let me into some of the valuable insight on how social media marketing has improved his business, and how the relatively new strategy is changing the economy for small and large business in any

economic sector. Mr. Bobrow said, “Since we began our social media marketing campaign through Facebook and twitter in early 2009, the company has seen an increase in all the categories we were looking for, such as revenue and sales, ad sales, and global reach of our corporate name.”

Otomix allocates a single employee to all the functions of their social media marketing campaign. This employee uses tools such as AdWords and Google+ in order to track web traffic, and hits from their advertisements on Facebook and Twitter. For a smaller to medium sized business such as Otomix, this proposes an enormous advantage as their allocation of employees is incredibly minimal and does not take away from other sectors of the business. Besides for paying a minimal rate for advertisements throughout the internet, the social marketing campaign is efficient in allowing the company to advertise and market their products for completely free. Bobrow said, “using social media marketing has allowed our business to expand and become more lucrative without spending a dime.” In fact, he reports that his social marketing campaign has boosted his sales by 35% when compared to his use of conventional print, radio, and newspaper advertisements.

Otomix’s social media marketing campaign has allowed the company to reach more people than ever possible. Bobrow said, “Otomix is able to reach demographics and increase new customers with social media more than we would ever been capable through traditional advertisements.” One specific component he attributes this too is search engine recognition. As stated in the Social Media Examiner’s 2011 report, 68% of the marketers surveyed looked to optimize search engine visibility through current and social media use. (Stelzner, 2011) This advantageous component of the Otomix marketing campaign allows them to be more visible on

the Internet, for searches including Martial Arts, sports equipment, fitness gear, or any other key words related to Otomix.

Twitter Campaign

The Otomix twitter handle currently has just under 1,000 followers, exactly 916. However the growth of the twitter campaign from 2009-2011 has been a rapid increase. Having only 328 at the end of 2010, and 810 at the 2011, the handle has already gathered over 100 more followers in the beginning stages of 2012. Bobrow reports that the increase in his twitter followers and tweets per day are directly correlated. The twitter handle averages about a tweet every other day, and Otomix reports that his twitter followers are the most likely to click links involving product promotions and specials.

The Otomix twitter handle is incredibly useful in today's fast-paced, multi-tasking society. Bobrow says, "consumers are constantly bombarded by different advertisements, whether it be print, television, or radio, and being able to directly contact them with succinct and to the point advertisements for specials makes a much more efficient impact." Another major benefit of Otomix's twitter campaign is the audience it is able to reach. As the handle boasts some of the most famous members of the Martial Arts community, such as former world champions, current competitors, and others who support and wear Otomix gear, the company has seen positive gains from those "retweets," or the internet's new word of mouth marketing.

Facebook Campaign

Otomix's Facebook campaign has blasted off since it was created in 2009. The fan page currently has 5,291 likes, however the most impressive number is the amount of friends of fans the posts are able to reach, 2, 706, 504 people are at the fan page's disposal. While this number does not account for the actual amount of impressions made on people's Facebook pages, it presents an unprecedented number of customers the company could potentially contact through the social marketing campaign. Given access to the insights of the Otomix fan page has given me valuable insights on the demographics of the consumers the social marketing campaign reaches. Currently 75% of the fans are females. The two dominating age groups subscribing to the fan page are 25-34 year olds (29%), and 35-44 year olds (37.6%). Bobrow states that he has seen 73% increases in the variety of his demographics, as more Facebook users of the older demographics are more actively viewing the page. Also, the Facebook fan page has allowed him to increase his international business, as over 500 of the page's fans are from international countries spanning every continent on the globe. These insights are incredibly valuable to the business, as he is able to analyze which demographic are the most loyal customers, as well as where to concentrate marketing efforts to gain more.

