
THE VALUE AND IMPORTANCE OF DESIGN WHEN BRANDING IN SOCIAL MEDIA

Thesis submitted for the Doctor of Philosophy in Design Management by

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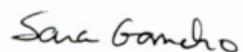
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Declaration of Authorship

I declare that this thesis is my own work and has not been submitted in substantially the same form for the award of a higher degree elsewhere. To the best of my knowledge it does not contain any materials previously published or written by another person except where due reference is made in the text.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Sara Gancho".

.....

Sara Gancho

Abstract

This thesis is an investigation into understanding the role of design and designers, when branding in social media. The work presented in this study considers what value design can bring to branding in social media. It identifies design skills necessary to work in branding in social media, and investigates how design strategy and marketing strategy can relate to social media strategy. It also examines what roles designers could play in the future of social media.

In order to fully answer these interdisciplinary questions and address this recent phenomenon of social media, the literature review considers three different domains and areas of expertise: marketing, design and social media. With regard to marketing the focus was on the branding literature concerned with strategic brand management and also social marketing management literature. We attempted to connect aspects of brand design that were crucial to the social media field. In the design chapter we focused on its importance to both branding and social media. We addressed the importance of design management in branding today and how it is connected to new research in social media. We analysed social media history and how it has developed into a growing and important platform for brands to connect with consumers and vice versa. We aimed to underline the way these three different areas of expertise connect with one another in an attempt to answer the research questions.

We conducted the empirical work with the collaboration of the one hundred and three multidisciplinary individuals (from marketing, design and/or social media areas) who answered the online questionnaire through a quantitative method approach. Qualitative data was also gathered from the twenty-one individuals through semi-structured interviews with experts in marketing, design and social media areas. We included participants from the United Kingdom and Portugal. We developed two models based on the literature review and empirical data analysis. These models were then validated with thirteen of the expert participants in an online mixed method questionnaire. This ultimately led to the remodelling of the previous models into two new models that combined the feedback and analysis and reflected the overall findings of this thesis.

Table of Contents

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.....	3
DECLARATION OF AUTHORSHIP.....	4
ABSTRACT	5
1. INTRODUCTION	12
1.1 OVERVIEW.....	12
1.2 THE RESEARCH PROBLEM	12
1.3 AIMS, OBJECTIVES AND QUESTIONS.....	14
1.4 CHAPTER SUMMARY	17
1.5 TERM DEFINITIONS.....	19
SECTION 1: LITERATURE REVIEW	21
2. SECTION OVERVIEW	21
2.1 BRANDING.....	21
2.1.1 THE IMPORTANCE OF BRANDING	23
2.1.2 BRAND HISTORY	24
2.1.3 BRAND MODELS.....	27
2.1.3.1 BRAND ORIENTATION MODEL.....	30
2.1.3.2 BRAND IDENTITY	31
2.1.3.3 BRAND IMAGE.....	34
2.1.3.4 BRAND DNA	34
2.1.3.5 BRAND PERSONALITY	35
2.1.3.6 BRAND ARCHETYPES.....	36
2.1.4 BRAND STRATEGY	38
2.1.5 BRAND LEADERSHIP.....	39
2.1.6 BRAND EQUITY.....	41
2.1.7 CORPORATE BRANDING	43
2.1.8 EMOTIONAL BRANDING	46
2.1.9 PERSONAL BRANDING	48
2.2 BRANDING CONCLUSIONS	54
2.3 THE IMPORTANCE OF DESIGN IN BRANDING.....	56
3. DESIGN	58
3.1 DESIGN IN BRANDING.....	64
3.2 DESIGN DISCIPLINES	67
3.2.1 INDUSTRIAL DESIGN.....	69
3.2.2 GRAPHIC DESIGN	72
3.2.3 SERVICE DESIGN.....	74
3.2.4 DESIGN MANAGEMENT.....	75
3.2.4.1 DESIGN MANAGEMENT MODELS	79
3.2.4.2 DESIGN MANAGEMENT AND BRANDING	84
3.3 DESIGN CONCLUSIONS	85
4. SOCIAL MEDIA	87

4.1 EVOLUTION OF SOCIAL MEDIA.....	89
4.2 SOCIAL MEDIA AND BRANDS	92
4.3 SOCIAL MEDIA STRATEGIES	101
4.4 SOCIAL MEDIA MODELS.....	101
4.4.1 CUSTOMER TRIANGLE MODEL	102
4.4.2 SOCIAL MEDIA INITIATIVES MODEL	103
4.4.3 SOCIAL MARKETING TOTAL PROCESS PLANNING MODEL.....	104
4.4.4 SIX SOCIAL SPHERES OF SOCIAL MEDIA MARKETING MODEL.....	105
4.4.5 POST-METHOD MODEL	108
4.4.6 WEINBERG'S ROI MODEL.....	108
4.5 WORD-OF-MOUTH	109
4.6 VIRAL MARKETING	110
4.7 USERS IN SOCIAL MEDIA	112
4.8 SOCIAL MEDIA CONCLUSIONS	116
SECTION CONCLUSIONS	118
SECTION 2: METHODOLOGY	120
5. OVERVIEW	120
5.1 INTRODUCTION	120
5.2 METHODOLOGY.....	125
5.2.1 QUALITATIVE METHODOLOGY	126
5.2.2 QUANTITATIVE METHODOLOGY	128
5.2.3 MIXED METHODOLOGY	130
5.3 RESEARCH DESIGN.....	130
5.3.1 QUALITATIVE RESEARCH METHODS	131
5.3.2 QUANTITATIVE RESEARCH METHODS	133
6. DATA COLLECTION.....	136
6.1 LITERATURE REVIEW	137
6.2 TRIANGULATION OF METHODS.....	144
6.3 EXPLORATORY STUDY.....	144
6.4 SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEWS	147
6.5 ONLINE SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRE.....	153
SECTION 3: RESEARCH FINDINGS	155
7. DISCUSSION OF RESEARCH FINDINGS.....	155
7.1 OVERVIEW	155
7.2 EXPLORATORY STUDY ANALYSIS.....	157
7.2.1 EXPLORATORY STUDY FINDINGS	159
7.3 FULL STUDY: ONLINE SURVEY ANALYSIS	161
7.3.1 CONCLUSIONS	169
7.4 FULL STUDY: SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEW ANALYSIS	171
7.4.3 CONCLUSIONS	189
8. DESIGN MANAGEMENT MODELS IN SOCIAL MEDIA.....	191
8.1 MODELS VALIDATION	196
8.2 DATA COLLECTION	197
8.3 DATA ANALYSIS	197

8.4 MODELS REFINEMENT.....	203
9. CONCLUSIONS.....	210
9.1 DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS AGAINST RESEARCH QUESTIONS.....	214
9.2 CONTRIBUTION TO KNOWLEDGE	222
9.3 LIMITATIONS	224
9.4 FUTURE WORK.....	226
10. BIBLIOGRAPHY.....	227
11. APPENDICES	241

List of Tables

<i>Table 1. The Research Questions.....</i>	16
<i>Table 2. The Milestones of Brand History, Moon (2000)</i>	25
<i>Table 3. The functions of the brand for the consumer.....</i>	28
<i>Table 4. Brand values identification parameters, Mollerup (1997).....</i>	29
<i>Table 5. Brand Personality, Aaker (1997).....</i>	36
<i>Table 6. Brand Archetypes, José Martins, 1999 (translated by the author)</i>	37
<i>Table 7. The design Process, Borja de Mozota (2013:15).....</i>	62
<i>Table 8. The Brand Building process, Best (2008)</i>	65
<i>Table 9. Types of Design Disciplines, Borja de Mozota (2003).....</i>	68
<i>Table 10. Buchanan's Matrix (1998).....</i>	68
<i>Table 11. Four Powers of Design, Brigitte Borja de Mozota (2006).....</i>	77
<i>Table 12. Shifts in the way brands are managed, Abbing & Gessel (2008)</i>	84
<i>Table 13. Brand Driven Innovation, Abbing & Gessel (2008).....</i>	85
<i>Table 14. Social media Classification, Li and Bernoff (2008)</i>	88
<i>Table 15. The evolution of the social web affects consumers, brands and social networks, Stelzner (2012)....</i>	90
<i>Table 16. Social media Models</i>	102
<i>Table 17. ROI model, Weinberg (2009)</i>	109
<i>Table 18. Paradigms.....</i>	122
<i>Table 19. Examples of Primary Data in social Research by Hox, Boeije (2005).....</i>	125
<i>Table 20. Quantitative, Qualitative and Mixed methods procedures</i>	126
<i>Table 21. Purposes, Major benefits and possible problems</i>	132
<i>Table 22. Questioning and Observation Approach.....</i>	139
<i>Table 23. Colours and Themes.....</i>	143
<i>Table 24. Exploratory study questionnaire interviewees.....</i>	145
<i>Table 25. Exploratory study - Online survey interviewees.....</i>	146
<i>Table 26. Interview Participants in United Kingdom.....</i>	149
<i>Table 27. Interview Participants In Portugal.....</i>	149
<i>Table 28. Semi-structured interview questions</i>	151
<i>Table 29. Key Theme Findings.....</i>	158
<i>Table 30. Question 2 - Table</i>	161
<i>Table 30. Question 3 - Table</i>	163
<i>Table 31. Question 4 - Table</i>	164
<i>Table 32. Question 5 - Table</i>	165
<i>Table 33. Question 6 - Table</i>	166
<i>Table 34. Coding Summary - Portugal and United Kingdom social media differences.....</i>	188

