

Companies on Facebook

How do they Engage their Followers?

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2016

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Abstract

In order to strengthen “business to customer”-relations companies need to be aware of the factors that trigger high level of positive customer engagement. More and more of the interaction between companies and customers is happening online on blogs and social networks which means brand owners have possibilities to find new ways to communicate with users and develop strategies to detect positive patterns amongst them in order to build and sustain beneficial relations.

Therefore the purpose of the research is to analyse and evaluate how companies with brand communities on the social network site Facebook can engage their customers. By doing this research the hope is to obtain knowledge and develop ideas on how to engage followers, what factors they are, on brand community pages on Facebook thereby making a theoretical contribution.

The research was made on two different case studies in a combination of a quantitative and qualitative method. A content analysis was made to choose and collect the data, categorise it and analyse the results. The categorisation of the data was made with the base of already established theories of online customer engagement and electronic word of mouth.

The results showed that there are a lot of different ways for brand pages to create high level of engagement amongst followers. With entertaining and informative posts, containing photos or videos, brand pages have a great possibility to affect the level of engagement amongst their followers, both in likes, comments and shares but also in eWOM.

Sammanfattning

För att stärka "företag till kund"-relationen bör företag vara medvetna om de faktorer som skapar högt positivt kundengagemang. Mer och mer av interaktionen mellan företag och kunder sker på nätet genom bloggar och sociala nätverk vilket innebär att varumärkesägare har möjlighet att hitta nya sätt att kommunicera med dessa användare och utveckla strategier för att upptäcka positiva mönster bland dem för att bygga och upprätthålla positiva relationer.

Därmed var syftet med denna forskning att analysera och utvärdera hur företag med varumärkessidor på den sociala media plattformen Facebook kan engagera sina kunder. Genom att utföra denna forskning var förhoppningen att få kunskap och utveckla idéer om hur man kan engagera följare, identifiera vilka faktorer som engagerar, på varumärkessidor på Facebook och därmed skapa ett teoretiskt bidrag.

Forskningen gjordes på två olika fallstudier i en kombination av en kvantitativ och kvalitativ metod. En innehållsanalys gjordes för att välja och samla in data, kategorisera den och analysera resultaten. Kategoriseringen av den insamlade datan gjordes med kunskapen av redan etablerade teorier om online kund engagemang samt elektroniskt word of mouth.

Resultaten visade att det finns en massa olika sätt för varumärkessidor att skapa stort engagemang bland följare. Underhållande och informativa inlägg, i kombination med innehåll av bilder eller videoklipp, ger varumärkessidor stor möjlighet att påverka graden av engagemang bland sina följare, både genom antal likes, kommentarer och delningar men också i eWOM.

Acknowledgements

After an intensive period of reading scientific articles, researching and meeting deadlines the expectations of the gain of this bachelors thesis was greatly exceeded. I want to thank my mentor Maria Ek Styvén for all the advice and support during this time. A big thank you to the thesis group for all our discussions and the valuable feedback I have received. Last but not least, thank you to all my friends and family that has picked me up when I felt like giving up.

Felicia Pournasiri

2016/06/07

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1. Introduction

This chapter will include background information and previous research in the thesis field. Thereafter the problem discussion will be introduced in order to provide a picture of the problem area. The thesis purpose and research question will then be presented and afterwards the chapter will end with an introduction of the delimitations and an overview of the thesis outline.

1.1 Background

In a world where technology is developing at high speed, online applications and the WEB 2.0 are integrating themselves into people's everyday tasks and duties. They are changing our individual and group behaviour as, in this modern age, you can shop, communicate, read, learn and be entertained by only using a technical device (Constantinides & Fountain, 2008). Example of these forums and communities are Wikipedia, YouTube, numerous weblogs and social network sites (hereby called SNSs) (Hoegg, Martignoni, Meckel & Stanoeveska-Slabeva, 2006). The WEB 2.0 is defined variedly. According to Murugesan (2007) "Web 2.0 is an umbrella term encompassing several new Web technologies (...)" (page 35). By focusing on evaluating these new technologies and online trends modern marketing can get a sense of the real value of WEB 2.0 (Constantinides & Fountain, 2008).

SNSs was introduced in 1997 and has then done a rocket speed expansion. SNSs can be explained as "web-based services that allow individuals to (1) construct a public or semi-public profile within bounded system, (2) articulate a list of other users with whom they share a connection , and (3) view and traverse their list of connections and those made by others within the system" (Ellison, 2007, page 2).

As SNSs grew in members from all over the world they introduced a new way for brands to communicate online and reach out to a diverse group of the SNSs members. With over one billion users (Facebook, 2016) Facebook is the most popular amongst business affiliations (Kabadayi & Price, 2014). By companies being present on these SNSs they can read patterns amongst consumers and learn what factors actually engage them into electronic word-of-mouth (hereby called eWOM), electronic in that sense of it being online (Chevalier & Mayzlin, 2006).

Chu & Kim (2011) describe WOM, based on previous research, as “the act of exchanging marketing information among consumers and plays an essential role in changing consumer attitudes and behaviours towards products and services” (page 48). WOM is a natural behaviour amongst consumers and customers and the talk between these participants is sometimes called “buzz” (Kirby & Marsden, 2006).

eWOM can be expressed in many ways and according to Henning-Thurau, Gwinner, Walsh & Gremler (2004) is defined as “any positive or negative statement made by potential, actual, or former customers about a product or company, which is made available to a multitude of people and institutions via the internet” (page 39). Reviews online has become important to consumers, replacing offline business-to-customer interaction and offline WOM about product or service quality. Reading patterns and factors that seem to engage these consumers into eWOM is an important part of the, to companies, critical “customer decision making process” of the buyer. (Chevalier & Mayzlin, 2006)

A big part of this eWOM is happening on SNSs (Chu & Kim, 2011) and companies are starting to see the potential in globally spreading their marketing messages with this marketing principle (Cvijikj & Michahelles, 2013). The occurring eWOM on SNSs has, in recent years, grown tremendously and the occurring eWOM on SNSs can be categorized into three categories: opinion seeking, opinion giving and opinion passing (Chu & Kim, 2011). Unlike offline WOM, SNSs offers people a platform to engage in eWOM where the roles of seekers, givers and passers becomes blurred out. The engagement of these people and their thirst for information is a great opportunity to create brand engagement amongst customers (Chu & Kim, 2011).

1.2 Problem discussion

According to Van Doorn et. al (2010) “customer engagement behaviours go beyond transactions, and may be specifically defined as a customer’s behavioural manifestations that have a brand or firm focus, beyond purchase, resulting from motivational drivers” (page 2). Thus, these behavioural manifestations by the customers can be done in various ways and strengthen or weaken the “business-to-customer” relationship. Online customer engagement on SNSs can be many different things such as liking behaviours, commenting, visiting and sharing (Gummerus, Liljander, Weman & Pihlström, 2012). Every moment of customer interaction should be treated as an opportunity to strengthen the relationship and engage the customer to create customer loyalty (Roberts & Alpert, 2010). Marketing professionals are becoming more and more aware of

the fact that having engaged consumers is nowadays one of the key objectives to a successful company (Dessart, Veloutsou & Morgan-Thomas, 2015). As the biggest factor of trust in purchasing decision is in WOM (Roberts & Alpert, 2010) and more and more WOM is happening online as eWOM (Chu & Kim, 2011) companies should be aware of SNSs as a great source of making impact on their customers.

Facebook, being the biggest SNS for brand owners (Kabadayi & Price, 2014), allows companies to create brand pages where they can communicate with their followers by for example posting pictures, information, news and upcoming events. A follower of a brand page on Facebook is a member who liked a page and is automatically updated on all information the group/page posts (Facebook, 2016). By getting followers to like, comment on these various posts or/and sharing them, companies can engage their consumers (Kabadayi & Price, 2014).

By being present on Facebook and doing this, brand owners can easily supervise their follower's activities and behaviours. This advertising strategy is lately introduced as a social media marketing (SMM) approach, a form of e-WOM, and is an addition in the traditional marketing elements in the marketing mix (Cvijikj & Michahelles, 2013). Previous studies shows that by companies being aware of these activities, performed by the followers on their brand pages, companies can learn a lot about their customer's needs (Cvijikj & Michahelles, 2013). There are several different ways brand owners can be present on Facebook (advertising ads, brand community pages, groups) (Facebook, 2016). This research will focus on brand community pages run by the companies themselves because of the research being focused on customer engagement between brand owner-to-follower and follower-to-follower.

Since Facebook gives the user free of charge access to a diverse, broad amount of users to connect with it works as a "natural technological platform for marketing" (Muniz & O'Guinn, 2001). This has found to give several positive effects including developing the consumer brand-relationship (Sicilia & Palazon, 2008) and increasing frequency of purchase and cross-buying behaviour over time (Adjei, Noble S & Noble C, 2010).

For example a study made by Gummerus et al. (2012) on a Facebook game community

showed that factors that led to higher engagement amongst followers, therefore strengthening the B2C relationship, was bonuses, lotteries and better service. The results of that study showed that community engagement behaviours (liking, commenting, reading content post by the brand page), called CBE, had a positive effect on the relationship between customer and brand owner but it also showed that CBE lead to higher expectations amongst the consumers of the company. By understanding the factors that lead to larger engagement on online brand communities by the followers, companies could increase positive eWOM and thereby lift the overall customer approach against the brand and likely increase the company revenue (Cvijikj & Michahelles, 2013).

1.3 Purpose

The purpose of this research is to analyse and evaluate how companies with brand communities on the SNS Facebook can engage their customers. The research question for this thesis is:

What factors engage followers on Facebook brand pages?

By doing research in this area the hope is to obtain new knowledge and develop ideas on how to engage followers on brand community pages on Facebook.

1.4 Delimitations

The research is limited to Facebook as the platform due to Facebook being the biggest SNS used by brands (Kabadayi & Price, 2014). The companies and their brand communities that the thesis will focus on operate in the same industry; the food and beverage industry. To clarify eWOM on Facebook, we differentiate follower-to-follower communication and business-to-follower communication on brand pages. The communication between follower-to-follower is hereby referred to as eWOM and business-to-follower communication as advertising strategy (Chu & Kim, 2011). Due to time constraints this paper will not look at follower-to-business relation but mainly focus on eWOM and advertising strategies.

1.5 Thesis outline

Total number of chapters in this thesis is six and consists of following: Introduction, theory area and literature review, research method, empirical data presentation, analysis, conclusions and further recommendations.

Chapter *one* reviews an overall presentation of the problem and purpose of the thesis. Chapter *two* presents the literature review and connects the theories to the problem discussion and the

most relevant theories for this thesis are given in a frame of reference. Chapter *three*, research method, is about how the research is done. The empirical data presentation and the analysis will be given in chapter *four* and the thesis will finish with chapter *five* including discussion and conclusions of the results (see figure 1).