In 2011, Bobrow reports over a 20% increase in overall business just from daily posts. Users subscribing to his Facebook fan page increased the purchasing through the links given, rather than visiting the online store or ordering through the catalog. Like their twitter campaign, Bobrow reports that Facebook subscribers are over 50% more visible and effected by sales promotions on specials through Facebook rather than e-mail, catalog, or print advertisement. An interesting statistic shows that Super Bowl Sunday, and this year's leap day, February 29th, have

been the two most popular days of the year. Specials promoted on these two days saw over 50% more purchases than on any other day.

As mentioned by the Awareness and Social Media Examiner reports, there is a direct correlation between frequency of posts, monitoring, and use and the expected ROI on the business. The relation with Otomix is apparent and matches the results of these surveys. In one marketing effort, Otomix posted a video to their Facebook page explaining their creation history and products, for the two days the video was the freshest post on the fan page, Otomix was able to analyze that over 30% of their likes, clicks, or traffic came between the hours of 12-4, almost tripling the rest of the day. These insights allow them to tailor their efforts to the most efficient hours of the day. Also by examining the fan page insights, Otomix is able to show just how their reach increases through posts per day. Bobrow reported that on days where Otomix posts more than once, their average reach and views per day increases by almost 50%, proving that frequency of consumer contact expands their ability to increase business operations.

Future Campaign

Otomix's business has benefitted greatly from their entrance into the realm of social media marketing, and the company only looks to expand on their efforts. However, since Otomix has been an established business for 22 years now, the company knows where its customer base is and where to focus its marketing efforts. Bobrow says, "I know that our social marketing campaign will not bring us millions of new customers, increased and more efficient use of it will help us increase our sales to our most loyal customer base, and hopefully turn those who are aware of us into loyal customers."

Bobrow hopes to launch more campaigns through Facebook and twitter including more specials, as well as starting a fan promotion program. This program would reward those Facebook and twitter fans who are their most active subscribers, in the form of Facebook likes and mentions, twitter follows and retweets, and overall activity involving the site. Bobrow also said he would like to include some form of prize or promotion to those active users who share the most content, and generate more active, loyal users. Bobrow does realize that in order to further the campaign, more man power and money may have to be allocated, but this doesn't worry him. "This is a fairly new strategy; however it is clear that it is no fad, rather an efficient way of promoting my business, and for that I am willing to put forth whatever it may take to become more efficient."

Conclusion

As shown by the statistics, Otomix has greatly benefitted through their social media marketing campaign. This company provides a prime example of the statistics generated by the Awareness and Social Media Examiner reports in the demographic of the more intermediate users looking to advance their campaigns to the levels of expert users. Through increased use of the different platforms, and the frequency at which they monitor and measure their return, Otomix will be able to increase their revenues, sales, and exposure throughout the world. Another major factor in increased activity through their social media marketing campaigns is the common interests people looking to Otomix share. Bobrow says that the majority of his customers are all current or former Martial Artists, thus sharing common ground, and using the Otomix fan page as a forum to engage each other on common interests.

Pawpons, Inc.

The second example of a small business that has maximized its business operations by including a social media marketing campaign is Pawpons. This company was only an idea in CEO Linda Sperling's mind in March of 2011, and in what she claims as "an unheard of turnaround time," the business's website was up and running by June of last year. Pawpons is almost a form of social media itself, as its main business venture is to offer consumer with the best offers, promotions, and deals surrounding the industry of pet and animal care. The website does not pay any of the business to advertise on their website, rather business looking to reach a larger base of consumers through a website typically similar to Groupon.com, just focused specifically on pet care.

Originally, Pawpons did not implement a strong social media marketing campaign. While the company did have a Facebook fan page set up by the end of 2011, it was rather under utilized and unfrequented by the management. Only recently, since Sperling decided to hire an employee for the sole purpose of social media marketing has their marketing campaign shot off at an incredibly high success rate. Sperling says, "Before we started using social media marketing, we thought our business was successful, however since we have concentrated our efforts on Facebook and twitter campaigns, our business has exploded!" Since the hire of their social media coordinator in the beginning of March, 2012, the Facebook fan page saw an explosion of activity jumping from just under 500 fans, to 1,868 subscribers in a span of 14 days.