List of Figures

<i>Figure 1. The Thesis Structure.....</i>	19
<i>Figure 2. Alfa Romeo Logo</i>	26
<i>Figure 3. Porshe Logo.....</i>	26
<i>Figure 4. From Brand assets to Brand Equity</i>	28
<i>Figure 5. The Brand Hexagon – A conceptual Model of a Brand Oriented Company and its identity, Urde (1994-97).....</i>	31
<i>Figure 6. The Relationship between Brand Equity and Brand Identity, Upshaw (1995).....</i>	32
<i>Figure 7. The core of Brand Identity, Upshaw (1995).....</i>	34
<i>Figure 8. Brand Identity Perspectives, Aaker (1996).....</i>	34
<i>Figure 9. Brand DNA model, Ellwood (2000)</i>	35
<i>Figure 10. Brand Archetypes, Jansen (2006)</i>	38
<i>Figure 11. Brand Leadership Model, Aaker and Joachimsthaler (2000).....</i>	40
<i>Figure 12. Consumer-Based Brand Equity Pyramid, Keller (2003)</i>	43
<i>Figure 13. The Corporate Brand, Hatch and Schultz (2001)</i>	44
<i>Figure 14. Emotional Branding, Gobé (2001).....</i>	48
<i>Figure 15. Personal branding, McNally, Speak (2002).....</i>	49
<i>Figure 16. Concentric model of a strong brand, Simmons (2010).....</i>	66
<i>Figure 17. Concentric Model of a Strong Brand (detail), Simmons (2010).....</i>	66
<i>Figure 18 - Design Value - Balanced Score Card model. R. Kaplan and D. Norton.....</i>	78
<i>Figure 19. Design as strategy, Process and Styling, Borja de Mozota (2006)</i>	79
<i>Figure 20. Design Management - H. Hase et al (2006: p.24)</i>	80
<i>Figure 21. Danish Design Ladder</i>	80
<i>Figure 22. Design Management Staircase, Koostra (2009).....</i>	81
<i>Figure 23. Model by Sun, Williams and Evans (2011).</i>	83
<i>Figure 24. The five Eras of social media, Owyang (2009).....</i>	91
<i>Figure 25. The social media Trinity Model</i>	92
<i>Figure 26. Raman Model.....</i>	93
<i>Figure 27. Groundswell Model, Li and Bernoff (2008).....</i>	94
<i>Figure 28. Business uses of social media, eMarketer (2012)</i>	96
<i>Figure 29. Attitude toward a company with unanswered Questions on their social media Space, eMarketer (2012).....</i>	96
<i>Figure 30. Level of importance of Company's Communication on social media according to US social media Users, eMarketer (2012)</i>	97
<i>Figure 31. Brand Relevance and Brand value in a B2B environment.....</i>	98
<i>Figure 32. Social Media ecosystem, Schultz (2007).....</i>	99
<i>Figure 33. Customer Triangle Model, Kotler, Zaltman (1971).....</i>	103
<i>Figure 34. Social media Initiatives</i>	104
<i>Figure 35. Social media Council Total process planning model.....</i>	105
<i>Figure 36. The six spheres of social media marketing, Brian Carter (2009)</i>	106
<i>Figure 37. The six spheres of social marketing and the 4 phases of social marketing, Brian Carter (2009)</i>	106
<i>Figure 38. Understanding where prospects are at in the 6 phases (detail), Brian Carter (2009)</i>	107
<i>Figure 39. Post-method Model</i>	108
<i>Figure 40. Relationship between word-of-mouth and viral marketing</i>	110

<i>Figure 41. Five pieces of advice when spreading a virus</i>	111
<i>Figure 42. Onsite versus offsite web analytics.....</i>	114
<i>Figure 43. Literature Review scheme.....</i>	137
<i>Figure 44. Concept Maps 1</i>	143
<i>Figure 45. Concept Maps 2</i>	143
<i>Figure 46. Interview Participants area of expertise</i>	150
<i>Figure 47. Relationship between research questions and interview questions</i>	152
<i>Figure 48. Online Survey Participants Areas of Expertise.....</i>	154
<i>Figure 49. Research Approaches.....</i>	156
<i>Figure 50. Question 1.....</i>	161
<i>Figure 51. Question 2 Plot</i>	162
<i>Figure 52. Question 3 Plot.....</i>	164
<i>Figure 53. Question 4 Plot.....</i>	165
<i>Figure 54. Question 5 Plot.....</i>	166
<i>Figure 55. Question 6 Plot.....</i>	167
<i>Figure 56. Knorr social media campaign.....</i>	173
<i>Figure 57. Shu Uemura social media campaign.....</i>	174
<i>Figure 57. Shu Uemura social media campaign.....</i>	174
<i>Figure 58. Coding Summary - branding in social media.....</i>	176
<i>Figure 59. Coding Summary - design in social media.....</i>	179
<i>Figure 60. Coding Summary - skills to work in social media.....</i>	181
<i>Figure 61. Coding Summary - characteristics to work in social media.....</i>	181
<i>Figure 62. Social media strategy by Diesel.....</i>	182
<i>Figure 63. Coding Summary of strategy in social media (all combined answers).....</i>	184
<i>Figure 64. Coding Summary - Future of social media category.....</i>	187
<i>Figure 65. Design in social media ladder.....</i>	192
<i>Figure 66. Social media design strategy</i>	194
<i>Figure 67. Question 1 - Models Validation Survey.....</i>	198
<i>Figure 68. Question 2 - Models Validation Survey</i>	199
<i>Figure 69. Question 3 - Models Validation Survey</i>	199
<i>Figure 70. Question 4 - Models Validation Survey</i>	200
<i>Figure 71. Question 5 - Models Validation Survey</i>	201
<i>Figure 72. Question 6 - Models Validation Survey</i>	202
<i>Figure 73. Model 1 v.2 Design in social media stages</i>	204
<i>Figure 74. Model 1 v.3 Design in social media stages</i>	206
<i>Figure 75. Model 2 v.2 Social media Strategy.....</i>	204
<i>Figure 76. Model 2 v.3 Social media Strategy.....</i>	209
<i>Figure 77. Research questions vs.methods used</i>	214

1. Introduction

1.1 Overview

This thesis is an investigation into the importance of design when branding in social media. It is a known fact that social media is used as a branding tool by companies (see chapter four), and as social media is growing rapidly each day, as is branding in social media. It is crucial to understand how branding and branding tools are used today in social media to comprehend what value design brings to the equation. Little is known of the role of design and designers in these social media platforms. We aim to find out what design can add in terms of value and importance to the business of branding in social media.

In this chapter we explain the research problem, determine the aims of the research and present an overview of the thesis structure as well as present the research questions.

The academic and general literature on social media is not current enough to understand the role of design and designers. This is due to the rapid changes and new developments that are occurring in social media platforms each day. From that understanding, we had the need to rely mostly on expert interviewees, case studies and ethnography in order to understand the area's emerging issues, problems and general framework. Most literature found on social media refers to design as means for beautification, not as process, management or strategy.

1.2 The Research Problem

As a trained graphic designer with fourteen years of experience I have had the privilege to work within several design agencies, as an independent freelance designer, as a consulting expert but also in academia as a design, marketing and branding lecturer. Learning marketing for research was key to better understand how the marketplace operated, especially when it concerns brands.