Figure 1. Thesis outline
Source: Own made

2. Literature review

This chapter will include previous research and theories that are connected to the thesis and research question. By using these already established foundations of knowledge the chapter will define customer engagement, engagement factors and eWOM. At the end the frame of reference is given and why this frame is chosen.

2.1 Customer engagement

As cited before in this paper customer engagement is defined as “(...) Customer’s behavioural manifestations that have a brand or firm focus, beyond purchase, resulting from motivational drivers” (Van Doorn et al., 2010). Both positive and negative behavioural manifestations can be performed by customers such as, for example, posting positive information about a brand on blogs or in a negative way organizing public actions against a firm for some reason. Customer engagement is in this paper focused on business-to-customer relationship. Customer engagement can also be about other actors such as potential customers, employees or partners and so on (Van Doorn et al., 2010). There are many different definitions of customer engagement and also different opinions and findings of the dimensions it possesses. Sashi (2012) claims that engaged customers play a role in co-creating value by getting companies to understand their needs and in a way provides companies with help in product development, product qualities and delivery.

Since the definition of customer engagement varies, the way to measure it differs. One consultancy report recommended companies identifying the ten most important engaging factors for customers by tracking the embrace, frequency and closeness customers have to the engaging factors. For example if a company rates online reviews as number one engaging factor for customers this will be measured by how many of the customers engage in this, how long time they spend doing it, satisfaction and similar (Dessart, Veloutsou & Morgan-Thomas, 2015). There are different stages to get a customer to be engaged and which can be illustrated in six steps, see figure 2 (Sashi, 2012, page 261).

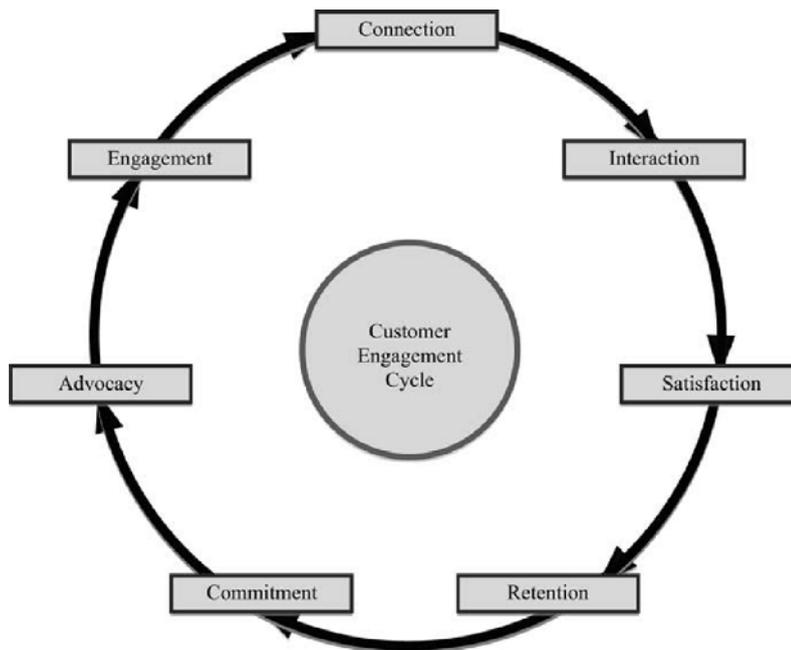


Figure 2. Seven steps of the customer engagement cycle
 Source: Sashi (2012, page 261)

Connection between business and customer can be either traditionally offline or more new online approach or both. For example offline connection could be in store, meeting salespersons and online connection could be on SNSs on brand pages. When the connection has been made between business and customer the *interaction* takes place. Offline interaction is somewhat restricted to salespersons, other customers and WOM unlike online interaction which lets businesses interact with customers globally 24/7 with email, messaging, SNSs, blogs and more. (Sashi, 2012)

After interaction in the customer engagement cycle comes *satisfaction*. If this interaction between business and customer ends satisfying for the customer the relationship will likely continue and the two parts will go on staying connected. A satisfying interaction is not, as some people think, the last step but a step in the right direction towards building customer engagement. The *retention* of a customer is often the result of overall positive emotions over time. Customer retention is often calculated created from either positive emotions, emotional commitment, or long-term relationships, calculative commitment, or in some cases both. (Sashi, 2012)

According to Sashi (2012) *commitment* has as written two different dimensions. Calculative commitment comes from lack of choice and is more rational. An example of calculative commitment is a customer who goes for coffee at a café every morning but complains at the menu and due to lack of cafés in the area the customer keeps on returning to the café. Affective commitment results from emotional connection and an example of this is the person who everyday goes to the café and becomes friends with the staff therefore creates an emotional bond with the place and sellers. (Sashi, 2012)

After retention and commitment, businesses and customers become *advocates* for each other. By companies standing up for their customers they gain trust and loyalty which means customers becomes advocates themselves for the businesses (Sashi, 2012). These six steps becomes the base for creating *engagement* amongst which is the last step in the customer engagement cycle. In the end customer engagement requires both emotional and calculative commitment and as customers makes new connections they become advocates for the business. The difference between a regular customer and an engaged customer is that engagement turns the customer more into a fan of the business. (Sashi, 2012)

To identify engagement Roberts & Alpert (2010) presents 5 degrees of positive customer engagement starting with level 1 and building its way up:

Level 1: Customer purchases your product/services.

Level 2: Customer is loyal to your product/service and either continues to come back for repurchasing or to continue to use our service.

Level 3: Customer readily buys your other products or services.

Level 4: Customer recommends your products/services to others if presented with the opportunity.

Level 5: Customer is an advocate and promotes your product/service at every opportunity given.

By identifying which level the customers belong to we can measure the engagement amongst them (Roberts & Alpert, 2010).

Specifically online, Kabadayi & Price (2014) writes that measuring customer engagement includes a wide range of behaviours such as for example liking and commenting behaviours on brand pages. These both behaviours are common on brand pages and a big part of what advertising strategy companies should focus on but still this area of research has been limited.

2.2 Online factors that create engagement

As presented in the problem discussion, companies with Facebook brand pages (see Appendix I) have different factors to take into account when advertising to and communicating with their followers. There are considerable diverse answers to what these factors might be. One research of customer engagement in a Facebook brand community suggests that “brand community providers should focus on offering entertainment and social benefits to their visitors” (Gummerus et al, 2012). Gummerus et al. also claims that “(...) companies need to track and encourage customer engagement behaviours in such a way that it not solely leads to more commenting and liking, but also to purchase behaviour” (page 870). This research was done through a survey that was sent out to all the users of a Facebook brand community of an online gaming provider.

According to Van Doorn et al. (2010) some of the most important factors in creating customer engagement are customer satisfaction, brand commitment, trust, brand attachment and brand performance perceptions and very high or very low of any of these factors can eventually lead to engaged customers. Customers can also be engaged out of other reasons such as customer goals (going on a trip and wanting to find a good deal). How customers interact with the brand can be broken down to what goals the customers have but sometimes the goals of the customers is not the only factor of high engagement. Both positive and negative experiences with the brand can lead to engagement like a customer having a strong negative experience, for example being delayed for a long time at an airport, and therefore engaging strongly in negative WOM. On the contrary a positive experience may drive the customer to engage in positive WOM. The customer's resources such as time and money are also factor of how engaged they are (Van Doorn et al., 2010).

Hennig-Thurau, Gwinner, Walsh & Gremler (2004) explains eight WOM motives that they have summited from Sundaram, Mitra & Webster (1998), four positive and four negative, with the motive to the left and the explanation of the motive to the right (see figure 3).

Sundaram, Mitra, & Webster (1998)	Altruism (positive WOM)	the act of doing something for others without anticipating any reward in return
	Product involvement	personal interest in the product, excitement resulting from product ownership and product use
	Self-enhancement	enhancing images among other consumers by projecting themselves as intelligent shoppers
	Helping the company	desire to help the company
	Altruism (negative WOM)	to prevent others from experiencing the problems they had encountered
	Anxiety reduction	easing anger, anxiety, and frustration
	Vengeance	to retaliate against the company associated with a negative consumption experience
	Advice seeking	obtaining advice on how to resolve problems

Figure 3. Eight motives for WOM
 Source: Hennig-Thurau et al. (2004, page 41)

Ways we can measure these factors for engagement can be for example content being clicked on a number of times, how many of returns to an page over a longer period of time, and recentness as number of returns of visits over a shorter period of time and how long time every visit is and action such as posting (Cheung, Lee & Jin, 2011).

“Social influencers” in SNSs should encourage consumers to create positive eWOM with their networks. These are more complex than one might think of them to be. Michahelles & Cvijikj (2013) suggest three factors affecting this level of engagement and these are (1) the content type, (2) the media type and (3) the posting time (see figure 4).

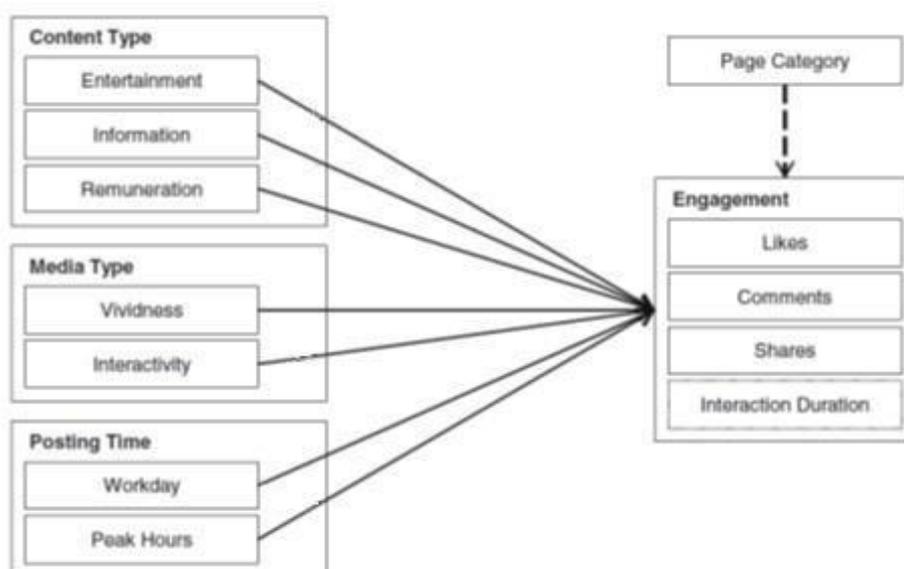


Figure 4. Relations between post type and engagement
 Source: Michahelles & Cvijikj (2013, page 847)

Content type

The content type of a post can be *entertaining*, *informative* or *remunerative* and displayed, with entertaining content being the most engaging and displayed, in four different post media types which will be explained later (Cvijikj & Michahelles, 2013). *Entertainment* content types refers to posts not including the brand or products/services of the brand but rather engaging the customer by entertaining slogans, wordplays or teasers. *Informative* posts are mainly traditional advertising posts promoting products/services of the brand. An example of a post like this is if a brand would promote their new line of products. Post that contains promoting of products/service/activities and includes Facebook in this post is called *remunerative*. (Cvijikj & Michahelles, 2013)