One of the main assets Pawpons was looking to increase by starting a more efficient social media marketing campaign was their customer reach. Sperling states that after they witnessed the massive jump in activity from the two weeks of Facebook activities, their revenues and sale generation also exploded. She reports that on three different deals, revenue generation of

a coupon jumped by over 50% following the gain of Facebook followers. Pawpons frequently reaches customers via e-mail newsletter on a daily basis. After their successful Facebook marketing efforts, Sperling states their daily newsletter listings rose by over 900 names. These statistics show just how valuable social media marketing can be to a small business in its early stages, as there areas of business grew from just the DC Metropolitan area, to over 10 states in the country.

Sperling states that one of the reasons she believes her social media marketing campaign is so successful is due to the nature of her corporation. She states that those who follow Pawpons are extremely passionate about animals, their pets, and animal rescue and this has provided her with an ability to connect on her fans on the most personal level. She states, “the animal industry is one of the fastest growing industries in our economy, more people spend money on their pets than they realize, and our website allows users to get the best deals to help them do so.” Sperling says that her Facebook page has even become a forum where some consumers post stories or pictures of their own pets, as well as offer Pawpons advice, recommendations, and feedback. This has been an invaluable asset to Pawpons, as it is fueled by the people who are interested in finding the best deals, connecting with her fans has only provided more opportunities to do so.

Facebook Campaign

Pawpons Facebook campaign provides interesting insight in comparison with the Social Media Examiner’s surveys. Sperling’s excitement for social media marketing directly coincides with the 66% of business owners with two employees who state that social media marketing is important for their business. (Stelzner, 2011) In fact, she could not agree more that social media marketing is the driving force behind the rapid explosion of her business. While the survey

reports that only those marketers with over a few months experience use social marketing platforms for more than 1 to 5 hours per week, Sperling reports that Pawpons has already surpassed that, clocking in almost 6 to 7 hours of time spent on Facebook and Twitter per week. The company averages anywhere from 2 to 3 post per day, and all posts on the Facebook page are immediately sent to twitter.

Twitter Campaign

While the company does have a twitter page, Sperling states that since the start of their efforts, Facebook has been their main form of social media marketing. While the two platforms are connected, the span of her reach on Facebook is almost 20 times that of her twitter follower reach. Sperling does however state that efforts to continue improvement on her twitter page are in the future, but Facebook will hold the bulk of their efforts for the mean time.

Conclusion

It is entirely clear that adopting a more aggressive Facebook marketing campaign has increased Pawpon's business. This case analysis provides an insight onto not only the power Facebook has for a business, but also exemplifies the new relationship formed by businesses and consumers in the social marketing age. Sperling states, "because of the passion and emotion consumers have for products, especially in the animal industry, it is unbelievable how I am able to use social media to connect with my consumers, and provide an online forum for consumers to connect with themselves."

Final Discussions

Conclusion

In light of all the statistics, evidence, and facts given in the above literature, the question becomes clear, what can't social media be used for? It has encompassed the world around us. Today, television shows like Sports Center on the World's leading sport's network constantly provide viewers with Twitter updates on the bottom-line of the news feed. Or one of pop culture's most valuable shows, American Idol, updates viewers with fan's tweets and mentions at real time speed. Social media is becoming a huge grey area in our society, as it is integrating into every part of our daily lives. For example, a decade ago when people read the New York Times, it was a synchronous communication from the writers to the singular reader. Today, people are able to bring an article up on their Ipad, computer, or medium of choice, and immediately have a forum of thousands of people to communicate and discuss thoughts, ideas, or feedback regarding the article. It is now ubiquitous in our society. A grey area between traditional and what is now considered social media has emerged. No longer black and white, marketing is taking a new road benefiting from both social media and traditional means. This is the future for existing, expanding and new businesses to profit and be successful. Social Media Marketing is now and most definitely the future. Nothing will have the ability to effectively compete with low cost of advertising, instant feedback in real time and an ever spiraling demographic with possibilities of going viral.