Designers are visionaries and their market knowledge allied with their creativity and problem-solving perspective makes them ideal candidates to work in brand innovation (Abbing, 2010).

When discussing brand and design, author J. Heskett mentioned that the biggest problem was that both areas are frequently regarded as just decorative aesthetics. It is not just about the visual appearance that identifies it but also the complex design reality that is within. In order for

good branding to occur the image needs to be more than arbitrary, it has to have reflective meaning and quality in the reality that it represents (Heskett, 2008).

Design guides the brand through the structuring of its reality, by planning the processes that result in multiple products, communications, environments and systems. When the design is based on human needs there is the possibility of further identification from the user because he sees the design as beneficial to his life.

Heskett recommends that this approach be implemented in the internal affairs part of an organization. Internet affairs will then be able to find their aims in a strong way, but that does not occur. In order for this reality to happen design has to act on several levels of the organizations, from levels of execution skills to strategic resource (Heskett, 2008). That said, design is still regarded, by many businesses, as purely visual although its contributions to branding and to business and that has proved to be an investment (Borja de Mozota, 2004).

How will design prove itself as an important tool (as it did with branding) for social media? Social Media is a communication platform that is highly visual and, is already being dominated by marketing, and marketing related literature, across multiple platforms. Design as designers know it is being called content marketing (Cook, 2012).

The advent of social media brought the possibility to create a place where digital identities and activities connect brands and consumer across distributed web. Social media is expansive and adaptable; it can be about exchanging and discovering niche content, such as video, images, bookmarks, events and news. By joining these networks brands are associating themselves with the industry, ideas, content and people that convey values (Solis, 2008).

Social media has always fascinated me since I became aware of its possibilities. It was a place for experimenting with content and it allowed me to connect with people and share my ideas, storytelling, and image content. It has become a space where brands and people come together and create something new. It can help new product development, it can deliver customized solutions and offer specific services to target groups. Social media domain areas such as storytelling, collaboration and interaction are all concepts design is highly familiar with, therefore the gap between design and marketing has been breached (Moon & Millison 2000) and (Parrish, 2006).

Researchers have said that design is part of the way towards the future, especially when it comes to products, services and systems (Berger,2010); (Neumeier,2009); (Borja de Mozota, 2003). Design thinking is also claimed to make companies more competitive. From developing differentiated products, services and systems that match consumer's needs and desires. However there is little research done on how companies can embed design thinking to make them more competitive and able to face the future (Lee, Younjoon and Evans 2010).

Brand storytelling focuses on community, and how customers can help themselves and each other find the answers they need. It strives to pull the customer into a long-term, intimate relationship with the brand firm and its value-creation process a "one-to-one" partnership between customers and designers. This storytelling emphasizes the virtues of the

manufacturer's integration framework for branded business solutions or lifestyle expressions (Quesenberry, Whitney and Brooks 2010).

Literature suggests that we can use design to improve branding in social media, using design processes and strategies. Design has branding knowledge and is an important asset to increase brand value and ROI revenue (Borja de Mozota, 2003b). This study aims to establish how important design is in social media platforms, its added value to branding strategy, and how branding in social media can take advantage of design knowledge to improve its relationship with consumers.

1.3 Aims, Objectives and Questions

The underpinning work is represented by five research questions.

- What is the role of design when branding in social media?
- What design skills are necessary to work in branding in social media?
- Is design strategy similar to social media strategy?
- What value does design bring to branding in social media?
- What roles will designers play in the future of social media?

The aim of this research is to identify the importance and value of design when branding in social media. Social media concerns branding and a study shows that 82% of managers in America use it as a branding tool (Herder, 2009). As social media is emerging as an important tool for both branding and design it becomes increasingly important to define and understand its importance on these areas.

It has become clear that the designer has a substantial knowledge base related to brands and marketing. Understanding the role of design in branding and in the different design disciplines is very important. The use of social media by brands is becoming a challenge for designers, as they are designing social media spaces, and the look and feel and content of this is generally managed and overseen by marketers. There is little academic research on the use of social media in branding and design. Therefore this thesis investigates the role of design in promoting brands within the social media space.

To develop this study we need to understand the social media ecosystem, which is focused on consumer experience, through the integration of marketing communication strategies in social media and combining them with traditional media. Social media provides an opportunity to create an integrated strategy that brings consumer's experiences to the forefront. It is all about engagement with consumers, trying to get their attention and influence (Hanna et al., 2011).

We can also remark that the dynamics between clients and brands have also changed. Today we observe that consumers are dictating the rules and often hold the power over brands (Hanna et al., 2011). Recently we have watched rapid developments on the Internet such as, new networking sites, blogs and web applications that are receiving a lot of attention from several audiences. These new mediums are called social media and they can be viewed as new opportunities for business to build brand and to better communicate with customers. With social media (Facebook, Twitter, Flickr, Google+, Instagram - to name a few networks) companies are able to interact directly with customers, customers can share knowledge with each other and they can all participate in the on-going conversations (Robinson, 2009).

Social media extends the word-of-mouth that is considered to have a tremendous power on a brand, because people are more likely to believe their friends rather than the company (Kotler & Pfoertsch, 2007). Social media therefore is a group of Internet-based applications that build on the ideological and technological foundations of Web 2.0, and that allowed the creation and exchange of "user generated content" (Kaplan and Haenlein, 2010).

With the social media phenomenon brands have generated new ways to target their audience. Data collected from these different platforms allows for a more targeted approach. Social media plays an important role in how consumers discover, research, and share information about brands and products. Whilst design is the gateway to adding value to brands; as they are becoming more measurable, companies keep trying to increase their value, by using design to encourage people's trust (Neumeier, 2003).

Presently consumers are becoming more active in co-creating marketing content with companies and brands. Companies are therefore looking into online social media programs and campaigns to better reach their consumers because they also "live online". It appears that the development of social media strategies on YouTube, Facebook and Twitter is not part of an integrated system of advertising and rather a separated event.

Marketers cannot depend on advertising alone; with social media there is an interaction with individuals and communities according to their particular interests and needs. A brand is now a relationship builder in this new age of branding (Christodoulides, 2007). The question now is: How will design contribute to this new reality? And what has been its contribute so far?

This thesis therefore studies design and designer's roles in social media; what skills are necessary for designers to have in social media, whether design strategy is similar to social media strategy, what values and importance does design bring to social media and what will be the future of design in social media. Furthermore this thesis aims to address the bring light into these objectives:

Objectives:

- To better understand the relationship between social media and branding
- To understand and elaborate upon strategies for the social media space

- To understand the role of the designer in the world of social media
- Develop ways to empower design in social media spaces
- Learn how design can improve brands in the social media space

Table 1 illustrates the proposed research questions under investigation. They concern the role of design when branding in social media, the design skills necessary to work in social media. A question about design strategy and its similarity or not to social media strategy is also asked. The topic concerning what type of value design brings to branding in social media. In terms of value in this question we define it as 'worth or merit' but also monetary and material worth. The importance in this question means, its relevance and significance. Also, what types of roles will designers play in the future of social media.

Research Questions	
Q1. What is the role of design when branding in social media?	Q1.1. What is the role of designers when branding in social media?
Q2. What design skills are necessary to work for branding in social media?	Q2.1. What skills are necessary to work in social media?
Q3. How is design strategy similar to social media strategy?	Q3.1. What are the strategies used in design? Q3.2. What are the strategies used in social media?
Q4. What value does design bring to branding in social media?	Q4.1. What is the importance of design when branding in social media?
Q5. What roles will designers play in the future in social media?	Q5.1. What will be the future of social media? Q5.2. What will be the future of design in social media?

Table 1. The Research Questions

Along with answering these research questions this thesis aims to develop models to better understand the dynamics between design strategy and social media strategy. The theoretical fundamentals of the models were developed through interdisciplinary literature review, based on the collective knowledge of the expert interviewees and later validated through data analysis of an online survey done by a selected group of experts. We hope that through these models and its validation findings we can shed some light into design use for branding in social media.

1.4 Chapter Summary

Figure 1 (next page) illustrates the thesis structure and summarizes each chapter. This figure guides us through the different steps of this thesis, which is divided in three sections. In Section 1 we approach the research problem, elaborate the research questions and develop the research goals. There is also the introduction to the themes in the study and a brief terms explanation. This section also includes the Literature Review where we discuss the three relevant areas that make this an interdisciplinary study: Branding (chapter 2), Design (chapter 3) and Social Media (chapter 4). This section aims to find the gap in knowledge, and further develop the research topics. We did a literature review, which gave us an overview of the key aspects in the chapters themes.