These different types are (A) status, (B) photo, (C) video or (D) link has shown in previous studies to engage very differently depending on the type. Higher level of vividness of a post has shown to create higher level of engagement and vice versa high level of post interactivity, meaning longer requirement of engagement, has shown creating a lower level of engagement. (Cvijikj & Michahelles, 2013)

Media type

Regarding the *vividness* and *interactivity* of post media types and the definition of these the level of *vividness* can be decided upon four levels starting at level one being the least vivid type of post media type according to Cvijikj and Michahelles (2013). Level one includes posts containing texts. These have none vividness. Posts in level two are low vividness posts such as photos (pictorial content). Level three is posts of medium vividness as links. Links makes the customer open another page and often experiencing further text and photos and therefore level three is a combination of the two previous levels. The most vivid types of posts are videos, including sound and a richer media. Therefore level four is posts with videos. Posts with higher level of vividness creates higher level of engagement. (Michahelles & Cvijikj, 2013)

The post media *interactivity* is divided into two levels, level one being posts that has low interactivity possibilities such as statuses and photos, “static content”. Level two is posts with high interactivity possibilities such as links and videos were the follower has to click in order to view the content. Because of the requirement of higher level of engagement of followers

interacting with posts of level 2, the higher level of post interactivity the lower engagement of the followers. (Cvijikj & Michahelles, 2013)

Posting time

Facebook allows brand pages to post and appear on the followers feed walls. As Facebook members feeds, were they see the activity and posting of all likes brand pages and connected friends (Facebook, 2016), often are overwhelmed with various information and posts it is not uncommon that a post gets “lost in the crowd”. Therefore, *posting time* is important and much is to gain if one studies the patterns of member’s login times and peaks of the days in the week. Previous studies showed that during workdays, after mornings and before afternoons, are the highest member activity on Facebook. (Cvijikj & Michahelles, 2013)

Soft and hard criterions

Regarding the content in posts by brand pages it can also, besides entertaining, informative and remunerative, be categorized as either as qualitative (soft criterion) or quantitative (hard criterion) (Sabate, Berbegal-Mirabent, Cañabate & Lebherz, 2014). The soft criterion qualitative way analyses the “message behind the post” and calls for accurate content analysis of the content (text, pictures, and links). This makes it hard to gather data and systematically analyse it with an objective magnifier without being subjective. This type of data analysis needs to be performed cautiously with a strong theory base and will in the end be time consuming. The hard criterion quantitative way is easier to analyse and process due to measuring of statistics, frequencies and timing of the data gathered. This way creating measurements for analysing the data stays objectively. (Sabate et al., 2014)

2.3 Frame of reference

The research is going to be conducted with the base of the theories mentioned above. Like discussed and described out of previous research, engaged followers on Facebook brand pages can strengthen the consumer brand-relationship (Sicilia & Palazon, 2008) and therefore increase frequency of purchase and cross-buying behaviour over time (Adjei, Noble S & Noble, 2010) and likely increase the company's revenue (Cvijikj & Michahelles, 2013).

The research by Cvijikj and Michahelles (2013) also showed that some factors of the advertising strategies of the brand pages can raise the engagement amongst the followers. The purpose of

this paper, as described in chapter one, is to analyse and evaluate how companies with brand communities on the SNS Facebook can engage their customers. The delimitations to Facebook will further be limited to brand pages and also the business-to-customer relation (advertising strategy) and customer-to-customer (eWOM).

The analysis of the data will both be in a subjective and objective way. For example the analysis of a comment and deciding how it should be categorized (example positive, negative, neutral) is made in a subjective way while the collection of number of likes, comments and shares of the chosen posts will be made objectively. Therefore a part of the analysis of the empirical data will be subjectively examined on “soft criterions”. Other parts of the empirical data will be objectively measured on “hard criterions”. After analysing the data subjectively or objectively the categorisation will be quantitatively in numbers by noting the data in a excel sheet. More details on how this is going to be done will be described in chapter 3 “Methodology”.

With the established theories and the constructed analysis choice we aim to answer the research question “What factors engage customers on Facebook brand pages?”. By using a model (see figure 5) adapted from already established theories from both Henning-Thurau et al. (2004), see figure 3 page 10, and Cvijikj and Michahelles (2013), see figure 4 page 10, the empirical data will be collected, processed and analysed with the base of this model which leads to results and discussion.

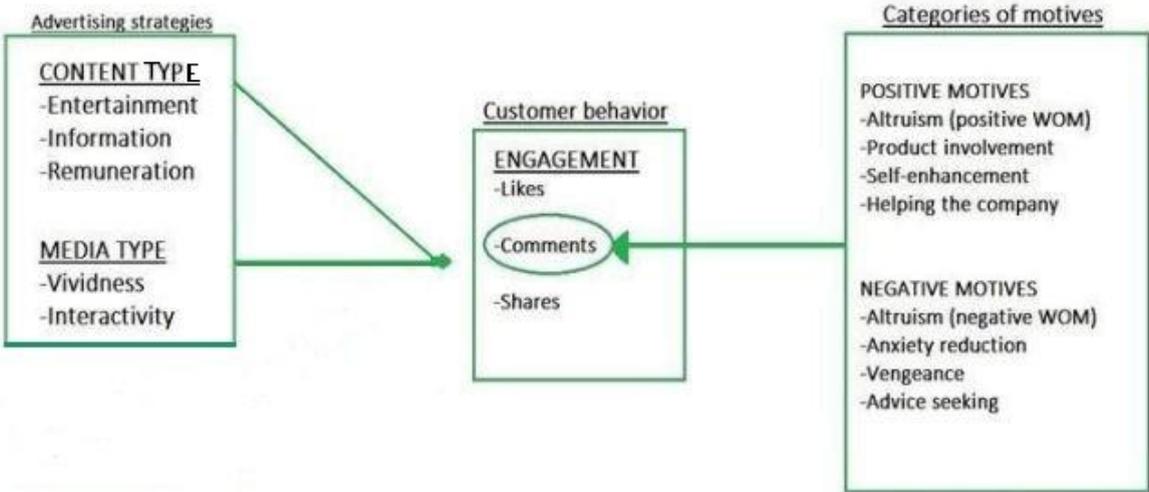


Figure 5. Model for analysing data
 Source: Adapted from figure 3 Henning-Thurau et al. (2004, page 41) and figure 4 Cvijikj and Michahelles (2013, page 847)

As described above the comments of the posts, categories of motives, is examined qualitatively by interpreting the motive of the comment and then categorized qualitatively in numbers. The

different parts of B2C, content type and media type, are also first judged qualitatively by deciding if the post is entertaining, informative or remunerative and also the vividness and interactivity level. After this is decided the post is quantitatively categorized in numbers in a data sheet. The engagement factors “likes” and “shares” are quantitatively collected, counting the numbers of these on each post, and then also put into a data sheet. More on this is going to be presented in chapter 3 “Methodology” The model is a remake of figure 4 (some parts are rewritten and some deleted to fit our purpose based on theories presented) and combined with the motives of eWOM of figure 3. See this model as figure 5.

Compared to figure 4 the “Posting time” content is deleted due to not being able to see what time the brand page posts the material when going back a couple of weeks in time and because of difficulties to analyse the impact of day (workday/weekday) on the level of engagement of the followers. “Interaction duration” under “Engagement” is also deleted because of the research lack of knowledge of the duration of each engaged follower.

After collecting these posts and the number of likes, comments and shares a chosen number of comments (depending on the amount of comments of each post) will be categorized then analysed. The different eWOM categories are 4 positive motives, 4 negative motives and 1 neutral motive and to help establish the motive of each comment chosen are the explanation of these in figure 3. This categorization of comments will be made in a mainly subjective way and therefore leaves space to other researchers to interpret the data in another way. This will be taken into consideration in the discussion in the end of this paper.

3. Methodology

In this chapter the different aspects of the chosen methodology is described. What is being presented is the different theoretical tools that has been used in order to answer the research question as well as the purpose, strategy and data analysis. After this the validity and reliability of the research are being discussed with the chapter ending in a summary.

3.1 Research purpose

To help deciding the research purpose Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill (2009) presented three different ways of going about this. The research purpose could either be *exploratory*, *descriptive* or *explanatory* and some research purposes could be a mixture of two, one often being more dominant than the other. An *exploratory* study means to shed light to a particular situation and clarifying a certain problem therefore the name “exploratory”. This research is often done by interviewing experts or arranging focus groups. *Descriptive* studies are made by illustrating and describing procedures, profiles, events or situations. An *explanatory* study is characterized as the explanation of a relationship between different variables in order to explain a situation or problem (Saunders et al., 2009).

Due to the purpose of this research the study had an explanatory nature to it. When looking at what factors engage customers the research is analysing the relationship between the posts put out on the brand pages and the followers engaging in them and also the eWOM between followers in the commenting section of the posts. This meant that the study done on these parts and their relationship between was explanatory.

3.2 Research approach

How to approach the research Saunders et al. (2009) proposes two ways of doing this. These approaches are either *deductive* or *inductive* which presents two different ways of connecting the collected theory in chapter 2 to the collected data.

Deductive or inductive

A deductive research approach means testing an already existing theory, explaining relationships between variables, establishing a hypothesis and testing this hypothesis on the collected data while inductive research approach means building a theory (Saunders et al., 2009). Bryman and Bell (2013) describes a deductive research approach as looking at the relationship between

theory and the research. The research is conducted by hypothesis and ideas derived from already established theories (Bryman & Bell, 2013).

Therefore the research approach of this thesis has a deductive nature since it is based on established theories making a frame of reference to analyse the data coming up with results to discuss.

Quantitative or qualitative

Because of the data being analysed both have hard and soft criterions the thesis had to adopt both a *quantitative* and *qualitative* elements.

Quantitative data is defined as collection of data results in numbers and presented and handled with statistics, models and diagrams. The meaning of the analysis is to explore the connection between variables and to measure it. With this approach you can develop the theories used in you frame of reference (Christensen, 2001). Major parts of the data in the thesis being quantitatively analysed is the hard criterions such as number of likes, comments and shares and how these variables are connected.

Based on these theories a model has been created that is going to be used to categorize and analyse the collected data. As described above eWOM, the comments of the chosen posts, is examined qualitatively by interpreting the motive of the comment and then categorized quantitatively in numbers. The different parts of B2C, content type and media type, are also first judged qualitatively by deciding if the post is entertaining, informative or remunerative while the media types, vividness and interactivity , is judged in a quantitative way. After this is decided the post is quantitatively categorized in numbers in a data sheet. The engagement factors “likes” and “shares” are quantitatively collected, counting the numbers of these on each post, and then also put into a data sheet. More on this is going to be presented in chapter 3 “Methodology”.

