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TITLE

Sportswear Marketing 2.0 – The Use of the Social Network in the Sportswear Industry

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The purpose of this work is to analyze the possible ways that companies could follow using the rising media system: the Social networks.

The field in which we will work is the sportswear industry, the reasons in the choice of this industry are multiple. The main are that the sportswear industry is for young and active people and the age range is people between the 14 and the 40 years. This kind of people results to be the main users of social network too.

The second reason that pushes the choice of this sector is the attention that the competitors of this market are turning to this media. Indeed numerous are the innovation that the leaders have done in the use of those tools in particular Nike, Puma and Adidas.

The choice of this companies is given by the attention that they are paying to this tool and to the training force that they have in their market.

What we want to understand is the efficiency of their strategies, if the Social Networks are a good way to attract customers and to make them as loyal followers of the brand, in order to change them from simple buyers to people who like the companies' ideas and the communities and all the movements around the firms.

Chapter 1

The Social Networks

Looking at a short history of the social networks we can see that from the start of these platforms people and scholars were attracted by them because those platforms gave the possibility to share information and carrying messages to people very far between them.

Several Social Networks have risen during the years but finally today there are some of them that can be considered as the market leaders and they can count the large part of the web population as their members, those platforms are Facebook, Twitter and MySpace.

The number of users registered in those websites is increasing. The large part of the users are adults, but they are just regularly visitors who check their pages only few days in a week for a short time. For this reason in the last years the teenagers are considered as the real resource of Sns. The real contribution of the teenager was not so much in number of inscriptions but above all in terms of number of hours spent on these sites.

Important factor for the users of the Social Network is the popularity, people who are popular have more self-esteem and it means that they will share more information than other people.

Important factors are the "others" too, indeed on those platforms the influence of the "neighbors" results to be very influent on users and it can push new-comer in joining a group, a page, a site only to appear popular to someone else.

Groups on Social Networks could be of several kinds, Armstrong and Hagel classified on-line communities into four different types: communities of interest, communities of relationship, communities of transaction and communities of practice.

Obviously firms cannot be indifferent to this networks were large amount of people were meeting, chatting, managing events and above all expressing judgments on products. So they had to start to use those networks. In their work Bughin and Chui found three possible clusters of networked companies: those who use the Web for interactions with employees; those forging links with customers and suppliers; and those combining internal and external linkages at high levels of effectiveness.

According to their statistical analysis there is "a significant correlations between market share gains and the latter two organizational types, those that are fully or externally networked, for this reason our focus will be on those kinds of companies.

The development of the relationships between customers is very interesting for marketers, for this reason companies who want to start in managing a campaign on social networks have to pay great attention to the most common and more relevant mistakes done when firms try to use the community online:

Build it and they will come: this problem rise when company decides to build a community and do not pay too much attention to it, hoping that will be populated automatically

The not Invented Here Syndrome: when the brand decides to ignore the already existing community

Let's keep it small so it's doesn't move the needle: sometimes the efforts done by a company could not be so effective

My company is smarter than I am: some company thought that the main reason of using their community was that people wanted directly speaking only with the company, so they avoided the possibility of interaction between users.

With those mistakes have to be also considered the four pillars for building an efficient platform:

Tribes versus market segment: designers have to get in count the traits of the groups and the market that they will represent

Human-centricity versus company-centricity: the main role of the company has to be direct

to the users and not to itself.

Network versus channel: the marketers have to understand that the network is not easily to manage. On the network the information flow rapidly and not always for the same ways, for this reason they could not think to manage the channel of communication but only to choose the best way to attract the large part of potential users

Social messiness versus process and hierarchy: a lot of companies prefer not engage with the "hyper-sociality" because sometimes it could be a difficult way and they can just obtain a big headache for the messy of information that they will receive.

But why the use of 2.0 technologies are so important? There are many reasons that push this increase, the main are that 2.0 technologies can help in improving collaboration and communications within most companies. These technologies should be assessed to determine real impact, and a number of assessment techniques (interviews, observations and surveys) can be used to measure impact over time across multiple business areas. Other improvement can be obtained in collaboration and communication across multiple vertical industries. The social networks appear as a useful stuff in order to understand the needs and requests of customers.

Related to this discussion is important to understand the image of the brand. It is one of the most important elements in this strategy, indeed it is the starting and the ending point of this work on the web. It is the starting point because it is a way that people can use to achieve discussion and communities where people are speaking about products or companies and it is also the ending point, because the aim is the increase of the brand equity.