Section two concerns the research methodology in which we introduce the design methodology and the different methods for collecting data used. We then, selected the methods that were more suited to the specifics of the study approach. This study opted primarily for qualitative research methods, although we also did quantitative research in the form of an online survey. We did an exploratory study, an online survey and semi-structured interviews to find the right data needed for analysis.

Section three discusses the research findings of the qualitative and quantitative methods used as well as introducing, based on the research findings the two proposed models. We then used appropriate methods to validate the models, which resulted into proposed models with changes based on the interviewee's feedback, analysis and in depth comments. After that we present the answers to the research questions as well as this thesis contribution to knowledge, limitations and further work. Chapter 10 includes the bibliography of the thesis and contains all references used. The final chapter, Appendices, has relevant information such as: participation information sheet, interview and online survey guides but, also all the articles published during the course of this thesis.

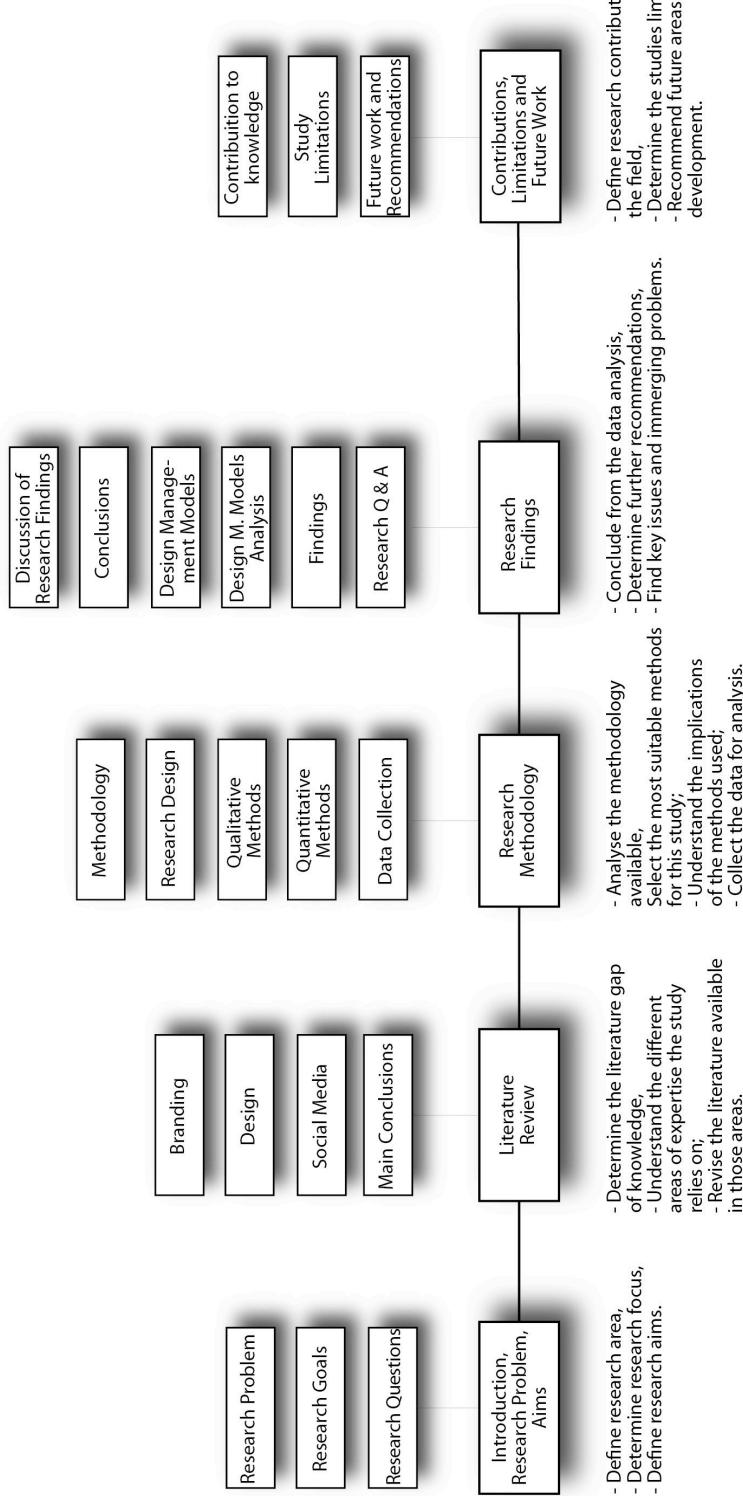


Figure 1. The Thesis Structure

1.5 Term Definitions

The terms used in this thesis can be interpreted and used in multiple ways depending on the area of expertise. Therefore, for clarity, a definition of the principle terms used is provided, whilst the literature reviews will in some cases elaborate further on these topics:

Marketing. The analysis, planning, implementation and control of carefully formulated programs designed to bring about voluntary exchanges of values with target markets for the purpose of achieving organizational objectives.

Marketing Communication. Interaction between a sender and receiver that delivers a core message to the receiver that is personally relevant and offers a personal benefit in exchange for the desired action

Mass media. Non-personal channels of communication that allow a message to be sent to many individuals at one time. Includes advertising and media relations.

Positioning. The relationship of an issue/program/service relative to the competition in the marketplace. Positioning is often determined by the characteristics of the issue/program/service and the wants and needs of the target audience.

Branding. The naming of a product, issue, service, or organization, with which the audience associates attributes and characteristics. Branding helps communicate the product's position.

Audience segmentation. Segmentation is a selection process that divides the broad audience into manageable segments with common characteristics or wants that relate to the marketing exchange or marketing mix.

Targeted media. Media with a high potential to reach a specific audience. Target media can include mass media, but also encompasses special interest media and trade media.

Advertising. Is a way, which informs and persuades the act of purchasing a good (product or service) through paid media (television, radio, magazine, newspaper, outdoor or direct mail.) Advertising is placed (bought) on the basis of media research (that measures the nature and size of the audience reached by the medium) to ensure the desired audience is exposed to the message. Advertising provides control of content and delivery of message.

Stakeholders: A person, group or organization that has interest or concern in an organization.

Point of purchase/service. Materials designed to display messages within the consumer's environment, such as posters, countertop displays, shelf signage, etc.

Direct media. Communication that targets and delivers the message directly to the consumer through mail, telephone and computer.

Message. The core concept or idea to be communicated to a target audience. Effective messages contain a call to action, a key audience benefit, image and support that makes the message relevant, believable, feasible and compelling.

Pricing. Value applied to a marketing exchange. For goods or services, pricing generally implies monetary cost. In terms of social marketing, "time" might also be considered in terms of price (how much time will be exchanged for engaging in the desired behaviour.)

Public relations. Activities that create goodwill for an organization, which affect long-term public opinion.

ROI (Return on investment): The earning power of assets measured as the ratio of the net income (profit less depreciation) to the average capital employed (or equity capital) in a company or project.

ROE (Return on equity): Ratio measuring stockholders' (shareholders') profitability, expressed as a percentage of the firm's net worth. ROE indicates a firm's efficiency in applying common-stockholders' (ordinary-shareholders') money. Formula: Net income ÷ Net worth.

Metrics: Standards of measurement by which efficiency, performance, progress, or quality of a plan, process, or product can be assessed.

Section 1: Literature Review

2. Section Overview

The aim of this section is to contribute to a better understanding of the current state of research and knowledge about: branding, design and social media. We need to understand the gaps in the literature and the relationships and interdependencies of branding in social media. Therefore, we outlined the key literature within branding to identify the gaps of knowledge within the literature.

Marketing literature has developed several models and ways to evaluate brands [both offline and online (ex: social media)], their contribution to business, and the overall company ROI. However when trying to understand branding in social media through a design perspective there is a gap in literature that can be explored and considered through design and design management literature. In the design literature review chapter we understand how marketers in branding can benefit from a design perspective and how branding and design can benefit from each other when applied in social media. The social media chapter is a further exploration into the online branding literature but it also adds knowledge combined with social marketing literature. Little research has been done regarding design's contribution to branding in social media, even though social media is a highly visual means of communication. There is however, a significant amount of literature for branding in social media and the exponential growth of consumer's importance in social media. Concepts like interaction, engagement and storytelling are emerging from the social media/branding literature and they are also ultimately design concepts.

