

Department of Business and Management
Master Thesis in Marketing Management

***Social Media Consumer Engagement: a Study on the Most
Popular Fashion Brands' Fan Pages.***

SUPERVISOR:

Prof. Peter Leeflang

CANDIDATE:

Angelo Lombardi

ID 632721

CO-SUPERVISOR:

Prof. Simona Romani

Academic year 2011-2012

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction	5
Chapter 1 - Social Media	7
1.1 The evolution of Media and Internet	7
1.2 Web 2.0	9
1.3 What is Social Media?	12
1.4 User Generated Content (UGC)	15
1.5 Classification of social media	18
1.5.1 Collaborative projects	22
1.5.2 Blogs	23
1.5.3 Content communities	25
1.5.4 Social networking sites	26
1.5.5 Virtual game/social worlds	28
1.6 Most popular social networking sites	32
1.6.1 Facebook	32
1.6.2 Twitter	34
1.6.3 Google+.....	35
1.6.4 LinkedIn	37
1.6.5 Pinterest.....	39
1.6.5 A brief comparison.....	41
Chapter 2 - Consumer Engagement and Social Media Marketing	45
2.1 Enterprise 2.0	45
2.2 Consumer engagement and CGC	49
2.2.1 Consumer online brand-related activities.....	56
2.2.2 Customer engagement value	59
2.3 Viral Marketing and Word of Mouth	63
2.4 Marketing and communication through Social Media	68
2.4.1 Social Networking: building a relationship with users	69
2.4.2 Communicating through the blog.....	73
2.4.3 Communicating through other instruments: forum, podcast, videos, photos.	77
2.5 Communicating and promoting through Facebook	81
2.5.1 Facebook Fan Page	82

2.5.2 Strategies for effective Facebook wall posts.....	86
2.5.3 Use of emotions in posts	88
2.5.4 Use of endorsers in posts.....	90
Chapter 3 - Facebook Posts Analysis	93
3.1 Method and objectives	93
3.2 Advertising content codification	95
3.3 Performance variables	97
3.4 Results and findings	99
3.4.1 Testimonial presence.....	103
3.4.2 Valence of emotional appeal.....	107
3.4.3 Type of informational appeal.....	110
3.4.4 Type of conative post.....	113
3.5 Discussion	117
Conclusions.....	119
References.....	121

INTRODUCTION

The evolution of digital communication and the enormous potential offered by Web 2.0 favored the global affirmation of new Social Media.

Social Media are new innovative tools that collect millions of users all around the globe and they offer several possibilities and opportunities to companies that want to develop communication and marketing strategies while gaining competitive advantage on their competitors.

The latest developments in the field of marketing, communication and information are leading to new innovative business and consumption models, in which users are gaining a leading role and are increasingly important.

Thanks to the higher degree of interactivity possessed by new technologies and social media, companies interact with customers, treat them as organizational assets, learn about them and develop a level of intimacy with them, in order to build long lasting and profitable relationships. This ability of marketing to engage and endear consumers is an important factor contributing to product adoption, thereby driving sales and brand loyalty.

Consumer engagement becomes so the most important concept and the central point of this study.

The final aim of this research work is to carry out an empirical study on a sample of Facebook posts, created by several different fashion brands and placed on their fan pages. The work consists in conducting a content analysis in order to relate the characteristics of the posts to users' engagement.

In the first Chapter we will introduce new technologies and Social Media, giving some definitions of them and describing their evolution. Then we will provide a Social Media classification and we'll explain in a better way, one by one, each category. In the last part of the Chapter, we will focus on description of the most popular social networking sites, which is the category we are interested in for the purpose of this study, and we will provide a brief comparison between them.

In Chapter 2 we will introduce the idea of consumer engagement, that is the main concept of this thesis, and we will proceed with the literature review on this subject. We will talk about consumer online brand-related activities, which have important consequences for products and brands, and about consumer engagement value. We will then give definitions of viral marketing and word of mouth, and we will continue describing all the communication tools (social network, blogs, forum, podcast) that can be used by companies to generate conversations with users and to implement marketing strategies. At the end we will focus on Facebook, that is the most relevant social network for our analysis, and we'll talk about fan pages, its characteristics and best strategies for effective wall post, with particular attention to the use of emotions and the testimonial presence.

In the last Chapter we will show the results of our research work on a sample of 523 posts, created by the most popular fashion brands and published on their fan pages. Results of the analysis will be divided in two part: a simpler preliminary frequency analysis and a more specific analysis with the use of ANOVA. We will explain the methodology we used and the objectives of the study, specifying some research questions. We will describe dependent variables and independent variables, and we will show the results for each one of the most interesting factor variables and their relationship with final measures of user engagement such as number of likes, comments and shares. In the last part of the chapter we will present the final findings, giving answer to our research questions, and we will discuss them and the related implications for companies' marketing and communication strategies.