The qualitative way of analysing data is based on subjectively reading meanings of words, messages, symbols of the collection of data. The data is conceptually analysed with a theoretical base and building its own theory. There is no standardized way of analysing in a qualitative way but there are different processes of going about this. These processes are categorizing, summarizing or structuring meanings of data (Saunders et al, 2009). The qualitative way of analysing and building theories is subjective and therefore leaves the researcher to see patterns and explanations to these true his or hers eyes (Christensen, 2001). In figure 6 the different parts

of the collected data are illustrated and how these were either qualitatively or quantitatively analysed.

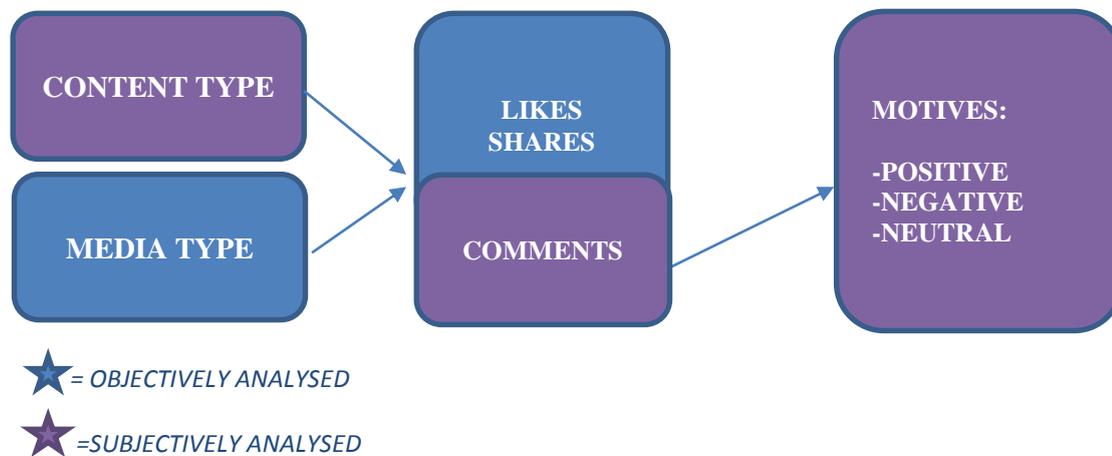


Figure 6. Model for analysing data with quantitative/qualitative parts shown
Source: Own made

After categorising the data objectively or subjectively the analysis of all the data were made in a quantitatively.

3.3 Research strategy

With the deductive research approach we need a strategy to help the examination of the research question. There are several different strategies to use and based on our research question and purpose the thesis adopted a case study strategy. According to Saunders et al. (2009) a case study strategy is suited to the researcher trying to understand the content and process of the research and is often used in either exploratory or explanatory nature. There are different ways of making case studies and the one that fitted this research is multiple case study strategy with each Facebook brand page being observed as a case. This gave the researcher a chance to study whether the findings of the first case also applied on the second case study (Saunders et al., 2009). When the choice of single or multiple case studies has been done, the study can either be holistic or embedded. A holistic case study refers to examining the company as a whole while the embedded cases study means diving in to the company examining subgroups and divisions. This thesis chose to adopt a multiple holistic case study.

3.4 Data collection

A data collection existing of documents is often gathered of documents already existing and not produced for a special cause. Example of these documents can be personal documents like letters, official government documents, mass media documents and more. Documents of these kinds have to be able to be read, not made for a special research purpose and are available for analysis. This data is typical secondary data meaning the data was already available when the research was created and the data is not specially produced for that research (Bryman & Bell, 2013). Primary data is usually made for the specific research such as interviews, questionnaires and focus groups (Saunders et al, 2009).

The documents this research used as the data collection is mix between “mass media documents” and “visual documents”. The term “mass media documents” includes newspapers, reviews, television shows and “visual documents” includes graphic content, websites and video data (Bryman & Bell, 2013). Due to the nature of posts can vary between statuses (texts), photos, videos or links we had to adapt both of these types of documents it was not defined as one type of document.

This thesis used two Facebook brand pages were brand owners operates in the same business and is of great size; reach out to a lot of Facebook members. The data collected was systematically organized into different categories (in a subjective or objective way) and then analysed by looking at different relations between the results of the different data. By looking at the mean values of the results given of different factors (vividness, likes, positive motives of eWOM) and comparing these to each other different correlations was discovered. The highest and lowest liked posts of each brand page was also examined and potential similarities and differences between the two case studies was made.

3.5 Sample selection

Due to time restriction of this research the sample selection of this thesis was limited to two different case studies. By restricting the size of the sample selection chances are the data collection is more detailed and more time can be spent on each sample when deriving the data but also analysing it afterwards. There are two different types of sampling techniques; probability and non-probability. A probability sample is a known selected sample, known sampling frame, while a non-probability sample is not known to be selected from the total range of samples (Saunders et al., 2009)

In this thesis the choice of samples was based on our research question and what was best fitted to answer this. Because our samplings are based on our research question, size and representable function for this research a non-probability sampling selection was most suitable. There are several different brand pages on Facebook and the choice of the food and beverage industry was made on the base that the industry contains both products and customer service. Amongst the 20 most popular Facebook brand pages there is only one brand that is a product and that is “Coca-Cola” (www.statista.com/statistics/269304/international-brands-on-facebook-by-number-of-fans/) with over 97.21 million likes. The other brand page chosen was McDonald’s with over 64 million likes. These pages mentioned are the globalized brand pages on Facebook, there are also specific brand pages to every country. In this thesis the data collected will be from the globalized version of the brand pages. McDonald’s interacts a lot with their followers on their brand page which, in connection with their big amount of followers, was the reason of the choice. Because of these arguments and the choice of using non-probability sampling the research used a purposive sampling since this was the most appropriate to this research. A purposive sampling (also called judgmental sampling) means the researcher uses their judgment choosing samplings depending on the research question and purpose of the thesis (Saunders et al, 2009).

3.6 Data analysis

A content analysis means analysing the content of texts, documents and systematically categorizes and quantifies the information. As this analysis is collecting data in a systematic quantitatively way the strategy is objective and therefore the process of the analysis is made without any personal values (Bryman & Bell, 2013). This strategy suited our research due to our major data being quantitative.

When the data had been collected and categorized the analysis was conducted. The data was categorized some in a subjective way and some in an objective way. First the data was divided into either “Advertising strategy” or “Customer behavior”. The data put into the category “Advertising strategy” was content regarding the posted material from the administrator of the brand page side such as post content type and post media type. These are all seen as different factors that possibly has an effect on the result (see figure 7).

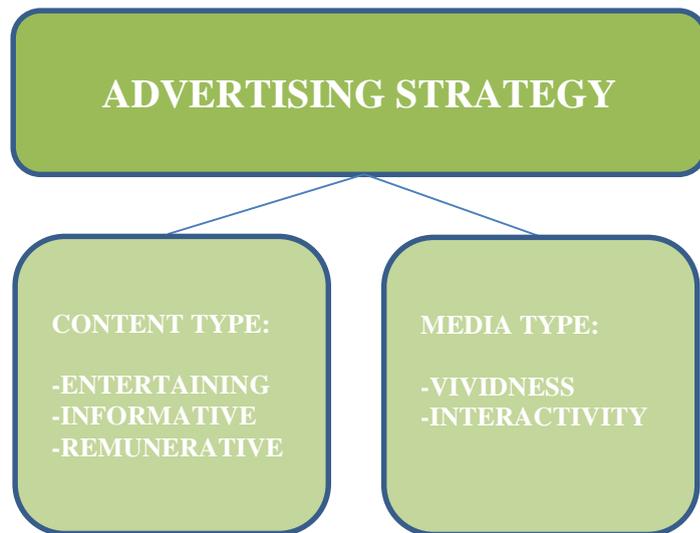


Figure 7. Categorisation of data from brand pages
Source: Own made

These effect could be for example posts with entertaining content creating more engagement amongst the followers than remunerative content. The other category “customer behaviour” contained content produced by the followers such as number of likes, comments and shares (objective data). A subcategory to “Customer behaviour” was created to divide the comments (subjective data) from the objective numerical data for easier analysing. In the category “eWOM” the comments was divided into further categories depending on their nature such as positive or negative altruism, product involvement and more (see figure 8). The strategy of how the comments were divided was based on the theory by Henning-Thurau et al. (2004) presented in figure 3. The table show eight different motives of eWOM and the explanation of what these motives mean. These explanations of the motives were the base for the categorisation of the comments (see figure 8).

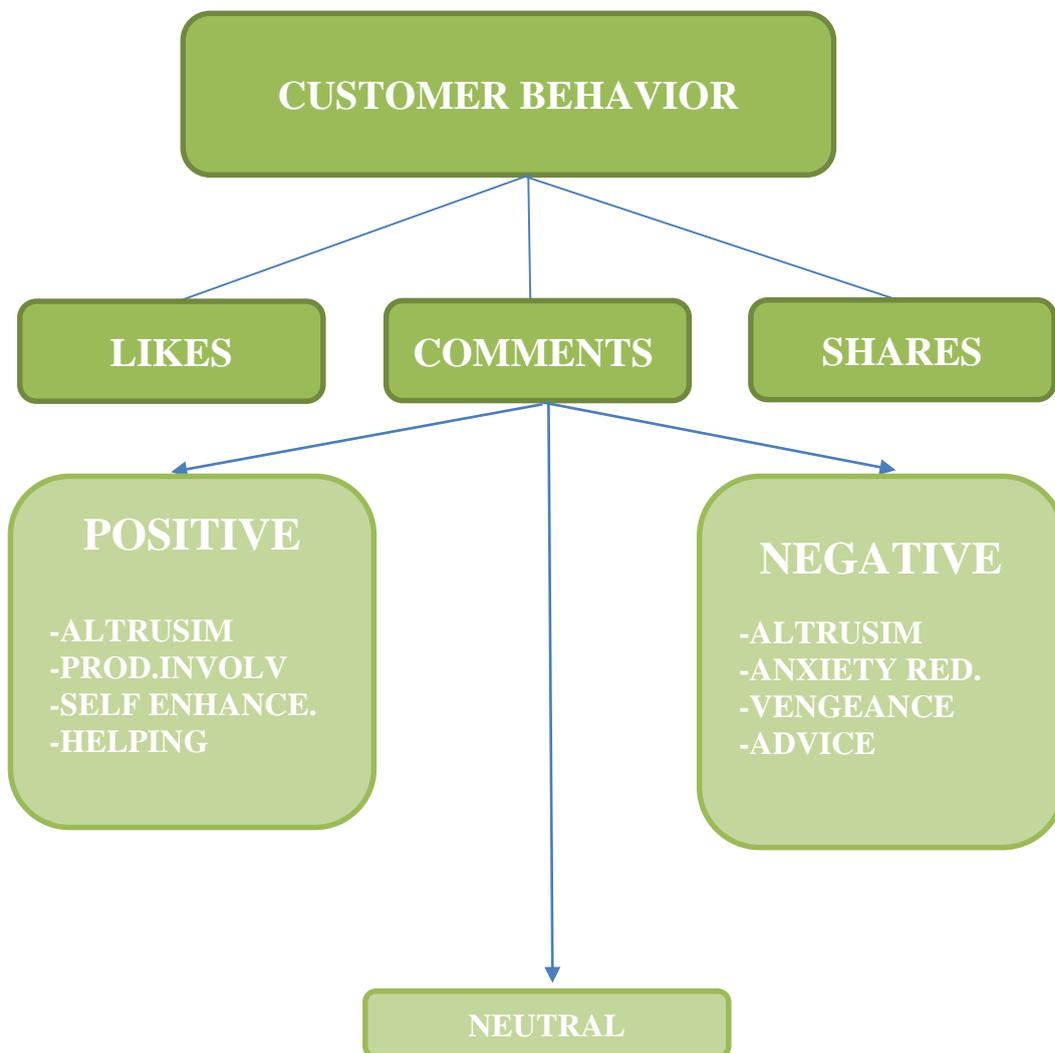


Figure 8. Categorization of data of the customer behavior
 Source: Adapted from figure 5

After the data was categorized the different factor was analysed and measured against each other to see if there was any connection between the variables (both positive and negative). One category which is added to these eight categories is “neutral comments” which obviously shows no positive or negative meaning to it.