2.1 Branding

There are numerous definitions of what a brand is; a definition provided by the Random House Dictionary of the English Language says that a brand is a "product or service bearing a widely known brand name."

A brand is the representation of all information about a product or group of products. It can be considered a symbol that is composed of a name, identifying mark, logo, visual images or symbols, or mental concepts, which distinguishes the product or service. A brand is also filled with connotations of a products "promise". Marketers can give a product a personality or an image through the use of a brand. Marketing tries to "brand", or burn, the image into the consumer's mind by associating it with the image of a quality product. Brands can form an important element of advertising as they serve as a way to show and tell consumers what a supplier has to offer (Aaker, 1991).

The American Marketing Association (AMA) defines a brand as a "name, term, sign, symbol or design, or a combination of them intended to identify the goods and services of one seller or group of sellers and to differentiate them from those of other sellers. Keller and Lehmann (2006) take a wider perspective making a distinction between the brand definition as set by AMA and the industry's concept of branding. Keller adds tangible and intangible brand elements, rational & emotional brand elements, and symbolic brand elements, which differentiate and identify a brand. As a consequence Keller's definition is taken from a more holistic point of view: "A brand is therefore more than a product, because it can have dimensions that differentiate it in some way from other products designed to satisfy the same needs" (Keller and Lehmann, 2006).

Gelder recognizes the managerial interdependencies and argues that "a brand is the translation of the business strategy into a consumer experience that brings about specific behaviour" (Gelder, 2003: p.16). In a more traditional definition brand is: " the name, associated with one or more items in the product line, used to identify the source of character of the item(s)" (Kotler, 2000: p.396).

There are numerous brand definitions, according to the American Society of Marketing a brand is "*a name, term, symbol, or design, or combination of them, intended to identify the goods and services of one seller or group of sellers and to differentiate them from those of competitors*" (Kotler, 2000, p.404). A more universal definition says that a brand is a "cluster of functional and emotional values, which promises stake holders a particular experience," (Chernatony and Riley, 1999). According to Blackett and Boad a brand in its simplest form represents the promises that a product makes to the consumer (Blackett, Tom and Boad,1999).

Previously the brand was regarded as just another step in the process of marketing to sell products "...the brand has been treated in an off- hand fashion as a part of the product" (Urde, 1999: p.119). As it was part of the product its communication strategy was to work towards exposing the brand and creating brand image, Kotler (2000) says that it is a "major issue in product strategy". Kapferer talks about the brand as signs, and for that reason external, whose function is to allow the product qualities that are inaccessible to be seen. The brand was a way to identify and differentiate a product from its competitors (Kapferer 2008). According to Kohli (1997) the challenge is to create a strong and distinctive image.

According to Neumeier (2003) people often confuse the term brand with other terms like Logotype, Trademark, Corporate Identity system and also products and services. A brand is much less tangible then that, and Neumeier (2003:p.3) even refers to it as "... an approximate - yet distinct - understanding of a product, service or company." It is less tangible because, we as individuals define it, and human beings are emotional and intuitive despite our rational side. So, we all translate/project/create our version of what a brand means to us, and it varies from person to person. When we have enough people sharing the same opinion about a brand, that's when we know we have one. Aaker says that brands are a strategic asset and that they should be managed, for it is a key asset for long-term performance (Aaker, 2002).

Kapferer (2007) agrees with the previous authors and appends the source of influence; a system of interconnected mental associations (brand image) and relationships. According to Kapferer a brand exists when it has the power to influence the market acquired by its sources of cumulative brand experience. The dynamics of branding and the bidirectional contingencies between the brand and the market makes the brand a living system build around three anchor points; (1) product & service, (2) name & symbols, (3) concept.

Lake says that a strong brand is invaluable, as it gets harder to approach customers each and every day. The investment in a brand is necessary because you are investing in the source of a promise to your consumer. Your brand is now in the minds and hearts of consumers everywhere, they have their expectations, experiences and perceptions about it. Nowadays brands as not just the result of advertising messages that we see in the marketplace. A brand is what is perceived by the consumer's mind (Lake, 2009).

Kotler and Pfoertsch adopted the holistic paradigm and argue that a brand is a promise to the consumer at which the brand has formed a set of perceptions about a product, service or business. It holds therefore a distinctive influential position in customer's mind where the brand represents a shortcut of attributes, benefits, beliefs and values based on past experiences, associations and future expectations. Finally it is the brand that differentiates, reduce complexity, and simplify the decision-making process (Kotler and Pfoertsch, 2007).

Therefore a brand can represent an image, an experience and embodies the consumer's perception. It can represent all these things at once and none at all and be able to resonate differently within each consumer, meaning different things to different people.

Consumers are used to regarding a brand as an important aspect of a product, and it can also add value to a product or service. The brand also carries the reputation of a product or company. People often have an image or an idea of a brand and they associate it with a product, service, trademark, or other image-related asset—the Shell sign, for example. A brand can be regarded as trusted, reliable product or service whose use brings predictable results and experiences. Other can view the brand as an economic asset and tangible expression of what accountants call "good will," that attempts to put a dollar value on an otherwise intangible corporate possession (Moon, Michael and Millison, 2000).

2.1.1 The importance of branding

These traditional definitions of brand leave out the most significant aspect it, its relationship with the consumer, perspectives, terms, expectations, and needs (Ellwood, 2002). Dolak says that a brand is an identifiable entity that makes some specific promise of value. Branding is used to create emotional attachment to products and companies. Branding efforts create a feeling of involvement, a sense of higher quality, and an aura of intangible qualities that surround the brand name, mark, or symbol (Dolak, 2009).

Successful brands have their name recognized by the audience and that builds strategic awareness. Branding is more important today than ever due to the huge amount of advertising, media fragmentation, the commoditization of products, and the seemingly limitless choices we are offered in just about every product category (O'Malley, 2010). A brand can be regarded as influential regarding the buyer's decisions, they can create an emotional bond of trust that is not always based on logic or intellectual reasoning. The brand also helps to increase the company's or product/service value and to enhance it by association (Kapferer, 1997).

Branding is now the most important aspect of business, and everyone wants to measure its value. If you have a powerful brand your business will bloom. It becomes increasingly more important to make the consumers see that your brand is the only one that could fill all their needs and desires (Millward Brown, 2009). Branding has become part of pop culture. Numerous products have a brand identity: from common table salt to designer clothes. Non-commercially, branding can also apply to the marketing of entities, which supply ideas or promises rather than goods and services -- such as political parties or religious organizations (Ellwood, 2002).

Brands have evolved into a powerful marketing asset. Starting from being just a message about the products identity is now something with its own concept, with its own identity. A brand represents the value of a company or organization. Through out its strong identity a brand can create relationships with its consumers, with the people who work directly with it (employees, suppliers, etc.). These relationships can be possible if the brand fulfils the stakeholder's aspirations. The better these relationships are, the better the probability of obtaining a long term relationship that will lead to preference, loyalty and an interest to invest.

2.1.2 Brand History

According to Moor (2007) brands have operated as a force in the organization of production since the mid to late nineteenth century. The term branding appears to have emerged during the 1990's when a particular set of practices – product design, retail design, point-of-purchase marketing, among others came together to look at marketing and business in a strategic way.

Brands recapitulate the long history of the strategic use of symbol and imagery as a conveyance of power, prestige, and goodness. Brands work on the human psyche the same way as religious symbols, totems, fetishes, and a host of other symbolic communications that include the heraldry of kings and the icons of liveries, bakers, and other craftspeople. (Moon, Michael and Millison, 2000).

The following table highlights some of the most significant developments in the evolution of brands. This timeline was based in "Brand New History," a January 2000 article in Red Herring magazine as well as Adrian Room's "History of Branding" in Brands: The New Wealth Creators (New York University Press, 1998) and its featured in the Michael Moon book: Firebrands: building brand loyalty in the Internet age.

2000 BC	Egyptians mark livestock with brands.
600 BC	Babylonian merchants hang signs outside their shops to describe their activities and distinguish themselves from competitors.
560 BC	King Croesus of Lydia mints and stamps gold coins with his insignia.
300 BC	Roman merchants identify the manufacturer or seller of products with symbols.
100	Christians choose the sign of the fish to indicate their clandestine faith at a time it was outlawed.
1200-1600	Europeans abbeys and monasteries use brands to identify beers and liquors.
1400	"Brand" appears as an English word, denoting the burning of an animal's flesh to claim ownership.
1600	Commerce flourishes with visual symbols used widely to identify products and commercial activities.
1760	Josiah Wedgwood creates the first brand-oriented commercial enterprise.
1886	Coca-Cola trademark its brand.
1922	"Brand name" enters the English language.