A final annotation in order to build an efficient strategy of advertising and communication is that companies do not have only on 2.0 technologies, they have to use them in collaboration with other media as television, radio, paper ecc. Following this way companies will assure the best visibility to them and be quite sure that large mass will be attracted in their network.

Chapter 2

The Sportswear Industry

Before to go further and understanding how Nike, Puma and Adidas have used all this information to build their own social network campaign we need to better analyze the

composition of the sportswear industry.

Across the world buying clothes, shoes, hats and what else is a huge business that count around 1,972.2 billion of US dollar and it shrank by 3,4% in 2008. According to the previsions of Datamonitor in 2013 the whole is forecasted that it is going to value 2,751.2 billion of Us dollars with an increase of the 34,5%. When we speak about sportswear we mean the union of the textile part and accessories for ball sports (baseball, softball, basketball, soccer, football, volleyball, cricket, hockey, etc), adventure sports (camping, hunting and firearms, skin diving and scuba, water ski-ing, surfboarding and sailboarding, etc), fitness (exercise bikes, home gym, rowing machine, hand/wrist/ankle weights, treadmill, jump rope, stepper), golf (clubs, bags, balls, gloves, carts, etc), racket sports (tennis, squash, badminton, etc), winter sports (downhill and cross-country ski-ing, snowboarding, etc), and other sports such as archery, billiards, indoor games, bowling, in-line skating, martial arts, wheel sports, pogo sticks, and fishing equipment.

The industry is so big that we have to do a partition within it. Indeed we can split this in two parts: in the first we put the clothes and accessories related to sports activities and in the second we will take in light the footwear side, that can be considered as important as the first and as a driving force for the sector too.

The sportswear sector, strictly considered, counts revenues equal to 74,8 billion Us dollars in the 2009 with a constant growth in the last year and a forecast that this market is increasing of a 2% until the 2014. Of these revenues the large part of the profits are from the "ball sports equipment" that assures to the industry revenues for $13,3 billion equal to the 17,8% of the total sector. The global market for sports equipment is fragmented despite the presence of huge brands as Nike, Adidas or Puma, this variety of players is given above all by the possibility to focus on several products for specific activities or on the whole range. Retailing plays an important role and it offers some economies of scale such as bulk buying, but the possibility to enter in the market with a low budget operating on a small scale are also frequent. The power of the buyers is high because they can decide the faith and the success of a company deciding to buy or not it. Supplier also have a good importance because in this market in which people require a good performance of the products at a good price and the only way to achieve them is through the research and development and the possibility to save money exploiting low-cost factories.

A threats for the companies in this market could be the possibility of new competitors' entrance. They could have the opportunity to conquer portion of the market entering in it

with a small scale and a small investment but exploiting a better focus on customers or through the use of a new technology they could increase their position. The substitutes could be middle-high because there could be a substitution of the sport activity in general, so avoiding the necessity of wearing them, or, for people who wear athletic apparel for casual, the choice to wear other clothes. Our analysis on the 5 Porter's forces ends with the risk of rivalry. It is quite high because the market for sportswear and equipment is very fragmented.

The footwear market in general is a sector that guarantee something like 196.3 billion of Us dollar and sports shoes are the 30-35% of this, so it is easy to understand why we could consider the footwear market as a market apart.

Looking at the 5 forces of Porter we will see a similar situation compared to the sportswear industry, the great difference is in the case of substitutes, indeed here this risk is very low because it is difficult that people can use another pair of shoes to play sports and be equally satisfied by the performance.

Important for this industry is also to understand the trend in the different countries. We have found that in the main regions, US, Europe and China the situation is similar but with some significantly differences. In the US, the most profitable market for this industry, the training sectors are the adventure sports and the ball sports. In Us the risk of rivalry is quite low given the presence of real giants as Nike and Adidas who hold the large part of the market but here, more than other countries, retailer have strong powers.

In Europe we find a different training sector, here is the golf sportswear and equipment that assures the major revenues, followed by adventure sports and ball sports. In this continent we have also to make a focus to understand which are the most profitable countries. At first place there is Germany, followed by France and the United Kingdom. The analysis of the 5 forces is very close to the American one, the only difference is for the transportation costs that could result higher than the other case.