3.7 Validity and reliability

There is always a risk when conducting a research that the methodology contains certain errors or misconceptions that can make the given results not reliable. Therefore it is crucial to look at the validity and reliability of the methodology used to conduct the research. The validity of a methodology is the level of probability of the given results, how accurate they are. The reliability of the methodology is if the research was done by someone the results would be the same (Saunders et al., 2009).

Validity

To minimize the risk of negatively affecting the methodology there are some threats to evaluate and take into consideration. Threats to the validity of the methodology are history, testing, instrumentation, mortality, maturation and ambiguity about casual direction which is displayed as figure 9 (Saunders e al., 2009).

History	What has happened in the recent times? Has something happened that is out of order?
Testing	Is there a risk for manipulated results in tests?
Instrumentation	Does the instrument/s effect the results?
Mortality	Is there a risk of participants dropping out of the study?
Maturation	Has the recent time affected the management style?
Ambiguity about casual direction	Does the findings affect your primary focus or the other way around? Or both?

Figure 9. Explanation of the six threats to validity
Source: Saunders et al. (2009)

This thesis has a decided time of data being collected and any factors out of the ordinary that may affect the results will show in the data. Example, McDonald’s receiving a big amount of negative eWOM due to a product being withdrawn from their menu. This big amount of negative eWOM will affect the validation of our results but the research can take this into account when noticing the withdrawal amongst the comments. Just looking at the data in a subjective way would leave space for misinterpretation but since the research was made in a both objective and subjective way these out of the order incidents can be detected and taken into account. When analyzing the data subjectively is was done with a foundation of already established theories but there is a risk that another researcher would interpret the data in another way, for example the comments that were categorized or what kind of media types the different posts were. It is difficult, if not impossible, to minimize the risk of this to zero since there is always going to be an element of interpretation in the decision making process. There is no risk of manipulation of the results since the data is secondary and already made when the data collection is starting. The instrument in the data collection is observation and categorizing based on established theories. There are no participants that can risk the research by dropping out. By securing collecting data from different sources (Coca-Cola and McDonald’s) the direction of the effect of the variables will be stated.

Reliability

To ensure that the research will produce the same results even in by a different researcher but with the same references there are some factors to consider. Saunders et al. (2009) proposes four threats to take into consideration to ensure a reliable methodology (see figure 10).

<i>Subject/participant error</i>	May the time of deriving the data affect the results? (EX. Questionnaire completed on a Monday versus Friday)
<i>Subject/participant bias</i>	Is there a risk for the content to be manipulated when deriving the data? (EX. Interviewees answering what they think you want to hear)
<i>Observer error</i>	Subjective error in interpreting the data collected
<i>Observer bias</i>	Subjective formulation of the data that was derived

Figure 10. Explanation of the four threats to reliability
 Source: Saunders et al. (2009)

This research is observational with a content analysis and therefore the risk of the threats “Subject/participant error” and “Subject/participant bias” is small to none. There is a risk that the subjectively made categorization and analysing could affect the results and also when formulating what subjective data had actually been collected. To minimize this risk a carefully made frame of reference has been made and all categorisation was made objectively and even the part of the content analysis that were subjectively made had theoretical base.

3.8 Methodology summary

The purpose of this explanatory study was to analyse and evaluate how companies with brand communities on the SNS Facebook can engage their customers. By using a deductive research approach, using already established and existing theories, different variables and their relationships between them were analysed to answer the research question. Both a qualitative and quantitative way was used to gather the data from the case studies. Case study was the choice of research strategy, the explanation of the relation between different variables, and the data collection was made of “secondary data” (data that already existed before the collection began and not made specifically for this research). While gathering the data and categorizing, by content analysis, was made based on the frame of reference. The data was put in either the B2C sheet or C2C sheet and then categorized again in that specific sheet depending on their nature.

To minimize the risk of validation of the methodology six threats were evaluated. These were history, testing, instrumentation, mortality, maturation and ambiguity. The results of the research and its reliability was ensured by looking at four threats; subject/participant error, subject/participant bias, observer error, observer bias.

4. Results

Chapter four is both a presentation of the empirical data and analysis with help of the frame of reference with examples of the data in different tables. The chapter is divided into different subsections with focus on results of B2C, C2C and then a B2C with C2C analysis the highest and lowest engaged posts. The both case studies are presented separately.

4.1 Empirical data presentation

The data of the two different case studies was gathered in four different excel documents. Each case study had two different excel sheets, one for B2C and one for C2C. The data was categorized depending on their content. The data collection and data categorization was made through content analysis. This content analysis was made both subjectively and objectively as discussed in chapter three. The B2C, categorization of data from brand pages, excel sheet consisted of ten categories. Each excel sheet, B2C and C2C, consisted of 30 pieces of data which was the sampling size (see table 1 and 2).

Table 1. Data collection excel sheet of B2C for Coca-Cola

Entertainment	Informative	Remunerative	Vividness	Interactivity	Day	Views	Shares	Likes	N.o Comments
1	1	0	3	1	4/11/2016	89000	1	4	82
1	0	0	4	2	4/7/2016	210000	45	1300	9
1	0	0	2	1	4/5/2016		58	23000	1068
1	1	0	4	2	3/30/2016	196000	240	2100	114
1	0	0	4	2	3/29/2016	261000	67	2100	42
1	0	0	2	1	3/28/2016		12	1300	14
1	1	0	4	2	3/26/2016	139000	106	636	30
1	1	0	2	1	3/21/2016		24	934	213
1	1	0	2	1	3/18/2016		3	355	17
1	1	0	2	1	3/16/2016		14	484	17
1	1	1	4	2	3/15/2016	100000	23	472	30
1	1	0	2	1	3/12/2016		3	283	28
1	1	0	2	1	3/9/2016		16	684	152
1	0	0	2	1	3/7/2016		14	503	18
1	1	0	2	1	3/6/2016		1	1100	27
1	1	1	2	1	3/5/2016		13	429	121
1	1	0	2	1	3/2/2016		14	455	28
1	1	0	2	1	2/29/2016		2	442	12
1	1	0	2	1	2/26/2016		15	501	14
1	0	0	2	1	2/23/2016		11	572	60
1	1	1	2	1	2/19/2016		11	419	16
1	1	1	2	1	2/14/2016		30	1200	65
1	1	1	2	1	2/8/2016		21	1100	162
1	0	1	2	1	5/2/2016		2	330	12
1	1	0	2	1	2/2/2016		27	3100	29
1	0	0	2	1	1/29/2016		40	1200	23
1	0	0	2	1	1/25/2016		201	4600	173
1	1	1	2	1	1/22/2016		24	1500	184
0	1	0	2	1	1/20/2016		24	1300	357
1	1	0	2	1	1/18/2016		60	4100	215

The data collection of each brand page started from beginning of April and back in time until 30 pieces of data were collected. This because by then followers have had time to interact with the posts and react to it. As seen in table 1, for McDonald's, the date of the data collected was from 11th of April until 18th of January 2016. As seen in table 2, for Coca-Cola, the data was derived from 30th of December 2015 for McDonald's. When the posts were chosen for collection no post of the same day were chosen and with two or three days in between because of the intention of the research to minimize the risk of analysing data that were in some ways affected by outside factors. An example of this is bad publicity of the brand and then the eWOM tend to be affected. Therefore the intention was to "spread out" the collection of data. In the B2C collection the subjectively categorized data was entertainment, informative and remunerative. This was made with the criteria of Cvijikj and Michahelles (2013). The objectively categorized data were views, shares, likes, comments and level of vividness and interactivity.

The other excel sheet was of the C2C data collection and consisted of nine categories. The data consisted of 30 systematically selected comments of the 30 posts in the B2C data sheet. The comments were systematically picked, for example if a post had around 60 comments every other comment were selected, analysed and categorized (see table 2). If the post had around 90 comments every third comment was chosen and if the post had over 500 comments a random selection of 30 comments was chosen. An example of a random pick of comments was of a post with over 2 000 comments starting at the oldest comments and scrolling down and picking out random comments without reading the content of the comment or the name of the follower commenting. The 30 comments selected had to include at least some in the beginning, middle and the end of the comment field so that the risk of selecting comments that contains the same kind of topic, example friends commenting each other names and discussing "internal matters" within that group, were minimized. If a post had less than 30 comments, all comments were collected and categorized.