CHAPTER 1. SOCIAL MEDIA

Kaplan A. and Haenlein M. (2010) defines Social Media as "a group of Internet-based applications that build on the ideological and technological foundations of Web 2.0, and that allow the creation and exchange of user-generated content. [...] Web 2.0 represents the ideological and technological foundation, while User Generated Content can be seen as the sum of all ways in which people make use of Social Media".

User Generated Content (UGC) or Consumer Generated Media (CGM) , are terms used since 2005 to refer to the various forms of content that are publicly available and created by end-users and in order to be considered as such, according to the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development, it requires: to be published on a publicly accessible website or on a social networking site, to show a certain amount of creative effort, and to have been created outside of professional routines and practices (OECD, 2007). The easiness in the use of services and interfaces on the Web has allowed the user generate contents to grow to the point of becoming a mass phenomenon, so anyone who has the ability, can produce, upload and share different content on the net, from photos to video movies, from reviews to simple comments on articles, from music to games.

There are several classification of Social Media based on different aspects, but the most used and popular classification is indeed the Kaplan an Haenlein one. They created a systematic classification scheme, based on the two key elements of social media and the theories behind them.

The first element is composed by: *Social Presence* that social media allow between two users, namely the acoustic, visual, and physical contact that can be achieved (It depends on intimacy of the medium and on immediacy of the medium; and *Media richness*, amount of information social media allow to be transmitted in a given time interval.

The second element is represented by: *Self-Presentation*, since in any type of social interaction people have the desire to control the impressions other people form of them and they wish to create an image that is consistent with one's personal identity; and *Self-Disclosure* that is the conscious or unconscious revelation of personal information (thoughts, feelings, likes) consistent with the image one would like to give.

The combination of the two dimensions leads to the classification in table 1.1

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

Table 1.1: Classification of social media by social presence/media richness and self-presentation/self-disclosure. (Source: Kaplan M., Haenlein M., 2010)

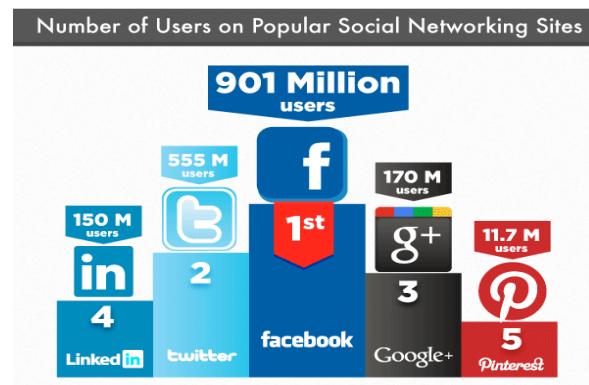
- 1- Collaborative projects enable the joint and simultaneous creation of content by many end-users and are, in this sense, probably the most democratic manifestation of UGC. The main idea of collaborative projects is that the joint effort of many actors might lead to a better outcome than any actor could achieve individually. The category includes wikis and social bookmarking applications. The most important example is the online encyclopedia Wikipedia, a wiki currently available in more than 230 different languages.
- 2- Blogs, which represents the earliest form of Social Media, are special types of websites that usually display date-stamped entries in reverse chronological order. There are many different types of blogs, differing not only in the type of content (by genre or by media type), but also in the way that content is delivered or written (personal blog, corporate blog, reverse blog).
- 3- The main objective of content communities is the sharing of media content between users. After registering for an account, individuals upload their materials, describe them, and make them publicly available. Content communities exist for a wide range of different media contents: text, audio, video. The most popular content communities are: YouTube for videos, Flickr for sharing photos, Slideshare for PowerPoint presentations.
- 4- Social networking sites are applications that enable users to connect by creating personal information profiles, inviting friends and colleagues to have access to those profiles, and sending e-mails and instant messages between each other. These personal

profiles can include any type of information, including photos, video, audio files, and blogs. Social networking sites allow us to digitally represent our connections with other users and to model our network of social relationships by requesting and accepting “friends”.

- 5- Virtual game/social worlds are platforms that replicate a three dimensional environment in which users can appear in the form of personalized avatars and interact with each other as they would in real life. In this sense, virtual worlds are probably the ultimate manifestation of Social Media, as they provide the highest level of social presence and media richness of all applications discussed thus far. The most popular examples are World of Warcraft and Second Life.

For the relevance of our study, the most important category on the social media classification scheme is the one of social networking sites and, in particular, in chapter 3 our attention will focus only on Facebook.

According to characteristics such as number of users (Figure 1.1)¹, number of monthly visits, time spend by average user per month and estimated user worth, the most popular and famous social networking sites are: Facebook, Twitter, Google+, LinkedIn and Pinterest.