The final country to analyze is China. This emerging market is theater of a great increase in the sportswear purchasing, indeed today China is the second in Asia but looking to its rate of increase (5,9% annually) very probably is going to be the first in the region. China is a particular case compared to the other two regions, first of all because here the main sports are the ball sports at the first place, followed by racket sports. Also in the analysis of the forces of this market we find some differences, above all for the threat of rivals. Indeed in the country the situation is quite similar to the others except for this part, because in this

region very numerous is the number of small factories that have guaranteed a better focus and closure to customers and the possibility to subtract large piece of the market to bigger companies.

Looking more in particular to the main competitors we can start with an analysis of the Nike Inc. The company started in the 1964 as a distributor of Asics Onitsuka shoes called Blue Ribbon Sports and in the 1971 became an independent firm that started to create its sportswear collection under the name Nike, as the Greek god.

Important for the growth of the nation were several strategic choices, over all the acquisition campaign that started in the 80's with the purchasing of Cole Hann and that have is peek in the 21th century with the acquisition of famous brands as Converse and Umbro.

Fundamental in its history were also the advertising campaign that Nike promoted and the choice of its ambassadors who have brought great importance and visibility to the firm.

A final successful and distinctive factor of the firm was the innovation that Nike always tried to bring in their products from the first pair of Air shoes to the last innovation called Nike+.

To increase its presence worldwide the company has a new organization consisting of six geographic areas. This new setting reduces management layers and increased focus on core category business areas, driving greater efficiencies and stronger consumer connections. The plan had six new geographies: North America, Western Europe, Eastern/Central Europe, Greater China, Japan and Emerging Markets.

The biggest rival for Nike is the German company Adidas AG. This company was founded in 1949 by Adi Dassler and started as specialized brand in soccer equipment.

In the history of Adidas, as for Nike, fundamental was the strategy about acquisition. The first relevant one was in the 1997 when the German brand bought the Salomon Group and this acquisition guaranteed to the company a wide range of brands.

In recent times the most important acquisitions of Adidas was the agreements with TaylorMade that guarantees to it the presence in the golf sector, and in the 2005 the acquisition of the Valley apparel Company that assures to Adidas the control on Reebok International the third company of the market. To finance this operation Adidas had to sell the Solomon Group.

In the history of Adidas the Sponsorship agreements that the company signed, had great importance. They guaranteed to it a great visibility and huge returns. Of those have to be

reminded the ones with the Olympic Games of Beijing, with the NBA as official supplier of uniforms and other products and the right to be the only distributors in Europe, with the UEFA as global sponsorship for the Euro 2008, 2012 and 2016 and to be the one of the main sponsor at the World Cup in 2006 and 2010.

The third firm in the sportswear market is Puma AG. This German company was established in the 1924 by the same founder of Adidas. In the 1948 Rudolf Dassler became the real founder calling it Puma and producing the first pair of soccer shoes.

The history of Puma is quite different from the other two companies, indeed this firm was more time acquired then buyer. In 1997 Monarchy/Recency Enterprise acquired Proventus that had previously bought Puma, in this way the American company became the Puma's majority shareholders. The next year Puma acquired the company LogoAthletic to enter in the Uk market. In 2002 Monarchy/regency sold its shareholding in Puma to a broad base of institutional investors and two years later Mayfar, an asset management company increased its shares in Puma to 25%.

In 2007 there was the final selling of Puma, Mayfar sold its 25.14% stakes in Puma to Sapardis, a subsidiary of the French holding PPR (Pinault-Printemps-Redoute).

Important in the Puma history was first of all the strong use that they have done of their subsidiaries. Indeed the German company can account subsidiaries in the large part of the world and the firm gives to them a considerable independence in the management.

Another success factor for Puma was its strategy. Puma, knowing the difference in brand equity with the other leaders of the market, decided to start a different policy. It tried to be the partner of the niches sports and niches teams in order to tightly unify its brand image with the sport or the team.

On this three companies we could do a common SWOT analysis highlighting the differences between them. The points of strength for those three firms are first of all the possibility to count on important innovation teams that always assure to them the possibility to be a step forwards to others. Another point in common is the worldwide diffusion that those companies have. In this way they can better achieve everyone in all the regions of the world. In the case of Adidas and Nike the brand equity and the fame around the companies are a strong enough to assure a good prospective. Looking at their weaknesses we still have to remark differences between those firms, because while for Adidas and Nike the trickiest problem is the pension liabilities and the too high

independence of the foreign subsidiaries, in the case of Puma for sure the greatest problem is the distance that it has to overcome to achieve the leaders in market share.