Table 2. The Milestones of Brand History, Moon (2000)

The concept of branding and the idea of brand has been around for at least 5000 years but now it has become quite important because our society moved from an economy of mass production to an economy of mass customization and now our purchasing choices have multiplied. The author Neumeier (2006: p.3) says, " We have become information-rich and time-poor". So what is important is "The degree of trust I feel towards the product, rather than an assessment of its features and benefits..." that will determine whether a person will buy your product or not. This is because nowadays we are quite symbolic and emotional about our choices because previously we have been judging products by comparing features and benefits, and now with all the copyright infringements for their features and subsequently loss of quality we turn to our gut feeling about a brand, what it feels to us as individuals from a tribe of brand users. According to the author we are quite emotional about the brands that we choose and those feelings can be quite strong, as we regard them as our own (Neumeier, 2003).

Brand had their origins in the need and desire for social identification by part of an individual or a group. It was used to distinguish something from another, to characterize one thing as being different from the other one. This initial brands were used in three different ways: Social Identity; whom is this, or who says this; Possession; who owns this; Origin; who made this. We cannot determine who showed their identity, possession or creation by graphic methods. We

know however that these first manifestations were made through symbols and not letters (Mollerup, 1997).

The study of heraldry offers a whole line of thought and a terminology that is still relevant to the creation of modern brands. Today the word heraldry has two meanings: it refers to the symbols used in heraldry (coats of arms) and also refers to its design study. There are various conjectures as to its origins that could remount as early as 3100 BC (Predynastic Egypt).

From individuals to families, cities, regions and countries also adopt heraldry symbols. They are also incorporated in company's trademarks to for example show their place of origin. There are a lot of brands that use heraldry in their identification, it is the case of Alfa Romeo and Porsche (Mollerup, 1997).



Figure 2. Alfa Romeo Logo



Figure 3. Porsche Logo

Moon, Michael and Millison (2000) state that brands as advents of goods appear around the 19th century. Industrialization turned the production of many household items, such as soap, from local communities to centralized factories. These factories needed to sell their products in the market so the packaged goods manufacturers needed to convince the market that the public could place just as much trust in the non-local product (Moon, Michael and Millison, 2000).

The authors say that many brands in the 19th century such as Uncle Ben's rice and Kellogg's breakfast cereal wanted their products to appear and feel as familiar as the local farmers' produce. From there, with the help of advertising, manufacturers quickly learned to associate other kinds of brand values, such as youthfulness, fun or luxury, with their products. This was the beginning of the practice we now know as "branding" (Moon, Michael and Millison, 2000). Brand have evolved through history, they change through its own developmental lifecycle in the new economy.

Moon, Michael and Millison (2000) mention that while brand managers may think only in terms of slogans, campaigns, and other discrete elements of cultural detritus, great brands arise from those striving to transcend commercial culture and speak directly to deep human concerns and aspirations (Moon, Michael and Millison, 2000). The authors Moon et al give an example of Apple's 1984 television commercial that used George Orwell's dystopian novel as a starting point saying "Apple tapped the same taboo fear of all modern societies (one which George Lucas

fully developed into an epic mythology in his Star Wars trilogy” (Moon, Michael and Millison, 2000: p.18).

When it became a success, brand managers started to infuse their brands with a larger-than-life dimension that could speak directly to the human heart and at their highest aspirations. They were no longer making brands they were creating cultural icons. In order to understand how brands operate in the market, brand models were elaborated with different functions and different considerations. Though out brand history there was always the intention to quantify and analyse the brand in order to fully profit from it.

2.1.3 Brand Models

Aaker and Joachmishaler (2000) talk about the traditional branding model, where there is a brand management team responsible for creating and coordinating the brand management program. The brand manager's responsibility was to address short-term financial results for single brands, products and markets. His job description was to coordinate the manufacturing and sales department in order to solve problems about sales and market share. In this perspective the brand manager was not high in the company's hierarchy and the brand was solely a concern of the marketing department. According to David and Dunn (2002) some companies believe that an advertising campaign meant focusing on brand so, instead of having a strategic and visionary approach to it they were rather tactical and reactive towards the brand (Aaker and Joachmishaler, 2000) managing a series of tactics instead of developing a global strategy (Davis, S. and Dunn, 2002).

Upshaw says that brands are the atomic core of our consumer-driven capitalistic economy and that they've fuelled our commerce by being the nucleus of product and service categories toward which consumers have been attracted in their search for benefits to improve their life's. He says “A brand has become the assortment of expectations established by the seller that, once fulfilled, forms a covenant with its buyers” (Upshaw, 1995). Consumers think of brands they prefer as trustworthy and reliable and this is largely based on the perceived value of the brand – its performance-to-price quotient. A brand performance that overcomes or matches brand promises is one step closer into reaching brand loyalty from a consumer (Upshaw, 1995).

Wheeler describes branding as being a “disciplined process used to build awareness and extend customer loyalty. It requires a mandate from the top and readiness to invest in the future. Branding is about seizing every opportunity to express why people should choose one brand over another. A desire to lead, outpace the competition, and give employees the best tools to reach customers are the reason why companies leverage branding” (Wheeler, 2009).

Before the 80's companies wanted to buy production capacity but after that they started to want to buy a place in the consumer's mind. The focus shift started when they realized that brands were more than simple identifiers. Kapferer proposes eight functions for the brand as showed in the table 3 below (Kapferer, 1997).

Function	Consumer Benefit
Identification	To have accurate perception, offer coherence, to quickly identify the demanded products.
Practicality	To permit time and energy savings by means of identical repurchasing and loyalty.
Guarantee	To be sure about the product/service quality distribution around the world.
Optimization	To be certain when buying the best product in its category, the best performer for a specific purpose.
Characterization	To know of your self-image or the image that you present to others.
Continuity	Satisfaction generated by familiarity and intimacy with the brand that you have consumed for years.
Hedonistic	Satisfaction regarding the brand attractiveness, logo and communication.
Ethical	Satisfaction as part of responsible brand behaviour towards society.

Author's adaptation from Kapferer (1997)

Table 3. The functions of the brand for the consumer

Kapferer (1997) talks about brands serving eight functions as showed in table 3: the first two parameters are regarded as mechanical and are about the brand essence, the next three are all about reducing the perceived risk and the final three are regarded as the pleasurable side of a brand. He says that brand value comes from gaining an exclusive, positive and prominent meaning in the minds of the consumers, and for that reason branding and brand building should focus on developing brand value.

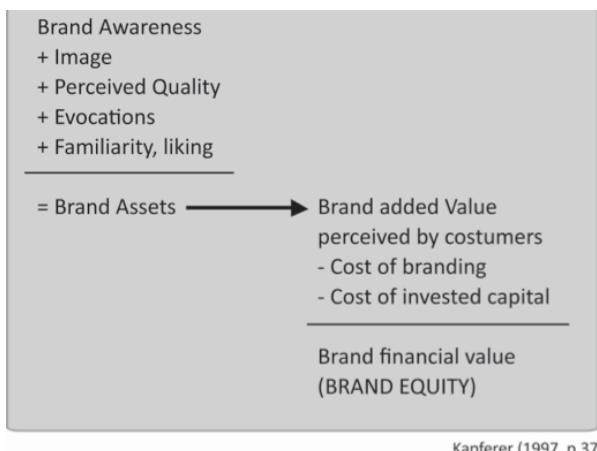


Figure 4. From Brand assets to Brand Equity

According to Kapferer there are four factor combined in the mind of the consumer in order for him to perceive the brand value: brand awareness; images associated with the brand; level of perceived quality (compared to competitors); level of confidence (evocations), level of familiarity (liking). In figure 4 the relationships between the different concepts of brand

analyses are presented. His view about brand value is monetary and includes intangible assets (Kapferer, 1997).

Most companies realize that brand names are now their most valuable asset and even so branding is still a merely tactical decision. Kapferer (1997) provides a strategic brand management model that includes the brand as a pyramid with three levels: in the top-level is the “kernel” or core identity, below that in the middle is the style or personality and the bases correspond to underlying themes and advertising programs. He believes that is should all be managed not only by marketing but throughout the entire company.