CHAPTER 2. CONSUMER ENGAGEMENT AND SOCIAL MEDIA MARKETING

Consumer engagement and CGC

Thanks to the higher degree of interactivity possessed by new technologies and social media, companies interact with customers and try to engage them through several marketing actions and promotional campaigns, in order to build long lasting relationships. This ability of marketing to engage and endear consumers is an important factor contributing to product adoption, thereby driving sales and brand loyalty.

¹ Number of users on most popular social networking sites. (2012)

(Source: Infographic by Go-gulf.com. <http://ijustdid.org/2012/06/social-media-users-comparison>)

Customer engagement is considered as a behavioral manifestation toward the brand or firm that goes beyond transactions (Verhoef et al., 2010).

Examples of customer engagement behaviors include: talking about the brand to friends and family, word-of-mouth activity, recommendations, helping other customers, blogging and writing reviews. In the Web 2.0 context, consumer engagement is visible through the means of publishing, posting comments, subscribing, bookmarking, emailing and networking. When measuring engagement, the level of user interaction is an obvious and important component, and each of the users' action indicate a different level of engagement (consumer online brand-related activities can be categorized into three dimensions that correspond to a path of gradual involvement with brand-related content on social media: consuming, contributing and creating). A user who comments on an organizational post on a corporate blog is at a higher level of engagement than one who simply reads the post.

Customer engagement is also strictly related to the concept of Customer Generated Content, since the creation of content from users, and more specific from consumers, is considered the expression of the highest level of involvement and engagement. Consumers, especially those who are members of active communities, are capable, skillful and proficient, in the creation of high-quality consumer generated content, with high resonance among other Internet users. The growth of UGC has been astounding and commercial firms have been quick to seize upon UGC as a new way to promote and create engagement with their brands.

Customers can generate value to the firm through more ways than only their purchase behavior. Thus, firms should focus on customer engagement value (CEV), which offers a more complete evaluation of how much an individual customer is contributing to the firm in multiple ways. According to Kumar et al. (2010) the value of customer engagement is comprised of four core dimensions: customer purchasing behavior, customer referral behavior, customer influencer behavior and customer knowledge behavior.

Viral Marketing and Word of Mouth

The technological innovation of the last decade has changed the way in which companies and people communicate. It is necessary, nowadays, that organizations begin to develop non-conventional marketing strategies, relying on tools offered by the Web 2.0 and the

ease of connection, relationship and distribution of content. Connected marketing, viral marketing, word of mouth, and use of social media as new communication tools are all concepts related to non-conventional marketing.

Word-of-Mouth is the sharing of information about products, services or promotions between a consumer and a friend or colleague. The transfer of information that spontaneously takes place between people, such as friend's advices or recommendations for example on products or services, can influence the purchasing behavior more than any advertisement. The interaction between word of mouth and the exponential growth of social media leads to viral marketing. Viral marketing can be defined as "electronic word of mouth whereby some form of marketing message related to a company, brand, or product is transmitted in an exponentially growing way, often through the use of social media applications" (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2011). Viral marketing is the promotion of a company or its products and services through a persuasive message designed to spread, typically online, from person to person.

Marketing and communication through social media

Web 2.0 offers a variety of communication tools that can be used by companies to generate conversations with users and to implement marketing strategies. The most used tools, in addition to a corporate website necessary to provide a physical presence of the company in the Internet, are represented by social networks, blogs, forums, podcasts. Thanks to these tools, the company is able to develop a relationship with its stakeholders based on conversations, which contents are constantly exchanged and enriched by all users. This will form a bond of trust between group members and the company itself, whose business proposals can be discussed and be useful to spread the brand image and product value, influencing purchasing decisions. Consumers, in fact, if involved, are more likely to express their own opinions and experiences about a product or brand and this generates a fruitful exchange of information.

Communicating and promoting through Facebook

Facebook is now the most popular and used Social Network in the world with over 900 million users. Facebook's potential, in communication and marketing field, is high and, if exploited in the right way, can provide a great advantage for companies. This potential depends on an effective use of the different tools and services provided by Facebook, in

particular the possibility to create fan pages, the most used Facebook's tool by companies to promote their products and brands. A fan page is like a corporate website internal to the Social Network and it is composed by several sections. Public profiles allows administrators to use Insights, in order to monitor statistics related to the page. Facebook Insights, the free metrics dashboard and analytics tool for fan pages, provides page administrators with visibility into how their posts and content are engaging fans. It also allows companies to get to know the characteristics of their audience, so that they can define more targeted communication strategies.

General strategies and tips for effective Facebook wall posts are: keep the post short and sweet, post when people are listening, determine the best day to post, use instructions, use "softer sell" keywords and ask questions at the end.

Other key elements that can characterize the content of a post and that can have a fundamental role in generating user engagement are the use of emotions in posts and the use of endorsers/testimonial.