For all three companies the main opportunities come from the sponsorship agreements that they have done (very different between them) but that can help the companies in trying to increase their market share.

Finally we have the possible threats, they have in common the risk of the management of their manufacturers in regions where there are lower costs. Those regions are very turbulent and there is also the risk that sometimes companies have to move their factories.

Chapter 3

Analysis of the strategies of the main companies

After that we have seen an investigation on Social Networks and we have analyzed the sportswear industry in particular, it is time to understand how the main companies of this market use this new media. We have three really different situations:

Nike

The American company in 2006 created in collaboration with Google a soccer themed channel called *Joga Bonito*. On this platform users have the possibility to share information, commenting the matches of the Soccer World Cup and they could also watch videos of their favorite players. This social network was a success but it had some technical problems and users' accounts were violated. So Nike and Google were forced to close the website. But Nike had understood the power of this new media so decided to launch a new social network, this time dedicated to runners, called Nike+.

As also explained by the introducing video of the websites Nike+ is shared in two parts:

Monitoring exercises with Nike+: this part consists in the use of a technology created by Nike and Apple that enables a Nike shoe to "talk to" a runner trough his iPod Nano, wirelessly transmitting runner's stats to the iPod, with the possibility to download the stats on the laptop using the Apple software iTunes, once the training has finished.

Nike+ Online: "Where everything comes together". Here users have the possibility to use multiple functions and desktop widgets, where athletes can track their own progresses and goal and hook up with the largest community of runners, compare performance with them and also managing competition or meeting among them.

The strength points of this Social Network are the easy interface and the possibility to meet numerous people who play the same sport and have the same passions. A useful tool is also the direct link that the company offers to customers, indeed there are special pages in which people can discuss about the "perfect shoes" and then trying to create it through *NikeId.com.*

Nike had acknowledged of the main errors that can push a Social Network to failure, and for this reason, its strategy in creating Nike+ was quite different from other companies. The firm from Oregon did not try to create a virtual community through a build-it-and-they-will-come, an approach centered on a brand or specific product. On the contrary, the project simply started as a clever way to combine music and running. Through this campaign Nike has started to give a price to customers themselves and not anymore as just sneakers' buyers. Users are members of a running club and staying in this group they will be more motivated consumers of Nike's products.

The concept that appears clear is that this running Social Network is not just a marketing and advertising campaign trying to push a customer in doing its purchase, Nike+ continues to engage the consumers after that the transaction has finished, keeping the runners motivated and connected with each other and with the swoosh brand. Nike changed the game, now people know the experiences of other people and not only what the firm wants them to know. And users seem to react well to this new strategy, indeed when the website organized a world marathon 800,000 people participated. However even if more focused on this kind of strategy Nike have also care for the use of the common Social Networks as Facebook, indeed in the last year it created an application to simulate a basket tournament were basket lovers can freely play.

Instead of Nike, Adidas has decided to follow a very different strategy. The first use of social networks made by the company was in 2007, when the company started to roll out a global digital drive across this platforms, above all MySpace and Pzico to support the launch of its MicroBounce running shoes.

The German giant understood which was the best path to take and it realized that creating only a micro-site, or only a viral program, or using just an add on the pages was not a winner strategy, so it had to use all these three operations to create a positive association.

Adidas has also understood that nowadays Facebook is one of the most used networks and that it have to deal with its functions.

For this reason the German company decided to base all its Adidas all Original campaign using Facebook as the main media. Adidas all Originals is a sportswear division of the firm that consists in the revitalization of items very similar to the clothes and trends of the 70's and it give to people the possibility to customize them as much as they are willing to.

Adidas started to promote cool events, parties, meetings and all activities where people could meet and stay together, on the social network all the interested people could gather and they can share all the kinds of information, from the location of the parties to the favorite sport or music, naturally passing through comments on the clothing line or other suggestions on how to increase the brand image of Adidas.