Mollerup has a different perspective on brand value, he characterizes the trademark, delineates its functions, and then explains the role of trademarks within the process of social communication conducted by companies. The basis for his theory is that trademarks are identified with messages sent and received. Mollerup based his model on the (sender- message-receiver) from Shannon and Weaver (1945, *The Mathematical Theory of Communication*) and also the six linguistic functions of Roman Jakobson. He also draws from semiotic theory from Charles Morris and Charles Sanders Peirce (Mollerup, 1997).

A brand can be characterized by at least ten different ways. Some of these characteristics are explained in the text below and resumed in table 4, Mollerup (1997).

1. Originality	The brand distinguishes itself from all the others, it has an uniqueness about it;
2. Value	The brand possesses an attention value that can be easily recognized among others;
3. Holding Power	The brand has the ability to focus our attention for more than a split second;
4. Description	The brand includes explicit information about the company and/or its products;
5. Association	The brand informs the viewer about its nature by respecting associating to the company/products;
6. Type of Communication	The brand uses a certain tone in their communication that can be perceived by key aspects;
7. Graphic Excellency	The brand possesses a known artistic and symbolic value allied with a functional graphic excellence;
8. Reputation	The brand gains added value based on the reputation of its company or products / services;
9. Discretion	Some brands want a discreet identification, others prefer not to be quite as discreet;
10. Repetition	All these characteristics can be increased by the use of repetition. Recognition by repetition.

Author's adaptation from Per Mollerup (1997)

Table 4. Brand values identification parameters, Mollerup (1997)

Neumeier states that brand value is a large part of a company's assets and that companies use brand value tools to increase their market value. As brands are becoming more measurable companies keep trying to increase their value, one way to do it is using design to encourage people's trust. The author believes that design is a powerful combination of logic and magic because it deals with tactical elements, strategic and also aesthetics (Neumeier, 2003).

2.1.3.1 Brand Orientation Model

Urde talks about the brand orientation model as another brand building model that views brands as strategic resources. He states that: "Brand Orientation is an approach in which the processes of the organization revolve around the creation, development, and protection of brand identity in an ongoing interaction with target customers with the aim of achieving lasting competitive advantages in the form of brands" (Urde, 1999: p.117-118). This model starts with developing brand identity as a strategic platform. As a consequence of that the brand becomes a response to customers needs and wants. However this concept must be carefully taken as the demands that customers make are not necessarily the ones that will strengthen the brand as a strategic resource. So we can say that the "the wants and needs of customers are not ignored, but they are not allowed to unilaterally steer the development of the brand and determine its identity" (Urde, 1999:p.122). A central part of this brand orientation model is to have a clear understanding of the internal brand identity, that's the starting point of the whole processes. By then the brand becomes a strategic platform that can provide satisfaction to customer's wants and needs.

Urde's Brand Hexagon (1999) in figure 5 (below) shows brand equity and brand identity integrated into the company's direction, strategy and identity. The right side of the table shows the reference function – product category and product, that are analysed rationally, quite different then the left side in which things are analysed emotionally regarding the emotional function – corporate and brand. "A brand is experienced in its entirety" Urde (1999: p. 126), both reason and emotions are involved. The lower part of the model corresponds to the mission and vision and reflects the company's intentions towards the brand, while the upper part reflects the way that consumers sense the brand. At the centre of the model lies the core process of brand meaning creation, which includes the positioning and core values.

In a brand-oriented organization, the objective is to create value and meaning (see figure 5). The brand is a strategic platform for interplay with the target group and thus is not limited to being an unconditional response to what at any moment is demanded by customers. Management strives to develop and protect the brand as a strategic resource by acting within the degrees of freedom that the brand identity provides space for. The mission and the vision indicate an overall direction for the *core brand values* developed which provide structure for the processes of the brand- oriented company.

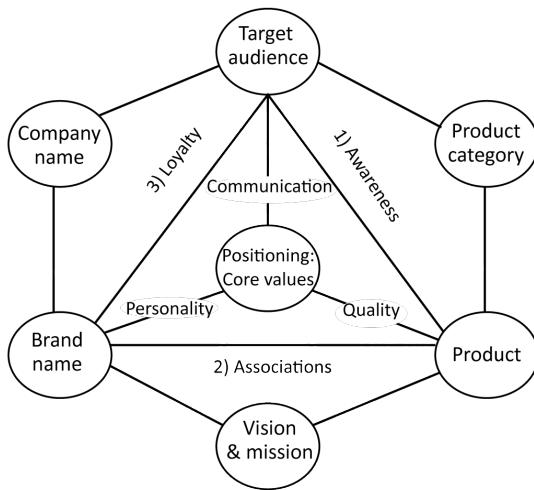


Figure 5. The Brand Hexagon – A conceptual Model of a Brand Oriented Company and its identity, Urde (1994-97)

Urde suggests that brands are still unexplored territory for many companies and have for too long been neglected strategic assets. When brands are brought into focus, a route is opened toward intangibly based competition using brands as strategic resources. For organizations that have lived in the belief that they produced and distributed products, with brands only equal to names or labels, brand orientation might likely lead to a new conception of reality. It is no longer only a question of innovative products, clear positioning, and attractive image, but also of identity, integrity, core values, and mission. The organization's values, attitudes, visions and general approach to brands make a difference - a world of difference. Learning to see intangible values and symbols as resources is a necessary step in brand orientation. We must accept the notion that a company's foremost assets can consist of something other than iron, bricks, and mortar (Urde, 1999).

Other authors have referred to other types of models such as the brand identity model. Brand identity has become a wide concept and encompasses early theories such as positioning, relationship and brand personality. Brand identity gives guidelines to how brands can evolve in time (Hampf, Anders and Lindberg-Repo, 2011).

2.1.3.2 Brand Identity

Upshaw states that a brand's identity has always been the most influential and most easily leveraged part of its accumulated equity. Being “ part of the brand's overall equity, brand identity is the total perception of a brand in the marketplace, driven mostly by its positioning and personality”(Upshaw, 1995:p.14). Kapferer (1997: p.12) states that: “thought all things are possible when a brand is first created, after time it acquires an autonomy and its own meaning”. The brand name starts as a word with hardly any meaning, then, year after year it requires one, composed of memories of past communications.

Brand Identity is the brand's unique fingerprint that makes it one of a kind. It is the configuration of words, images, ideas and associations that are formed in the consumers mind and that give it an aggregate perception of a brand. Kapferer calls it meaning, its identity is what gives a brand its uniqueness. It is how a product or service is seen by its constituencies, how it is perceived to perform. This includes the strategy that was made to sell it, the strategic personality that humanizes it, and how both of these two elements work together with all those tangible and intangible executional elements that should flow from their joining together: brand name, logo, graphic system, and so on (Kapferer, 1997).

Brand Identity is not involved in bearing on the worth of a brand and its financial assets, it refers to the part of equity that offers benefits that make it more attractive as an object of purchase. It is the result of brand positioning and personality and it can be seen in the product/service performance, in the brand name, its logo and graphic system, the brand's communications, and in all the ways that a brand gets involved with its constituencies. As you can see from figure 6 Upshaw (1995) believes brand equity can be divided into two regions: brand valuation and brand identity:

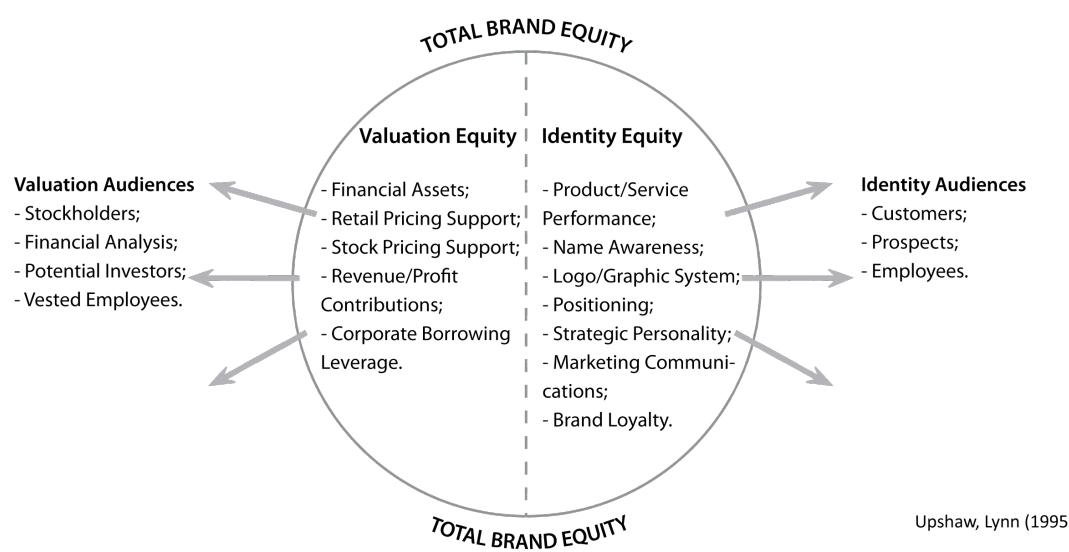


Figure 6. The Relationship between Brand Equity and Brand Identity, Upshaw (1995)

It is important to distinguish between brand equity and brand identity (figure 7) because brand identity as part of brand equity deals with how a brand is viewed by its current and potential buyers. The brand valuation part deals with the factors that have a direct bearing on the worth of the brand and that includes its financial assets.