Social media marketing has shifted the power of our economy from corporations and brands to the consumers. Social media is the empowerment of the consumer via generated real time media; they now have the control and ability to decode synchronous and asynchronous

messages from brands, and transmit their own thoughts, feelings, and perceptions on to other consumers, and back to the businesses. The most important thing to realize is these transmissions are no longer the traditional word-of-mouth they used to be, but consumers now have millions of other consumers who follow the Internet and social media platforms to communicate with at their leisure. This benefits both the consumer and the business. Below are figures I have created to visualize this new feedback loop marketers must adhere to. Figure 3 shows the traditional communication cycle, where a business message was passed along to consumers through the traditional forms of business communication. Once the consumer has received the message, he or she then has the ability to pass the message to other consumers through word of mouth, or pass along readership. As previously stated, the average consumer only has the ability to reach about ten other consumers through word of mouth. This communication cycle is entirely one-dimensional; in other words, the consumer has no ability to provide feedback to the businesses. Figure 4 highlights the new elements social media marketing has added to the traditional mix. Opposed to the traditional linear cycle, this new communication is a loop, as social media allows for consumers to contact the business. In this system, the message is passed from the business to the consumer, and then consumers are able to engage and interact with those in their social networks. This provides businesses with a massive audience and opportunity to reach more people than ever before. Finally, this new cycle allows for the consumers to interact directly with the business, adding their own insights, feedback, criticism, or approval.

Figure 3: Traditional Consumer Communication Cycle

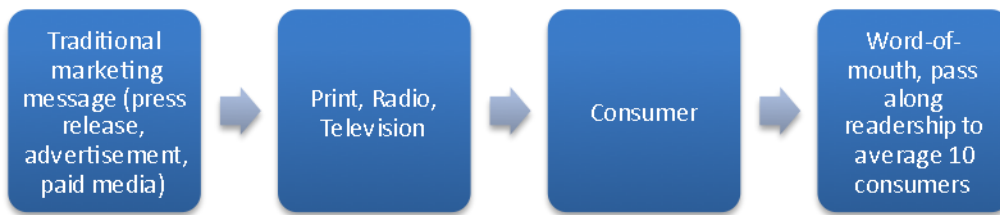


Figure 4: Social-Media Infused Communication



This shift in power provides our society with one of the most drastic changes seen in our economic market place. It provides our society with a new framework on how business to consumer relationships needs to take place. Businesses must be aware that their traditional forms

of advertising and consumer connection are no longer the necessary mediums through which they must go through. As Mangold and Faulds suggest, social media marketing and traditional marketing strategies must mesh with one another, seamlessly integrating into one solid strategy where the business engages the consumer to interact with the brand, and other consumers, but also with a deal of control that the impressions being made are positive. The following table highlights some of the major differences between traditional marketing and the new social media marketing.

Table One: Traditional Media vs. Social Media

Traditonal Media	Social Media
One Way Communication	Two-Way Communication
Slow, single channeled delivery	Multiple channel delivery
Unchangeable	Rapid, instantly updateable
Corporation Controlled	Consumer Controlled
Negative Perception	Encourages sharing
Single media delivery (print, tv, press release)	Availability to give mixed media
Hard to access old information	Information lasts forever