1- We can define an emotion simply as a valenced affective reaction to perceptions of situations. Several studies focused on the emotional responses to advertising and some scholars have attempted to order the universe of emotions by identifying a set of basic or fundamental emotions, although there is no widespread agreement concerning the number or the nature of basic emotions. Laros F. (2002) developed a hierarchy of consumer emotions (the one we will use in our research work) that distinguishes between positive and negative affect, and composed by three levels: the superordinate level with positive and negative affect, the basic level with four positive emotions (contentment, happiness, love, and pride) and four negative emotions (sadness, fear, anger, and shame), and the subordinate level with 42 specific emotions based on Richins' (1997) CES.

2- There are different types of endorsers but companies usually tend to use a celebrity endorser, "a person widely known to the public for his or her achievements in areas other than that of the product class endorsed" (Friedman, Termini and Washington, 1977). Celebrity endorsers are considered to be highly dynamic, with attractive and engaging personal qualities and, in some cases, they may even be perceived as competent to discuss the product. The use of one of the different types of endorsers or testimonials can be more or less effective depending on different factors such as the type of product and the type of audience.

CHAPTER 3. FACEBOOK POSTS ANALYSIS

The aim of this research work was to carry out an empirical study on a sample of posts, created by several different fashion brands and placed on their fan pages. The work consists in conducting a content analysis in order to relate the characteristics of the posts to users' engagement.

Specifically, the content analysis will be conducted on a sample of 523 posts, created by popular and famous fashion brands such as Bulgari, Gucci, H&M, Zara, Ralph Lauren, Gap, Guess, United Colors of Benetton, Sisley (etc.). The sample contained messages posted between January 2011 and May 2012 in the brand's official Facebook fan pages.

The main purpose, as already said, is to evaluate and study the relationship between different types and characteristics of posts and the degree of user engagement they generate. To do so we need to proceed, first of all, with the identification of categories (independent variables) that represent the universe of information that will be extracted during the content analysis, we need to identify specific dimensions for each category, and finally we need to relate and test the effect of each factor on the dependent variables that measure engagement.

Summary table 3.1 shows all the independent and dependent variables we used in the analysis:

Independent variables		Dependent variables
Brand name	Conative post	Number of comments
Post Type	Valence of the post	Number of shares
Category of product/service	Post length	Number of likes
Endorser/Testimonial	Presence of images	Acceleration
Type of appeal	Presence of video	Virality rate
Valence of emotional appeal	Day of the week	
Type of emotion	Hour of the day	
Type of informational appeal	Presence of link	
Type of post goal	Type of link	

Once extracted all the needed information through the classification of the advertising content in the different categories and dimensions, there have been two steps of analysis: a preliminary analysis and a more in depth final analysis.

The first step was a preliminary analysis on the composition of variables based on frequency and percentage of the dimensions of each category found during the

classification of posts, while the second step was a more detailed and specific analysis through the use of statistical tools such as ANOVA (analysis of variance), essential to study the relationship between independent and dependent variables and to evaluate the effects of different characteristics of posts on the final user engagement that they are able to generate.

The study has produced different results not all equally statistical significant. The relation between some factor variables and the dependent variables in some cases has led to no significant effect, and for this reason we have decided to omit them in the presentation of results. For the relevance of this study, we preferred to focus our attention only on the variables that have led to more significant effects, investigating them and reaching more interesting final findings both in terms of results and in terms of implications for companies in the marketing and communication use of Social Media.

The factor variables we have decided to focus on are the use of testimonials, the valence of emotional appeal, the type of informational appeal and the type of call to action.

According to these variables and in order to make the objectives of this study more specific and easily understandable, we have specified some research questions:

1. Does the testimonial presence have some kind of effect on consumer behavior and is it able to increase the results of the dependent variables such as number of likes, comments and shares? And what is the type of testimonial who generates the highest level of user engagement?
2. Is the use of emotions in posts able to influence consumers? Are positive emotions more effective than negative emotions, for the purposes of the promotional campaign?
3. Does the type of informational appeal impact on consumers' behavioral reactions? Which is the type of posts, among the informative ones, that consumers are more motivated to like, comment and share?
4. Companies are strongly used to create and publish posts with a conative goal, but which type of call to action receive more attention among users and results more effective in terms of engagement and virality?

Testimonial presence

In 45% of posts companies have not used endorser or testimonial figure, while the sum of all the different categories of testimonials represent the 51,2% of posts. Companies prefer to use testimonials and the most used category in the sample is the one of ordinary person with the 31% of posts, while the use of a celebrity corresponds to only 8,2% of cases. This choice can be explained by the higher cost of using a celebrity and the companies' belief that an ordinary person is more attractive and credible for the consumer, who has the possibility in this way to recognize itself in the testimonial figure and its needs.