Table 2. Data collection excel sheet of C2C for McDonald's

Day	N.o Comments	Positive altruism	Product involvement	Self-enhancement	Helping the company	Negative altruism	Anxiety reduction	Vengeance	Advice seeking	Neutral
4/1/2016	58	7	9		3	5		3		3
3/27/2016	261	3	7	2	5	7	2		3	1
3/25/2016	69	2	6	1	3	9	1	2	3	5
3/23/2016	323	15	8		3				1	1
3/20/2016	138	8	6	2	2	1	3	2	1	5
3/17/2016	166	8	15	1	1	2			3	
3/15/2016	20	4	13			1				2
3/10/2016	213	10	8	1	1	2	4		1	3
3/5/2016	161	12	2	3	3	2	1			7
3/2/2016	61	9	6	2	6	3	1		2	1
2/28/2016	128	8	4	3	5	2	4			4
2/25/2016	11	3	5							3
2/23/2016	84	2	8	1	2	5	2			10
2/20/2016	1056	9	12	2	1	1	3		1	1
2/17/2016	98	11	8	2	2	3				4
2/14/2016	12	2	1		3	2	1		1	2
2/10/2016	276	15	7	1	3		2		2	
2/7/2016	30	7	8	2	1	4		2	3	3
2/3/2016	152	10	6	3	1	4				6
1/28/2016	171	4	8	5	3	2	5	1		2
1/25/2016	54	13	1		1					15
1/21/2016	247	15	2	1	1	1				10
1/17/2016	939	5	7	2		5	1	2	1	7
1/15/2016	158	7	9		5		7			2
1/12/2016	212	2	8	1	4		2		4	9
1/9/2016	34	4	11	2		2	4	6		1
1/5/2016	84	6	3	3	4	5	4	1		3
1/3/2016	1299	11	9	5				2	3	
1/1/2016	887	8	9		1		6		4	2
12/30/2016	82	4	12	3		3	2	1	4	1

Summarized, 30 posts were chosen of each case study, Facebook brand page, and the nature of these noted in the datasheet for B2C. After this was done 30 comments were chosen of each chosen post and put in the C2C sheet. Together the number of posts to analyse were 120 (30 per sheet).

When the B2C data had been collected several types of information was derived from the excel sheets so that the analysis would be easier to make. To make the analysis process less complex the mean value for each objectively gathered data was calculated as well as the maximum and minimum value. For the subjectively categorized data the percentage of occurrence of each factor was calculated.

The categorization of the C2C data was subjectively made. From every chosen post 30 comments were chosen, analysed and categorized based on the theory of Henning-Thurau et al. (2004) (see figure 3 on page 10).

4.2 B2C results for McDonald's

In this section of chapter four the empirical data will be presented and analysed with help of the frame of reference. The general values presented is of all the posts collected of the case study McDonald's. The occurrence of content types and different levels of media types is presented in percentage (how many out of the 30 collected data). Number of likes, comments, shares of different content and media types will also be presented under "Engagement in the different content types" and "Engagement in the different levels of media types".

General mean values of the collected posts

When starting examining the data in the different case studies one factor of engagement that had not been mentioned was discovered. If the post contained a video the number of views of that video was stated below. By clicking on the video the follower had in a way engaged themselves in the material the brand page had posted and because of this it was included as a factor of engagement in our objectively chosen data. The range between minimum and maximum number of views, likes, comments and shares were vast as can be seen in figure 13.

Table 3. Data sheet of general values for McDonald's

Values	N.o Views	N.o Likes	N.o Comments	N.o Shares
Mean	9562,5	3035,4	249,5	190,2
Maximum	19000	11000	1299	1198
Minimum	4000	163	11	39

Based on these results the followers seemed to mostly engage by viewing videos when videos were posted by the brand page. In second place were liking a post, after that commenting a post and least sharing it.

Occurrence of Content type

The categorisation of the different posts and their content types was easy due to the clear description of each type in chapter 2. The most used content type of posts was entertaining, in second place informative and least remunerative (see table 4). As written by Cvijikj and Michahelles (2013) the most engaging content types are in the order entertaining, informative and remunerative. Since a post can be more than one type of content the sum of the percentage is over 100 %, for example a post can be both entertaining and informative.

Table 4. Percentage of the occurrence of different content types for McDonald's

Entertainment	Informative	Remunerative
76,6 % (23/30)	70 % (21/30)	20 % (6/30)

For example an entertaining post could be a photo of a group of friends preparing to parachute jump out of an airplane with the text "Take your memories to another level! Would you dare?". The post is asking the followers to engage and a lot of these posts get responses in comments and likes. An informative post could be a photo of the product, for example a cheeseburger, being hold by a happy teenager with the text "Say "Cheese"! Smile with McDonald's!". A remunerative post could be McDonald's collaborating with Facebook and asking followers to sign a Facebook petition to show their support for the Paralympics.

Out of 23 entertaining posts only 9 (39 %) were "just" entertaining, not in a combination of another content type. The other 14 were in a combination of another content type, either informative or remunerative or both. Of 21 informative posts only 4 (19 %) were not in a combination of another content type. All of the posts with a remunerative content type were in combination of another content type.

Occurrence of different levels of media types

The found vividness of the posts were of level 2, photo, or 4, video, although both had a text above them they were categorized as photo or video because level 1 meant only text. No post collected as data were of level 1 vividness and also there was no post of the thirty chosen that was analysed with vividness of level 3, link (see table 5).

Table 5. Percentage of the occurrence of different media types for McDonald's

Vividness	Percentage of posts
Text	0 %
Photo	73,3 %
Link	0 %
Video	26,7 %
Interactivity	Percentage of posts
Post without clickmaterial	73,3 %
Post with clickmaterial	26,7 %

The vividness and interactivity of a post are connected to each other. Level 2 of interactivity demands action of the follower such as clicking and therefore level 4 of vividness, video, is connected to level 2 of interactivity.

Engagement in the different content types

When calculating the mean value of posts with different content types the results were as seen below in table 6.

Table 6. Comparison of values for different content types for McDonald's

Entertainment	N.o Likes	N.o Comments	N.o Shares
Mean	2981,34	246,13	154

Informative	N.o Likes	N.o Comments	N.o Shares
Mean	3024,33	258,28	206,57

Remunerative	N.o Likes	N.o Comments	N.o Shares
Mean	2993,83	147,66	127,33

The most liked, commented and shared posts were informative posts and the second most liked posts were remunerative posts. Entertaining post were more commented and shared than remunerative although remunerative posts were more liked. Remunerative posts often ask the follower to engage in a direct way, for example asking the follower to sign up for a competition

in conjunction with Facebook. These remunerative posts were least common, only occurring 6 out of 30 times according to this research. Gummerus et al. (2012) claims that brand community providers should focus on offering social benefits to the visitors and by offering competitions with prizes and winners the followers feel a higher level of engagement.

In this case study the informative posts were the most engaging posts which according to Cvijikj and Michahelles (2013) are the second most engaging content type with entertaining posts being the most engaging.

Engagement in different levels of media types

There were two different levels of vividness of the posts collected and those levels were 2 (photo) and 4 (video) and they had different results. There were no posts collected with only a text, level 1, or a link, level 3. Posts with text were always combined with a photo or video and there were no link posted of the 30 posts collected and analysed.

Table 7. Mean values of post media types for McDonald’s

Vividness Photo	N.o Likes	N.o Comments	N.o Shares
Mean value	3664,27	268,72	167,81

Vividness Video	N.o Likes	N.o Comments	N.o Shares
Mean value	1306	196,5	251,87

The mean value of likes and comments of posts with photo were noticeably higher than posts with video. Number of shares were higher if the post contained a video than a photo. According to Cvijikj and Michahelles (2013) the most engaging vividness of a post is higher level of vividness but not according to the results of this research which showed that lower vividness posts, photo, had higher mean value of likes and comments but lower mean value of shares (see table 7).

The interactivity level of the posts collected were either 1 or 2, 1 being not a clickable content of a post like in this case a photo and level 2 being a clickable content of a post like in this case a video (see table 8).

Table 8. Comparison between different levels of interactivity for McDonald's

Interactivity Photo	N.o Likes	N.o Comments	N.o Shares
Mean	3574,52	260,04	164,73

Interactivity Video	N.o Likes	N.o Comments	N.o Shares
Mean	1264	214,71	274

Again, we can see that the number of likes and comments are higher of the posts that is not clickable than posts that contain clickable material. The number of shares, the engagement, are also higher of the posts with clickable material than non-clickable material.

4.3 C2C results for McDonald's

In this section of chapter 4 the empirical data will be presented and analysed with the help of the frame of reference. The general mean values presented is of all the posts collected of the case study McDonald's. Later the data of posts with most positive eWOM is presented and which content type the posts had.

General mean values of the collected posts

The highest mean values of occurring motives of comments were, according to this research finding, positive altruism and product involvement. The mean value of each motive category was calculated by taking the combined value of all the comments in one category and then dividing them with 30 (the number of comments). So for example, if one chosen post had 58 comments and out of these 58 comments 30 were picked these comments were analysed to see how many were of different motives. If out of 30 comments 24 were categorized as positive altruism and the rest as negative altruism this was noted in the data sheet. When all the comments of the 30 chosen posts were categorized a mean value were calculated to see what the mean value of each motive category was. The mean value was calculated by adding all the values together and dividing them by the number of comments collected of that specific post. In this research, the mean value of comments that were categorized as positive altruism was 7,46 (see table 9).

The lowest average occurring motive of comment were self-enhancement with 2,18. Vengeance, advice seeking, helping the company and anxiety reduction are also in the lowest occurring motives of comments all being between 2,2 and 2,89 (see table 9).

Table 9. eWOM data categorized in different motives for McDonald's

Values	Positive altruism	Product involvement	Self-enhancement	Helping the company	Neutral
Mean	7,46	7,26	2,18	2,67	4,18
Maximum	15	15	5	6	15
Minimum	2	1	1	1	1

Values	Negative altruism	Anxiety reduction	Vengeance	Advice seeking
Mean	3,27	2,89	2,2	2,31
Maximum	9	7	6	4
Minimum	1	1	1	1

Example of common positive altruism was agreeing with the message of the post, being positive towards it (see figure 11). Product involvement could be such as positively suggesting something to the menu, telling a positive story of experience at the restaurants or the service while a comment with helping motive could be a person giving advice where to eat to another person who asked for recommendation in the comments field. Positive altruism and product involvement were generally the most common amongst the comments.



Figure 11. Example of positive comment for McDonald's

Examples of negative altruism were followers negatively commenting the organization (see figure 12) or the company decisions like meat suppliers. A lot of the negative altruism was about health and the environment. Anxiety reduction comments were comments about bad experience, bad service, facilities or products.

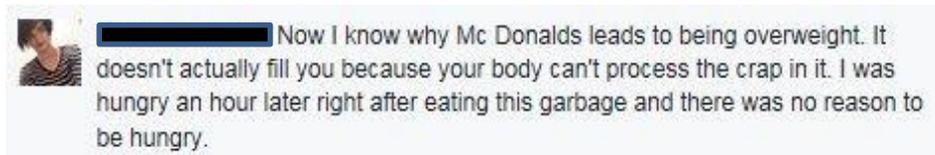


Figure 12. Example of negative comment for McDonald's

It is important to emphasize that since the categorisation of the comments was made subjectively there is a risk that another research would interpret the comments in another way. In some way the person analyzing the comments must make a decision of the motive behind the comment which makes it difficult. For example figure 11 is categorised as positive altruism but could also be seen as a comment that should be categorised under product involvement since the person is saying that McDonald's is delicious.

Occurring content types of posts with positive eWOM

Posts with a number of comments "Positive altruism" over 7,46 were 15. Out of these 15 posts 10 were of entertaining content, 15 were of informative content and 5 were of remunerative content (see table 10).