In doing this strategy Adidas had to take care of four main tools that it can use in order to reach customers and fans: the profile/page, the creation of groups, the use of applications and the management of events. Those instruments will drive users in doing some operations and actions that Adidas wants them to do, in order to have a better focus on customers' ideas and needs. Those objectives are:

Sharing of news and comments: on the profile of Adidas Originals there is a newsfeed, in which are shown events, promotions and applications posted by Adidas's staff. In this way fans will be informed about all the news of Adidas Original, by simply checking their Facebook page, avoiding to go on the official page. All the reactions to the announcement will be published on the users' profiles and it will be visible in the highlights of their friends' profile in order to attract the attention of more people. Users can express their reaction to the news in three ways: or writing comments (positive and negative reactions) or clicking on the "Like" button or sharing on their profile (both positive).

Sharing Product Descriptions: Adidas has created several links between the social network and its own website, where there is the possibility for customers to find the catalogue of all the products of Adidas Original. They have also the possibility to post their favorite products on their own Facebook profiles and share them with their friends.

Your Area: this is an external page which can be reached from the profile of Adidas Original. The function of this page is to appeal to the local audience and offer a deeper focus to the countries' activities. The Your Area has also the final goal to help you in finding the local stores closer to you and it is an helpful tool for the shops to target their specific fans.

Finally we can say that in this Adidas' marketing activities there are some advantages and some disadvantages too. The main advantages are that the company can boost its branding

presence, the campaign can generate the consumer insight and Adidas can use this knowledge for its market research and later for launching new products establishing a real dialogue with costumers. The main disadvantages are given because the company cannot effectively convert members in sale and for the difficulties in their management and monitoring.

In order to avoid those problems Adidas has started few months ago a new project similar to the Nike+, called Adidas MyCoach. On this external platform people have the possibility to create their gym exercise, to upload stats and to evaluate them. But also in this new platform Adidas decided to build a strict connection with Facebook and the only way to comment them is through posts on Facebook.

The last strategy that we have to analyze is the Puma case. As we have said before, Puma have a considerable distance compared to the two other firms. For this reason it has to look for all the possible ways to gnaw the spread.

In the use of social networks Puma reflects this behavior and indeed it uses a middle strategy that collocates itself between the Nike's and the Adidas' strategies, the goal of this campaign "is to celebrate everyone who does of the night fun and of the life in group a real sport". It is a platform directed to young people and sportsman of everyday, who thrive in the nightlife and prefer playing darts, pool, and foosball with friends at the bar rather than working out at the gym, to all the athletes who enjoy the thrill of competition in a fun and social environment or, to use the main sentence of the page: "Here's to the afterhours athlete". It is a good example of how to utilize a cross channel marketing in order to drive brand awareness, build a community and increase sales.

Puma Social is one of the first branded social aggregators, on the platform it is possible to find all the typical functions of the common Social Networks as publishing links or news, sharing photos or videos, tagging and other similar actions and also the possibility to refresh the profiles through the video-blog functions.

Someone could consider it as an alternative to a Facebook's page, but this could be a huge mistake, indeed Puma's idea is to give people the chance to import or export feeds from other social networks as Facebook, YouTube, Twitter and FriendFeed, in order to keep in touch with other web-members. Puma Social works in collaboration with other media too to increase the number of potential users and to give the idea of a community open to everyone of all ages, sexes, sportive or not, in order to increase the traffic on its channel and to give people the possibility to be only followers and not necessarily driving users. It

is an important point that has to be remarked, because it gives the possibility to follow the events through several channels and to reach the online shop, not only through the official network.

Facebook's application can always be taken out to the official page to increase the possibility that people join the community branded Puma and to better communicate the Puma's message. Important are also the links with the other tools as Twitter and Flickr, where we can also find other Puma communities.

Chapter 4

People's evaluation of the three strategies

But the large part of those strategies are just a prototypes. For this reason to understand if the companies are following a right way or they have to change something I decided to manage a survey. For the structure of this I will follow the 9 Step Process explained by prof. Shelley of the Harvard university.

The kind of questions that I will present to the interviewed is different between them. The first part will be general questions about sports preferences, sport activity, if they prefer wearing them also as casual apparel or only for training.

After this part I will move to questions about their relationship with the brands: the importance that they have in their purchasing choice and what they think about Puma, Nike and Adidas, what is their general judgment about these brands and which are their best products. The final questions will be about the strategies of these brands in the use of the social networks, what the people think about them and what they look as the qualities and fault of them.

The way that I chose to analyze data is the Chi-Squared test in order to better understand what are the real consideration of the people about the strategies and what are the reasons that push them in stating them.