- 1- Results of the ANOVA show that the testimonial presence in the advertising content has a strong impact on consumers and it is able to increase the number of likes and shares. In particular, answering to the first research question, the type of testimonial that generates the highest level of user engagement is the one of celebrities, on which companies should focus when planning a promotional campaign.

Valence of emotional appeal

Posts from our sample that have an emotional appeal are only the 11,3%, whereas the majority (88,5%) have an informational appeal. According to these numbers, companies prefer to use informative posts, relying on emotions only in some cases, maybe because of the risks and the uncertain result of this choice.

However, among posts with emotional appeal, companies tend to use positive emotions rather than negative emotions. The 91,5% of posts contains a positive emotion and in particular the most used are love, excitement and happiness. The remaining 8,5% of posts contain, instead, a negative emotion. In general we can say that companies usually prefer to communicate positive emotions in their posts because they want to create a positive, strong and reliable brand image.

- 2- Our finding from the analysis of variance is very interesting. Posts that contains emotions can elicit consumers reactions since they are considered to be the most interesting and attractive. Although positive emotions are obviously the most used by companies, we found out that negative emotions, consistently with some recent literature, are sometimes more effective in capturing users' attention, leading to an higher degree of engagement (more comments and likes).

Type of informational appeal

Focusing on the 88,5% of posts with informative appeal, the preliminary analysis shows that the type of informative appeal is almost equally divided between intangible attributes and tangible attributes, with a small prevalence of the intangible category. The valid percentage of posts based on intangible attributes is, in fact, the 55,7% whereas the one of posts that contains descriptions of tangible attributes is the 44,3%. From these numbers we deduce that companies in their Facebook fan pages are used to publish posts relying on promotion of both intangible and tangible attributes. This simultaneous presence of both type of attributes is also due to the specific fashion industry. When consumers are buying something, fashion industry is in fact characterized by the evaluation of tangible attributes such as fabric, shape, color of products, and intangible attributes such as fashion trends, quality or price.

- 3- According to the ANOVA and answering to our third research questions, we can say that companies are used to publish on their Facebook fan pages posts that rely on promotion of both tangible and intangible attributes. We found out that, for the specific characteristics of the fashion industry, intangible attributes generate more engagement and involvement in terms of likes and shares than tangible ones.

Type of conative post

Posts with a conative goal are the majority in the sample with the 43,2%. The preliminary analysis of type of conative posts shows that 67,7% of posts has a call to action related to the post, while 32,3% of posts has a call to action related to the brand. From these numbers we can deduce that posts that stimulate an action referred to the post itself such as like, comment or share it, are preferred by companies to posts that suggest an action referred to the brand, such as try or buy a product or services. The main reason is that an action referred to the post is actually easier and less demanding for users. Moreover the action of buying a product can be considered only a consequence and the final result of a promoting campaign that has different intermediate goal before that.

- 4- After all the analysis we can say that, among posts with a conative goal, companies prefer to use a call to action related to the post that generate more comments and shares and results more engaging, even though on the other hand a call to action related to the brand is able to attract more likes.

CONCLUSION

Social Media have gained a fundamental role in communication and marketing strategies and, for this reason, companies must take great care with the findings and results of this study. For companies it is very important, when managing fan pages and brands' Facebook presence, to create high quality contents and to exactly know the users' behavioral dynamics on the social network, in order to reach the higher user engagement possible. For an effective result and in order to create successful promotional campaigns, they need to know what drives engagement and they need to keep things in line with their fans' needs. Posts of brands' Facebook fan pages can have different characteristics and their content can have different effects on different consumers.

For this reason, our analysis can be very useful in this field and can help companies in developing their Facebook publishing strategies.

This research work and results of the analysis show that there are different factor variables such as use of emotion, testimonial presence and focus on intangible attributes, that can have strong impact on final measures of user engagement such as number of likes, comments and shares. This study, however, is not supposed to be an end point, since it has several limitations and further research is needed.

Our empirical study provides support to scholars and researches' already existing theories, important findings but also several avenues for further investigation.

In particular, with regard to the testimonial presence, results has shown that there is big difference not only between different categories of testimonial, but even within the category of celebrity. This finding might deserve further investigation and it will be very interesting a more specific study only on celebrities' differences.

Finally, future research should also focus on another starting point given by the analysis of the use of emotions. Users tend to highly share posts with positive emotions, but negative emotions generate stronger reactions and more comments. This is a remarkable finding, consistent with some literature on emotions, and it would be interesting a deeper research study, in order to find possible explanations to this users' behavior reaction.