Table 10. Percentage of occurring content types amongst posts with positive eWOM for McDonald's

Entertainment	Informative	Remunerative
66,6 % (10/15)	100 % (15/15)	33,3 % (5/15)

4.4 B2C with C2C McDonald's

The highest post analysed had 11 000 likes and has an informative content type (see figure 13). The reason the likes is different in the picture presented and the data collected is because the photo was taken a time after the data was collected and therefore the numbers in the photo is higher. This also applies for the highest and lowest liked posts for Coca-Cola. This post also had over average high number of comments, shares and positive altruism. This post has a level 2 of vividness and level 1 of interactivity. See this data in table 11.

Table 11. Data of the highest liked post for McDonald's

Entertainment	Informative	Remunerative	Vividness	Interactivity	Day	Views	N.o Likes	N.o Comments	N.o Shares
0	1	0	2	1	2/10/2016		11000	276	402

Day	N.o Comments	Positive altruism	Product involvement	Self-enhancement	Helping the company
2/10/2016	276	15	7	1	3

Negative altruism	Anxiety reduction	Vengeance	Advice seeking	Neutral
	2		2	



Figure 13. Highest liked post for McDonald's

The lowest liked post, 163 likes, was both entertaining and informative (see figure 14). The photo has different statistics than table 12 due to the fact that the photo was taken a time after the data was collected. The post was a video with 5 500 views and lowest number of shares. The number of comments was under average and had over average number of negative altruism motive comments although the number of positive altruism comments was above average. See this data in table 12.

Table 12. Data of the lowest liked post for McDonald's

Entertainment	Informative	Remunerative	Vividness	Interactivity	Day	Views	N.o Likes	N.o Comments	N.o Shares
1	1	0	4	2	3/2/2016	5500	163	61	39

Day	N.o Comments	Positive altruism	Product involvement	Self-enhancement	Helping the company
3/2/2016	61	9	6	2	6

Negative altruism	Anxiety reduction	Vengeance	Advice seeking	Neutral
3	1		2	1



Figure 14. Lowest liked post for McDonald's

4.5 B2C results for Coca-Cola

In this section of chapter 4 the empirical data will be presented and analysed with the help of the frame of reference. The general values presented is of all the posts collected of the case study Coca-Cola. The occurrence of content types and different levels of media types is presented in percentage (how many out of the 30 collected data). Number of likes, comments, shares of

different content and media types will also be presented under “Engagement in the different content types” and “Engagement in the different levels of media types”.

General mean values of the collected data

As with the other case study, McDonald's, number of views were added as an objective factor shown under the video of the post. The range between highest and lowest value of likes, comments and shares were big (see table 13).

Table 13. Data sheet of general values for Coca-Cola

Values	N.o Views	N.o Likes	N.o Comments	N.o Shares
Mean	165833,3	1883,4	111	37,4
Maximum	261000	23000	1068	240
Minimum	89000	4	9	1

Here we can see that far more followers engage by viewing a video than liking posts (posts meaning any kind of content and media type posts). These followers stop at step 3, satisfaction, in the seven steps of engagement by Sashi (2012) (see figure 2 on page 7). First they have a connection, then interaction (viewing) and then they are satisfied.

Occurrence of content types

The entertaining content type of the chosen posts were dominating thereafter informative posts and last remunerative (see table 14). This is similar to the values of McDonald's, entertaining posts being the most common content type.

Table 14. Percentage of the occurrence of different content types for Coca-Cola

Entertainment	Informative	Remunerative
96,6 % (29/30)	70 % (21/30)	23,3 % (7/30)

Occurrence of different levels of media types

Level 2, photo, were most commonly used as media type and as shown in table 15 no post were collected that only had text as a media type. One out of 30 posts contained a link and 5 out of 30 posts contained a video (see table 15).

Table 15. Percentage of the occurrence of different media types for Coca-Cola

Vividness	Percentage of posts
Text	0 %
Photo	80 %
Link	0,04 %
Video	16,6 %
Interactivity	Percentage of posts
Non-clickable	83,4 %
Clickable	16,6 %

Engagement in different content types

According to these results of this case study the entertaining posts had the most number of likes, comments and shares. The second most engaging content type was informative and lastly remunerative (see table 16).

Table 16. Comparison between different content types for Coca-Cola

Entertainment	N.o Likes	N.o Comments	N.o Shares
Mean value	1903,55	102,58	37,86

Informative	N.o Likes	N.o Comments	N.o Shares
Mean value	1028,47	91,09	32

Remunerative	N.o Likes	N.o Comments	N.o Shares
Mean value	778,57	84,28	17,71

Engagement in different levels of media types

Posts with the vividness of level 2, photo, were the most liked and commented posts media type wise. As we could see in the first case study of McDonald's the posts with video content were more shared than the other types of media types (see table 17). There were one post with the level 3 of vividness so no mean value was derived.

Table 17. Comparison between values of different vividness levels for Coca-Cola

Vividness Photo	N.o Likes	N.o Comments	N.o Shares
Mean	2078,79	126,04	26,66

Vividness Video	N.o Likes	N.o Comments	N.o Shares
Mean	1326,1	45	96,2

When it comes to interactivity level the “non-clickable content” were more liked and commented but the “clickable content” such as videos and links were more shared as can be seen in table 18.

Table 18. Comparison between values of different interactivity levels for Coca-Cola

Interactivity Photo	N.o Likes	N.o Comments	N.o Shares
Mean	1995,8	124,28	25,64

Interactivity Video	N.o Likes	N.o Comments	N.o Shares
Mean	1321,6	45	96,2

There is a difference between the mean values of vividness and interactivity even though both is displaying the values of the same levels of media types (photos and videos). This is a miscalculation which is noted by the researcher. A localization of the miscalculation was done but the error could not be found.

4.6 C2C results for Coca-Cola

In this section of chapter 4 the empirical data will be presented and analysed with the help of the frame of reference. The general mean values presented is of all the posts collected of the case study Coca-Cola. Later the data of posts with most positive eWOM is presented and which content type the posts had.

General mean values of the chosen posts

According to the results of this research the most common occurring motive of comments were positive altruism (see example of figure 15) and product involvement.



Figure 15. Example of positive motive of comment for Coca-Cola

In third place neutral comments were most common and those comments could be a follower mentioning their friend's name. The most occurring motive of comments in the negative eWOM (see example in figure 16) were negative altruism (see table 19).



Figure 16. Example of negative motive of comment for Coca-Cola

Table 19. Data categorized in different motives for Coca-Cola

Values	Positive altruism	Product involvement	Self-enhancement	Helping the company	Neutral
Mean	7,12	7,43	2,13	3	3,84
Maximum	16	24	5	6	15
Minimum	1	1	1	1	1

Values	Negative altruism	Anxiety reduction	Vengeance	Advice seeking
Mean	2,95	2,26	2	2,17
Maximum	7	5	6	4
Minimum	1	1	1	1

Occuring content types of comments with positive eWOM

Seven of the posts were over average with comments having “Positive altruism” motive. Out of these seven posts, six were of entertaining content type, seven were of informative content type and one out of 7 were remunerative content type (see table 20).

Table 20. Percentage of occurring content types amongst posts with positive eWOM for Coca-Cola

Entertainment	Informative	Remunerative
85,7 % (6/7)	100 % (7/7)	14,2 % (1/7)

4.7 B2C with C2C Coca-Cola

The highest liked post, see figure 17, had an entertaining content type and was also the highest commented. It had over average number of shares. This post had abnormally high number of comments with product involvement motives (see table 21).

Table 21. Highest liked post Coca-Cola

Entertainment	Informative	Remunerative	Vividness	Interactivity	Day	Views	Shares	Likes	N.o Comments
1	0	0	2	1	4/5/2016		58	23000	1068

Day	N.o Comments	Positive altruism	Product involvement	Self-enhancement	Helping the company
5/4/2016	1068		24	3	

Negative altruism	Anxiety reduction	Vengeance	Advice seeking	Neutral
3				



Figure 17. Highest liked amongst chosen posts for Coca-Cola

The lowest liked post had a combination of entertaining and informative content type with a level4 vividness which means it contained a video (see figure 18). It had the lowest number of

views, likes and shares and under average number of comments. Comments with motive positive altruism, self-enhancement and helping the company were under average but product involvement were above average. All comments with negative motives were under average except for vengeance. Neutral comments also were under average, see this data in table 22.

Table 22. Data of the lowest liked post for Coca-Cola

Entertainment	Informative	Remunerative	Vividness	Interactivity	Day	Views	Shares	Likes	N.o Comments
1	1	0	4	2	4/11/2016	89000	1	4	82

Day	N.o Comments	Positive altruism	Product involvement	Self-enhancement	Helping the company
4/11/2016	82	6	12		

Negative altruism	Anxiety reduction	Vengeance	Advice seeking	Neutral
3	1	3		5



Figure 18. Lowest liked post for Coca-Cola

5. Discussion and conclusions

In this chapter the analysis, made in chapter 4, will be discussed, conclusions will be made and the practical implications will be presented. The results of the discussion will answer the research question and in turn fulfilling the purpose of the research. At the end of the chapter the theoretical contribution will be presented as well as the recommendation to continued research.

5.1 Purpose and research question

The purpose of the thesis was to analyse and evaluate how companies with brand communities on the SNS Facebook can engage their customers. Out of this purpose one research question was created: What factors engage followers on Facebook brand pages? A theoretical framework was created out of already established scientific articles about engagement, the WEB 2.0 and Facebook. The most fitting theories for this thesis was selected and combined into a frame of reference. The frame of reference included a model created for supporting the research in collecting, analysing and categorizing the selected data. After this the analysis of the data was presented as well as the results. The results of the analysis showed that it is difficult to detect what creates engagement amongst followers. One can speculate and create different theories and beliefs of the results given depending on the combination of many factors or/and the meaning behind certain actions (both from brand pages and followers). Some results are supported by the theories in the frame of reference and others not.

Presented in this chapter is a discussion of the similarities and differences between established theories and results of this thesis conducted research. The presentation will be divided into B2C and C2C and after this the theoretical contribution will be presented and suggestions to continued research.

5.2 B2C

General values of the collected posts showed that followers seemed to mostly engage by viewing videos, in second place liking posts and after that commenting and least sharing. This could be because of the energy demanded of the action to engage. To view a video the follower only has to click on the video, watch it and move on. This action does not show on the followers own member page or the friends of the followers news feed. Liking a post is also just a click by the follower but this action becomes visible for the friends of the followers and this could be one of

the reasons views are higher than liking. Also, viewing a video is a “neutral” action meaning it does not mean liking the message or information mediated while on the other hand liking something is a direct action showing the follower is positive to the message/information. Commenting a post takes more energy and time of the follower to engage in and therefore the post has to be “worth” this meaning the content and media type must interest the follower. Sharing a post is the most demanding and in a way shows the highest form of engagement of the follower. This means the post and its message/information is advocated by the follower to its Facebook community.