The information that we obtained about each single firm are:

Adidas: Facebook is the "leader" of the "social network market". It can count the 97% of the respondent registered in, from this data we also know that the 71% of them consider himself as an intense user, spending more than 2 hour on this platform. For this reason Facebook seems to be an important way to achieve large population through an easy way.

Looking at these data the strategy of exploiting this channel appears the most natural and efficient. On our Chi-square test we have found that intense users prefer the Adidas solution, indeed the 39% of them like it, the motivation that they gave are that it reduces the timing to check answers. They say it is easy to check news and do not need time to log in external websites, there is also the possibility to post links to their friends and to co-operate with the Adidas page as it was a "friend". People recognized the easiness of checking news in Facebook (36%) and an half of them recognize in Adidas this feature and would prefer its idea to the competitors' ones.

People would prefer Adidas community because they do not feel comfortable with other platform external to the American one. Indeed from the questionnaires resulted that a 40% of respondent have a lack of faith in the efficiency and utility of external websites.

The last consideration about the Adidas' strategy is the difficulties that can rise in the use of Facebook. People who expressed a negative judgment about this kind of campaign do not consider it useful and consider it more as one of the normal advertising campaign that overload the profile than a community that carry a message behind the simply purchasing. What we found here is if this feeling of a part of the population is a quite big obstacle to the Adidas strategy. In order to understand it we analyzed what is the percentage of the people who have this sensation and still prefer Adidas. The first consideration is encouraging for the German company, indeed only the 23% of the respondents have this idea about Facebook campaign, but what is not good for the firm is that of this people the 79% of them see it as an huge obstacle that drive them in do not joining the Adidas policy.

What seems to be tricky for the firm is a too strict relationship with this social network could cause some problems, indeed the success of the Adidas' strategy strictly depends on the Facebook reputation and it have the risk to be considered as one of the multiple advertising of the web or worst one of the numerous spam that infect the social network.

Nike and Puma : after the consideration on Adidas we have to analyze some aspects of the Nike's and Puma's strategy. At the start I put together those strategies because the main think that we want to understand is the utility that could give the use of a branded social network. The first consideration that we have to do is about the preferences of the people, what I would investigate is about the preferences of the people on social networks if they are favorable to an external one or not. The 54% of the people have a good judgment on external social networks different from the commons. Of this piece of population the 48% prefer the Nike and Puma strategy to the alternatives, it is an interrogative point because it

is good percentage but not too much to be completely satisfied. In this case we also have to take a further division, because it is true that both companies have an own social network, but there is a difference between them too. Assumed that people are favorable to external websites, they prefer them totally external or with links to the commons?

From our analysis we get that people prefers the Nike+ idea to the Puma's one. It means that people would prefer a strategy that does not have too much links and relationship with the commons Social Networks, instead of one who use the external platform as a starting point or an holder for links on external website more known.

These data could be seen as a success for the Nike+ strategy, but we also have to consider a further step: the importance that people give to a brand, in few words how important is the brand in the choice of the products, of the branded parties and finally in the choice of the web-network. In this way we will have a clearer idea about the precedent results. Brand results to be important for almost an half of the respondents (48%) of this the 38% of them are more attracted by branded network and, given the bigger brand equity of Nike, seems obvious that the American company will attract more users. In the survey is also enlighten another preference, among people who give importance to the brand, for Nike (38%) very far from the preferences for Puma (14%).

The last consideration that we have to do concern about the Nike's idea, what we want to understand is if the focus on specific groups could give in some ways benefits to the companies or not. In the case of Nike+ it is a social network not for everyone but only for people who practice run, of all the kind, professional runners, amateur, who practice it as a secondary sport or who want just an help in starting it. What we analyze is if active people feel useful this social network. The percentage that we obtain is that the 31% of sportive users appreciate Nike+. It is good number but shows that Nike have to do more to be appreciated by all the sportive and running community.

The final conclusions on the two campaigns is that the strategy to go out of the commons Social Network is well accepted by the mass of respondents, the problem of doing it could be above all for Puma. The brand equity and the importance of the company has reflections on the will of the user in joining one community or the other. This is a good point for Nike but not for Puma who could see all its efforts wasted by the spread with competitors, so the idea to hold a strict linkage with Facebook and Twitter in order to attract the large part of people seems plausible.

The only advise that both companies have to take in mind is that people seem not to feel that this new communities give more importance to them than others, so they have to try to increase the freedom of their social network to attract more users.

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