This thesis has provided crucial information about the platforms people are using, frequency and usage statistics, as well as a review of what industry analysts have already researched and gathered regarding social media. By examining the case studies provided, it is clear that small businesses are able to effectively capitalize on a social media marketing

campaign and able to grow their business in ways they had never imagined with minimum financial expenses. Whether through sales and revenue increase, or through increased demographics, awareness, and lead generation, one of the most important aspects of the social media marketing age is a marketer's ability to measure their social marketing effort's ROI. As discussed in Hoffman and Fodor's discussion in the MIT Sloan Management Review, the ability to measure and effectively analyze the success and efforts of a social media marketing strategy are key to not only creating an effective campaign, but also making sure that the campaign has a long and effective life. The discussion of social media marketing and ROI has proved that marketers are concerned with their social media efforts, however it is the difference of the hard and soft metrics they are measuring. As the industry is up and coming, it is much harder for marketer's to grasp their effort's effects on the harder metrics of ROI that were easily obtained through traditional marketing strategies. However it is certain that softer metrics of ROI, such as consumer to consumer and consumer to business engagement, as well as reach and brand awareness are much more important for social media marketing. I predict that as time goes on, and businesses start to create more and more hybrid marketing strategies, their ability to measure the hard metrics will increase, and marketers will be able to have more of a sense of how there plans are fitting together.

The fact is that social media marketing is most certainly on the rise, with no decline in sight. It has provided businesses with a way to contact consumers like never before, and marketers understand the opportunities that come with it. They are now able to reach huge demographics at instantaneous speeds with close to no cost at all. There lies the potential for their messages to go viral, potentially contacting more consumers than originally intended. Marketers are continuously changing strategies and adopting social media marketing into their

traditional efforts, as industry leaders have effectively combined both strategies, melding into one efficient marketing plan. Social marketing is here to stay, and it will only grow, and become more relevant as time goes on.

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EXPERIENCE:

Vector Marketing: *Advanced Sales Associate, 2011*

- Attended extensive 3 day training session, nationally recognized for their detail in teaching employees marketing tactics, networking strategies, and how to sell the product. The training program is currently a required course for Georgia Tech Marketing Majors.
- Reached my first promotion within the first 24 hours working.
- Sold \$9,000 in cutlery in 10 weeks, hitting 4 out of 6 promotional levels.
- Tailored skills in networking, time management, and selling by creating my own weekly schedules and appointments.

Washington Redskins Premium Seating Department: *Intern, 2010*

- Collaborated to help create and carry out marketing campaigns, brochures, and incentive packages to existing and prospective customers
- Maintained and updated customer databases by creating prospect accounts and making sure existing accounts were up to date
- Organized and ran marketing events with 300+ attendees to encourage them to buy or extend contracts
- Completed 40+ customer service phone calls per day to answer client inquiries and organize payment solutions for financially delinquent accounts

Bullis Bulldog Summer Camp: *Counselor, Summers 2008-10*

- Encouraged the young campers to participate and try new activities
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- Counseled the young campers to develop skills such as sharing, playing nicely, and keeping their hands to themselves throughout the day and solved or mediated any problems that surfaced
- Solved and accommodated any issues or concerns with parents about their children
- Supervised 4-5 year olds throughout daily activities including field trips to The National Zoo, Air and Space Museum, and the Aquarium

LEADERSHIP:

Sigma Alpha Epsilon

Vice President, January – May 2010

- Organized and scheduled house maintenance and cleanliness among members of the house
- Managed the Chapter House parking lot to make sure no one is blocked in or in the wrong spot; collect parking lot fees from members; co-ordinate with Walk's towing company to oversee that all cars are properly registered to be parked at the house
- Participated in house decision making as the second vote on the house Executive Board
- Oversaw that other members holding positions are properly fulfilling their duties, and if not, bring it under review at an Executive meeting
- Individually raised \$2,500 to contribute to an organizational total of over \$117,000 raised for Penn State's Dance Marathon

Sigma Alpha Epsilon

Recruitment Chairmen, September-October 2009

- Marketed the values and ideals of Sigma Alpha Epsilon to prospective freshman to increase interest for new membership
 - Planned and managed multiple rush events at the house to introduce prospective members to members and let members meet the freshman
 - Created and presented a Powerpoint slideshow to the 56 members in order to decide which 25 prospective members to bid
 - Generated Excel spreadsheets and Gmail groups in order to contact 200+ rushes on a nightly basis
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