REFERENCES

- Ahuja V. & Medury Y., “*Corporate blogs as e-CRM tools – Building consumer engagement through content management*”, Journal of Database Marketing & Customer Strategy Management 2010.
- Albuquerque P., Pavlidis P., Chatow U., Chen K., Jamal Z., “*Evaluating Promotional Activities in an Online Two-Sided Market of User-Generated Content*”, Marketing Science, 2012, 31(3), 406-432.
- Arnhold U. & Burmann C., “*User generated branding: An exploration of a new field of study*”. Proceedings of the 5th Thought Leaders International Conference on Brand Management, Athens, Greece, (2009).
- Atkin C. & Block M., “*Effectiveness of celebrities endorsers*”, Journal of Advertising Research, 1983, 23(1) 57-61.
- Bagozzi R., Gopinath M, Nyer P., “*The role of emotions in marketing*”, Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science, 1999, 27(2) 184-206.
- Bell M., “*Virtual Worlds Research: Past, Present & Future*”, Indiana University. Retrieved 2012-07-29
- Benkler Y., “*La ricchezza della rete. La produzione sociale trasforma il mercato e aumenta le libertà*”, Università Bocconi, 2007.
- Bijmolt T., Leeflang P., Block F., Eisenbeiss M., Hardie B., Lemmens A., Saffert P., “*Analytics for Customer Engagement*”, Journal of Service Research, 2010, 13(3).
- Borges B., “*Marketing 2.0*”, Wheatmark, Tucson (USA), 2009.
- Boyd D.M. & Ellison N.B., “*Social network sites: definition, history, and scholarship*”, Journal of computer-mediated communication, 2007.
- Brown J, Broderick A. & Lee N., “*Word of mouth communication within online communities: conceptualizing the online social network*”, Journal of Interactive Marketing, 2007, 21(3).

- BuddyMedia, Data report "*Strategies for effective Facebook wall posts: a statistical review*", 2011.
- Castells M., "*The theory of the network society*", Blackwell Publishing, Oxford, 2006.
- Daft R. & Lengel R., "*Organizational information requirements, media richness, and structural design*", *Management Science*, 1986, 32(5), 554-571.
- Dholakia R. & Sternthal B., "*Highly credible sources: persuasive facilitators or persuasive liabilities?*", *Journal of Consumer Research*, 1977, 223-232.
- Edell J. & Burke M., "*The power of feelings in understanding advertising effects*", *Journal of Consumer Research*, 1987, 14(4).
- Ellison N.B., Lampe C., & Steinfield C., "*Social Network sites and society: current trends and future possibilities*", *Interactions Magazine* (16) 1, 2009.
- Evans D., "*Social Media Marketing: An hour a day*", Wiley Publishing Inc., Indianapolis, 2008.
- Fader P. & Winer R., "*Introduction to the Special Issue on the Emergence and Impact of User-Generated Content*", *Marketing Science*, 2012, 31(3), 369-371.
- Fraser M. & Dutta S., "*Throwing sheep in the boardroom*", Cornwall, UK: Wiley, 2008.
- Friedman H. & Friedman L., "*Endorser effectiveness by product type*", *Journal of Advertising Research*, 1979, 19(5) 63-71.
- Friedman H., Termini S., Washington R., "*The effectiveness of advertisements utilizing four types of endorsers*", *Journal of Advertising*, 1977, 22-24.
- Ghose A., Ipeirotis P., Beibei L., "*Designing Ranking Systems for Hotels on Travel Search Engines by Mining User-Generated and Crowdsourced Content*", *Marketing Science*, 2012, 31(3), 493-520.
- Goldenberg J., Libai B. & Muller E., "*Talk of the network: a complex systems look at the underlying process of word-of-mouth*", *Marketing Letters*, 2001, 12(3), 211-223.
- Hendler J. & Golbeck J., 2008, "*Metcalf's law, Web 2.0, and the Semantic Web*", 14-20.

Hennig-Thurau T., Malthouse E., Friege C., Gensler S., Lobschat L., Rangaswamy A., Skiera B., *“The Impact of New Media on Customer Relationships”*, Journal of Service Research, 2010, 13(3).

Holbrook M. & Batra R., *“Assessing the role of emotions as mediators of consumer responses to advertising”*, Journal of Consumer Research, 1987, 14(3).

Hollebeek L., *“Exploring customer brand engagement: definition and themes”*, Journal of Strategic Marketing, 2011, 19(7), 555-573.

Hovland C. & Weiss W., *“The influence of source credibility on communication effectiveness”*, Public Opinion Quarterly, 1951, 635-650.

Hoyer W., Chandy R., Dorotic M., Krafft M., Singh S., *“Consumer Cocreation in New Product Development”*, Journal of Service Research, 2010, 13(3).

Kamen J., Azhari A., Kragh J., *“What a spokesman does for a sponsor”*, Journal of Advertising Research, 1975, 16, 17-24.