Content type

According to Cvijikj and Michahelles (2013) some factors in advertising strategy of brand pages can raise the engagement amongst followers and one of those factors are the content of the posts. The results of this research show that brand owners with brand pages mostly post entertaining content posts, then informative content and least remunerative content. This is consistent with the theoretical framework that the most engaging content type is entertaining, secondly informative and the least engaging remunerative. When the categorisation was made it was noticed that a post could be more than one type of content and more than often entertaining content was combined with informative posts. This could be because brand owners want to market their brand in a combination with entertaining the followers and creating high levels of engagement.

Although entertaining content was the most used by brand pages the data of case study McDonald’s showed that informative posts had on average more likes, comments and shares than entertaining posts. It also showed that remunerative posts were more liked than entertaining posts although entertaining posts were more commented. One explanation of this could be that since entertaining posts were more occurring than both informative and remunerative followers were more intrigued and interested in these less occurring posts. The remunerative posts, only 6 out of 30 posts, often asked the followers in a direct way to engage in competitions, surveys, charity work or similar activities and this could be a reason why remunerative posts had more likes than entertaining posts. The highest liked post of McDonalds was also informative and contained a photo but the lowest liked post were a video with entertaining and informative content but in the case of Coca-Cola the most liked post were of

entertaining content. On average Coca-Cola's posts that was most liked were entertaining. Informative and last remunerative which differs from our earlier results of McDonald's.

A majority of the posts analysed were in a combination of different content types, often entertaining and informative, which makes it difficult to say solely which content type is the most engaging. By just looking at the hard criterions it seemed that the results of McDonald's showed that informative posts were the most engaging but when looking at the results of Coca-Cola case study entertaining posts seemed to be the most engaging. One thing is similar for both cases, the highest liked posts were both of a single content type and not a combination of two or more.

Media type

There were no posts chosen in the case study McDonald's contained a link. In the case study of Coca-Cola 1 out of 30 contained a link. Also, there were vastly more posts with photos than videos. This could be an economical conscious decision since making videos are more expensive than producing a photo. It could also be a strategy to create a certain kind of engagement that is more beneficial for the company such as liking and commenting. By doing this the posts reach out to the friends of the followers by appearing in their newsfeed as for example "Markus Andersen liked the post of McDonald's...". The results of this research showed that when posting a photo the number of likes and comments were higher than a video but when posting a video the number of shares were higher than when posting a photo. So depending on how the brand page wants to create engagement they post different types of posts.

The engagement of lower level of vividness were higher according to the first case study, McDonald's. This could be because of, like discussed earlier, since looking at a video is a form of engagement action of the follower the probability that the follower would, for example, first watch the video and then like, comment or share it is lower than the probability that a follower will see a post with a photo and then like, comment or share it. This is because the follower already feels as though they have engaged themselves by watching the video but not if they just look at a photo. One interesting factor is that the number of shares is also in this case higher with higher level of vividness.

In the second case study, Coca-Cola, the results were similar. This shows that, in some way, the followers feel more likely to share posts containing videos with their Facebook brand community

than posts containing photos. Since no posts analysed were of level 1 or 3, except for one in the case study of Coca-Cola that had low values of engagement, it is difficult to say how followers correspond to these posts with these different levels of vividness.

When it comes to the level of interactivity, theoretically it is the opposite of vividness. According to Cvijikj and Michahelles (2013) the lower level of post interactivity the higher level of engagement. The results of both case study agrees with this thesis frame of reference showing that posts without clickable material, level 1, create a higher level of engagement than posts with clickable material. In this though, this is accurate for likes and comments but once again this does not apply to shares. According to this results, the higher level of interactivity the higher number of shares. This could be because of, like with vividness, a clickable content refers to a video or a link followers tend to, after watching a video or clicking the link, share it rather than like it or comment it.

5.3 Customer to Customer

The most dominating motives of comments analysed in eWOM were in the positive categories. This could be seen as logic since members of Facebook who decides to become followers of a certain brand page often are customers and/or consumers and therefore in some way positive to the brand and their products.

The gap of occurrence between informative and entertaining posts is bigger in the case study of McDonald's than in the case study of Coca-Cola (see table 4 and 14) . This could be connected to the fact that our results showed in the case study of McDonald's informative posts were more liked and commented than entertaining posts but in the case study of Coca-Cola entertaining posts were more liked than informative.

B2C with C2C

The *highest* liked post of McDonald's were informative. It had 11 000 number of likes, mostly positive motives of comments and contained a photo. This could mean that the more likes a post has and if the other factors are over average the post has more positive altruism than negative altruism. Out of 30 comments examined of the post, 26 of these had positive motives and only 4 had negative motives. The case study of Coca-Cola had a *highest* liked post containing entertaining post with a photo but according to the results on average mean values of all the posts, the most liked posts with high positive eWOM were entertaining and contained a photo. With this said, this highest liked post could be seen as an exception from the average responds received on posts.

The *lowest* liked post of McDonalds, entertaining and informative with mostly positive eWOM, was a video. This could mean that, as discussed, if a post contains a video the number of like's drops since the follower already feels like the engaged in the post. The research got the same results for Coca-Cola which had the *lowest* liked post, entertaining and informative, containing a video with mostly positive eWOM. This confirms the theory that if a post contains a video the number of like's drops since the follower already feels like the engaged in the post by viewing the video. On the other hand this contradicts the theory that if a post is not of entertaining content type the engagement is lower since this lowest liked post of Coca-Cola were of both entertaining and informative kind. Another theory that could be derived from these results is that low numbers of likes is not connected to the motives of eWOM, in other words, low number of likes of a post does not have to mean a majority of negative eWOM and the opposite that high number of likes does not have to mean a majority of positive eWOM. Our results showed that either if a post has under average or over average amount of likes the majority of eWOM will be positive.

5.5 Theoretical contribution

Some of the results given in this research support the theories presented in chapter 2 and some of the results differs from it. For example, according to Cvijikj and Michahelles (2013) the most engaging type of posts are entertaining posts but the results showed that informative and entertaining posts are the most engaging. This research also shows that engagement can be displayed in many ways and that depending on what type of engagement a person wishes to create he or she should focus on different factors. With the help of the theories by Cvijikj and Michahelles (2013) and Henning-Thurau (2004) the research were able to identify different factors and examine how posts containing these factors create different results.

5.5 Implications for practitioners

The recommendations given in this subsection is based on the results of this research and has two dimensions, business to customer (advertising strategy) and customer to customer (eWOM).

The first, business to customer, is to choose entertaining and informative *content types* but not in a combination since our results showed that the highest liked posts contained a single type of content.

Regarding the *media types*, vividness and interactivity, there are different ways to create a high level of different engagement according to this research. A post with a video will most certain reach out to a lot of followers and get a high number of views and shares but lower number of likes and comments. A post with a photo will get a high number of likes and comments but lower number of shares. The same for clickable and non-clickable content, the clickable content will get higher number of shares, lower numbers of likes and comments compared to non-clickable content that will get higher number of likes and comments, lower numbers of shares. Therefore, the recommendation to practitioners is to choose a media type that will stimulate the type of engagement that they prefer to create.

The second is customer to customer. Logically, most of the comments, the *eWOM*, will be of positive motives since the follower has actively decided to like and follow the brand page. This is also confirmed by the results of this research showing that most of the analysed eWOM were in fact of positive motives.

To help create positive *eWOM* practitioners should use informative content types and secondly entertaining. Note that most of the posts analysed were a combination of both informative and entertaining but informative posts were more occurring.

5.5 Implications for further research

The research has been limited in different ways and because of this, and also the potential to gain more knowledge in this area of marketing, some recommendations for further research are given in this part of chapter 5. The research was limited to SNSs and then delimited to Facebook. Customer engagement on SNSs could be expanded to other popular sites such as Twitter, Instagram and so on. The brand pages were limited to McDonald's and Coca-Cola due to the sizes of these brand pages but there is a lot more that could be researched in the area of different industry for example McKinsey & Company.

Another limitation of the research was time. Since the research was made with a time restriction of around 10 weeks some interesting areas, research questions and factors was excluded. Theoretically, due to time restriction, the research has excluded examining links and cross references between different factors such as for example the relation between content/media type and negative *eWOM*. Since a part of the data was categorized in a subjective way this leaves space for misinterpretation of, for example, the motives of the examined comments. This risk could be even more minimized with a wider foundation of established theories in this area or to be more than one author that creates independent thoughts and conclusions of the research.

The research has derived data of the relation between different content types and positive *eWOM* but future researcher could also look at what factors create more positive *eWOM*, how to get more members to like the brand pages and how to minimize negative *eWOM*. If we zoom out from the SNS Facebook and the members there further research could study how to get existing followers to start follow the companies on other SNSs. Last but not least, further research could examine if creating higher level of engagement on SNSs is linked to higher purchase behaviour and therefore higher company revenue.

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Appendix I. Facebook and its brand pages

As Facebook has grown, since it first was launched in 2004, the SNS has largely integrated itself into the lives of its members (Kabadayi & Price, 2014). The member creates an online profile including a photo and some information, interact with Facebook “friends” by chatting on a messenger, commenting and liking each other’s posts, joining groups and liking pages such as brand pages. To join Facebook as a private member and/or create a page or group is free of charge (Facebook, 2016) but for creating advertisement or promote posts on Facebook is not (<http://www.forbes.com/sites/elandekel/2013/01/22/facebook-pages-are-a-bad-investment-for-small-businesses/#2091b14e4259>). Before looking at what online factors on Facebook companies use to create engagement and what that engagement looks like we have to establish how these Facebook brand pages work and what functions there are available for companies to use. The official name of these brand pages is named by Facebook as “like page”. Although this is the official name, we are hereby going to refer to these pages as “brand pages” in this paper due to the clarity of the name. All information posted by these brand pages are referred to as “posts”, whether it’s a picture, text information, link etc. and it’s the brand owners that runt these pages that decide what goes on their brand page. The posts appear on the center on the brand pages so called “wall” and the follower can scroll back in time and see older posts. Located on the top of the brand page is a picture, often related to the brand logo. There is also information about the brand owner, a slogan or similar. On the right side of the brand page is the number of “likes” the page has and there is no limit to how many people can “like” a page. When a member “likes” a brand page this member becomes a follower. Every brand page can have one or more “administrator”, a person who has access to control the activity of the brand page. The number of administrators of a brand page is up to the owners.

There are different ways that a follower of a brand page can be engaged in the material that is posted on the page. The follower can (1) post own content on the brand page (if this function is approved by the brand owners), (2) like the post, (3) comment on the post or (4) share the post. By the follower liking a post, this post appear on the feed of the followers connected friends. Commenting on a post will appear in a commenting field located under the post. Here is where

most of the eWOM is created. Followers commenting posts can also tag their friend's names. This comment and post will then appear on the tagged friend's notification centre in their profile (Facebook, 2016).



Figure 19. Example of Facebook brand page