Kaplan A.M. & Haenlein M., *“Two hearts in three-quarter time: How to waltz the social media/viral marketing dance”*, Kelley School of Business, Indiana University, 2011.

Kaplan A.M. & Haenlein M., *“Users of the world, unite! The challenges and opportunities of Social Media”*, Kelley Business of School, Indiana University, Business Horizons, 2010, 53, 59-68.

Kawasaky G., *“The art of the start”*, Pinguin Group Inc., New York, 2004.

Kelman H., *“Processes of opinion change”*, Public Opinion Quarterly, 1961, 25(1) 57-78.

Kirby J., Marsden P., *“Connected Marketing”*, Butterworth-Heinemann, Oxford, 2006.

Kumar V., Aksoy L., Donkers B., Venkatesan R., Wiesel T., and Tillmanns S., *“Undervalued or Overvalued Customers: Capturing Total Customer Engagement Value”*, Journal of Service Research, 2010, 13(3) 297-310.

Laros F. & Steenkamp J., *“Emotions in consumer behavior: a hierarchical approach”*, Journal of Business Research, 2005, 58 1437-1445.

Libai B., Bolton R., Bugel M., de Ruyter K., Gotz O., Risselada H., Stephen A., “*Customer-to-Customer Interactions: Broadening the Scope of Word of Mouth Research*”, *Journal of Service Research*, 2010, 13(3).

Mangold W. & Faulds D., “*Social Media: The new hybrid element of the promotion mix*”, Kelley School of Business of Indiana University, 2009, p. 357-365.

McAfee A., “*Enterprise 2.0: New Collaborative Tools for Your Organization’s Toughest Challenges*”, Harvard Business Press, Boston, 2009.

McGuire W., “*The nature of attitudes and attitude change*”, In Lindzey G. and Aronson E. (Eds), “*Handbook of social psychology*”, reading, Mass.: Rand McNally, 1968.

Mehrabian A. & Russell J., “*An approach to environmental psychology*”, Cambridge MA, MIT press, 1974.

Moe W. & Schweidel D., “*Online Product Opinions: Incidence, Evaluation, and Evolution*”, *Marketing Science*, 2012, 31(3), 372-386.

Muñiz A. & Schau H. “*How to inspire value-leaden collaborative consumer-generated content*”, Kelley School of Business of Indiana University, (2011), p.209-217.

Muntinga D.G, Moorman M. & Smit E.G., “*Introducing COBRAs: exploring motivations for brand-related social media use*”, *International Journal of Advertising*, (2011), 30(1), 13-46.

OECD, “*Participative Web and User-Created Content Web 2.0, Wikis and Social Networking*”, 2007.

Parent M., Plangger K. & Bal A., “*The new WTP: Willingness to participate*”, Kelley Business of School, Indiana University, 2011, 54, 219-229.

Prunesti A., “*Social Media e comunicazione di marketing*”, Franco Angeli, 2009.

Ransbotham S., Kane G., Lurie N., “*Network Characteristics and the Value of Collaborative User-Generated Content*”, *Marketing Science*, 2012, 31(3), 387-405.

Richins M., “*Measuring emotions in the consumption experience*”, *Journal of Consumer Research*, 1997, vol.24. Laros F. & Steenkamp J., “*Emotions in consumer behavior: a hierarchical approach*”, *Journal of Business Research*, 2005, 58 1437-1445.

- Scott D.M., *“World Wide Rave”*, John Wiley & Sons Inc., Hoboken (USA), 2009.
- Short J., Williams E., Christie B., *“The social psychology of telecommunications”*, Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley & Sons, Ltd, 1976.
- Tapscott D. & Williams A.D., *“Wikinomics 2.0”*, Etas Libri, Milano, 2008.
- Thackeray R. & Neiger B. L., *“A multidirectional Communication Model: Implications for Social Marketing Practice”*, Health Promotion Practice, 10(2), 171-175, (2009).
- Van Bruggen G., Antia K., Jap S., Reinartz W., Pallas F., *“Managing Marketing Channel Multiplicity”*, Journal of Service Research, 2010, 13(3).
- van Doorn J., Lemon K.N., Mittal V., Nass S., Pick D., Pirner P., Verhoef P.C., *“Customer Engagement Behavior: Theoretical Foundations and Research Directions”*, Journal of Service Research, (2010), 13(3), 253-266.
- Verhoef P., Reinart W., Krafft M., *“Customer Engagement as a New Perspective in Customer Management”*, Journal of Service Research, 2010, 13(3).
- Weber L., *“Marketing to the Social Web: how digital customer communities build your business”*, Wiley inc, 2009.
- Zhang K., Evgeniou T., Padmanabhan V., Richard E., *“Content Contributor Management and Network Effects in a UGC Environment”*, Marketing Science, 2012, 31(3), 433-447.
- Zarella D., *“The social media marketing book”*, O’really Media Inc., (2010).

ONLINE REFERENCES

- Arrington M., *“Google has acquired YouTube”*, 9-10-2006.
(<http://techcrunch.com/2006/10/09/google-has-acquired-youtube/>)
- Blake S., *“GigaOM top 10 most popular MMOs”*, 13-6-2007.
(<http://gigaom.com/2007/06/13/top-ten-most-popular-mmos/>)
- Boswell W., *“Twitter: what is it?”* (websearch.about.com)

Carton S., “Defining Social Media”, 2009.

(<http://www.clickz.com/clickz/column/1703507/defining-social-media>)

Dario de Judicibus, “*World 2.0*”, 2008 (<http://oreilly.com/web2/archive/what-is-web-20.html>)

Empson R., “*SlideShare details its own exponential growth in... an Infographic*”,
(<http://techcrunch.com/2011/11/28/slideshare-ironically-details-its-own-exponential-growth-in-an-infographic/>)

Glen D., “*The history of social media from 1978-2012*” (http://socialtimes.com/the-history-of-social-media-from-1978-2012-infographic_b89811)

Go G., “*How to market your business using online forums*”, 2010.
(onlinebusiness.about.com)

Gunelius S., “*What is a blog?*”
(<http://weblogs.about.com/od/startingablog/p/WhatIsABlog.htm>)

Kovach S., “*Everything You Need To Know About Google+*”
(<http://www.businessinsider.com/what-is-google-plus-2011-6?op=1>)

O’Brien C., “*The rise of slideshare and how corporate presentations became entertainment*”, (<http://www.siliconbeat.com/2009/10/06/the-rise-of-slideshare-and-how-corporate-presentations-became-entertainment/>)

Plummer L., “*What is Google+?*”
(<http://www.pocket-lint.com/news/40785/what-is-google-android-iphone-apps>)

Shaffer N., “*What is linkedIn and why should you join?*”
(<http://windmillnetworking.com/2009/08/26/what-is-linkedin-and-why-should-you-join/>)

Tim O’Reilly Conference “*What is Web 2.0*”, 30th of September 2005.
(<http://oreilly.com/web2/archive/what-is-web-20.html>)

Wakeman D., “*19 Tips for driving traffic to your blog*”, 8th april 2010.
(www.socialmediaexaminer.com)

Webb J., “*What is Pinterest and how to use it for marketing your business*”

(<http://www.jeffbullas.com/2012/03/21/what-is-pinterest-and-how-to-use-it-for-marketing-your-business/>)

Whitmell C., *“LinkedIn and how to use it: a graduate job seeker's guide”*

(<http://careers.guardian.co.uk/linkedin-how-use-graduate-guide>)

Wilson R.F., *“The Six Simple Principles of Viral Marketing”*, 1th February 2000

(www.wilsonweb.com).

“Facebook Insights Metrics Dashboard for Page Managers”,

(<http://gold.insidenetwork.com/facebook-marketing-bible/category/facebook-pages/insights/>)

“Pinterest driving more sales than any other network”

(http://www.nowmedia.it/wpcontent/uploads/2012/05/pinterest_driving_more_sales_than_any_other_network.jpg)

“The brief history of social media”

(<http://www.uncp.edu/home/acurtis/NewMedia/SocialMedia/SocialMediaHistory.html>)

“What is twitter and how does it work”

(<http://gnoted.com/what-is-twitter-and-how-does-it-workbeginners-guide/>)

Infographic *“User activity: comparison of social networking sites”* by Go-Gulf.com (May, 2012),

(<http://www.nowmedia.it/2012/05/21/lo-stato-dell-arte-social-media-social-network-statiche-a-confronto-2012-classifica-social-network/>),

Infographic *“How Pinterest drives online sales”* by Shopify (June, 2012),

(<http://www.nowmedia.it/2012/06/06/pinterest-genera-piu-vendite-di-qualsiasi-altro-social-network/>).

<http://ijustdid.org/2012/06/social-media-users-comparison/>

<http://secondlife.com/whatis/?lang=it-IT>

<http://www.fredcavazza.net/2008/06/09/social-media-landscape/>

<http://www.kzero.co.uk/blog/growth-forecasts-for-the-virtual-worlds-sector/>

<http://www.netlz.com/seo-blog/2012/03/24/metcalfes-law/>

<http://www.omginfographics.com/2011/07/the-history-of-social-media-through-2011/>

http://www.youtube.com/t/press_statistics

http://www.youtube.com/press_room

<http://www.alexa.com>

<http://www.comscore.com>

<http://www.experian.com>

<http://www.facebook.com>

<http://www.google+.com>

<http://www.insidefacebook.com>

<http://www.lewispr.com>

<http://www.mystarbucksidea.com>

<http://www.secondlife.com>

<http://www.pinterest.com>