The core of brand identity is brand essence (figure 7) and that's defined by two crucial variables: 1) how a brand is positioned within the minds of customers and prospects; and 2) what kind of living personality the brand projects into the marketplace. In order to create a successful identity the marketing program must be driven by optimum positioning and strategic personality.

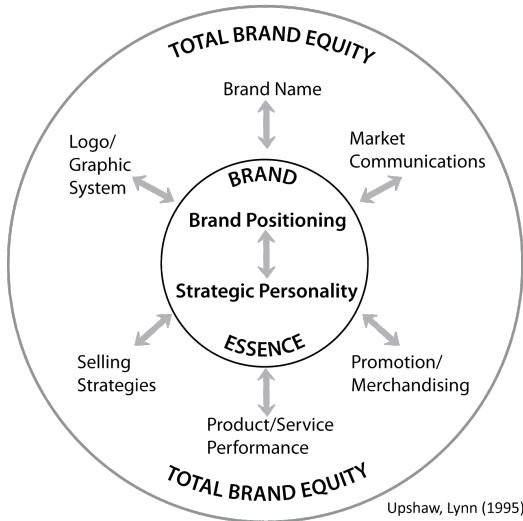


Figure 7. The core of Brand Identity, Upshaw (1995)

Managing Brand Identity involves developing a brand position and an execution program and according to Aaker we have to cope to adapt to a changing environment and at the same time try and be consistent about the messages and symbols we send out. It is really important to create a strong identity, and this has become of great importance. However, creating a solid identity now, does not mean that we stop developing it in the future (Aaker, 2002).

According to Wheeler (2009: p.3) "brand identity is tangible and appeals to the senses". She also states that brand identity "fuels recognition, amplifies differentiation, and makes big ideas and meaning accessible by taking disparate elements and unify them into whole systems".

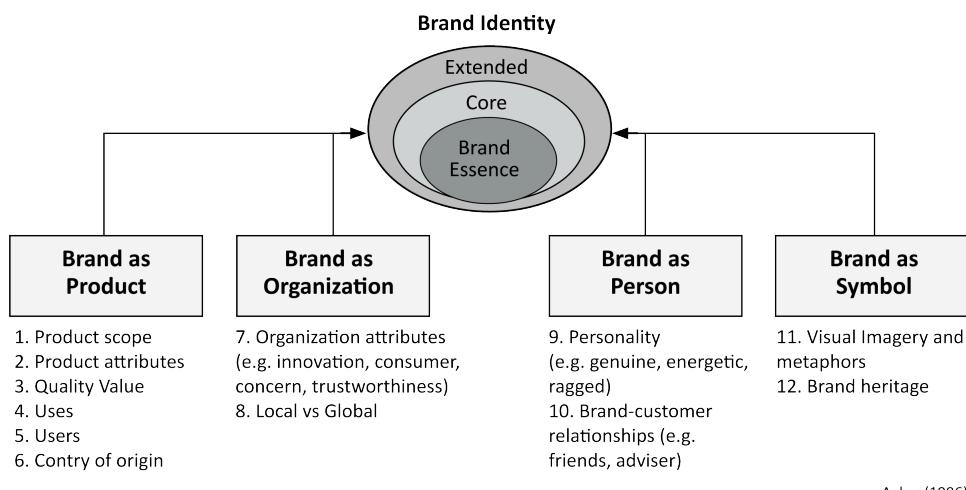


Figure 8. Brand Identity Perspectives, Aaker (1996)

Aaker (1996) develops his brand identity model around four different perspectives and twelve dimensions (figure 8). Aaker views brand as a product and relates to factors that have an important influence on brand identity and they are linked to user requirements and product experience (Aaker, 2000). Brand as an organization shifts the product perspective into

organization attributes that are less tangible and more subjective. Brand perspective as a person means looking at it as if it was a human being, as having a personality (which is extensively used in several brand equity models). Finally brand as a symbol is about brand representation and how a strong symbol can fulfil and dominate in brand strategy.

Another branding concept that is important to understand is Brand Image. Brand image is the reflection of consumer's perceptions of a brand's characteristics.

2.1.3.3 Brand Image

Chernatony and Macdonald find different types of brand associations regarding their level of attraction. Some authors use the term brand image to refer to a brand's overall reputation. The word "image" has alluded to a wide range of physical and attitudinal brand associations that deal with how people perceive the brand's outward characteristics. It is also often mistaken with brand identity, which can trivialize the importance of a brand's positioning and personality components. Brand Image can suggest good or bad aspects, it can become a shallow reflection of a brand instead of the natural core qualities it tries to represent. There is a lot more to a brand's identity than the image it tries to convey to others. For example celebrities nowadays talk about how the image they project is not totally consistent with whom they really are (Chernatony, Leslie De and McDonald, 2003).

2.1.3.4 Brand DNA

The brand DNA, also called the essence of the brand, is the sum of both internal and external benefits of the brand across all media types to all stakeholders. The value of the brand is related to its consistency as well as its expression in a brand personality. The DNA is specific of each company and it should only be changed against a risk assessment. The value of the brand is directly related to the consistency of the brand DNA and its expression as a brand personality. The brand message should be up to the point, clear and as powerful as possible so that it can survive in a world where the competition is fierce. If your DNA does not stand out from the others and if it's brand or vague it will become unrecognizable to the consumer. Like human DNA, a small replica of it should be incorporated into each brand expression, whether it is a website, an advertisement or an internal marketing programme. The force of the brand is therefore increased by the alignment of all these brand expressions.

The brand DNA model showed below regards the relationships between and the building elements of a strong brand DNA according to Ellwood. It can be used for new brand development and revitalizing or repositioning a brand in the marketplace (Ellwood, 2002).

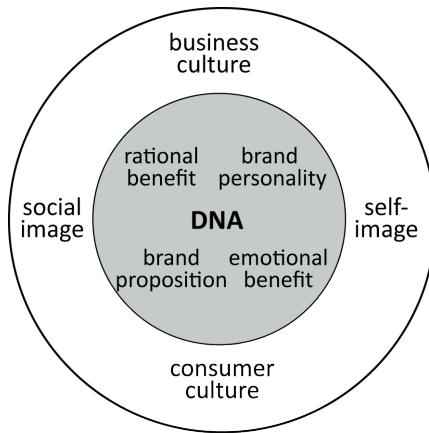


Figure 9. Brand DNA model, Ellwood (2000)

Prestes and Gomez (2010) have found a way to bring design management into the branding DNA model, creating the brand DNA process (figure 9). This process was created with combined knowledge of design, branding and brand DNA and its goal is to identify and validate the brand DNA within the co-creative process, where the stakeholders share emotional or functional experiences with the brand. This DNA brand model is created through its client's participation and therefore should be implemented within the early creative stages (Prestes and Gomez, 2010).

2.1.3.5 Brand Personality

Brand personality is the chosen character that communicates to the target audience, it features the characteristics that are most likely to draw people's attention, interest them and encourage them to take action and buy the brand according to Paul Southgate from the Brand House.

Another way to look at brands is regard them as having a personality and making them fit into specific archetypes. Brand personality is able to develop the interaction between the brand, product, service, organization and their user. Almost everything that we associate with the brand affects their perceived brand personality. Being such an important element for branding it appears in several branding models from different authors. The American Marketing Association (AMA) refers to brand personality as being: "... the psychological nature of a particular brand as intended by its sellers, though persons in the marketplace may see the brand otherwise (called brand image). These two perspectives compare to the personalities of individual humans: what we intend or desire, and what others see or believe." American Marketing Association.

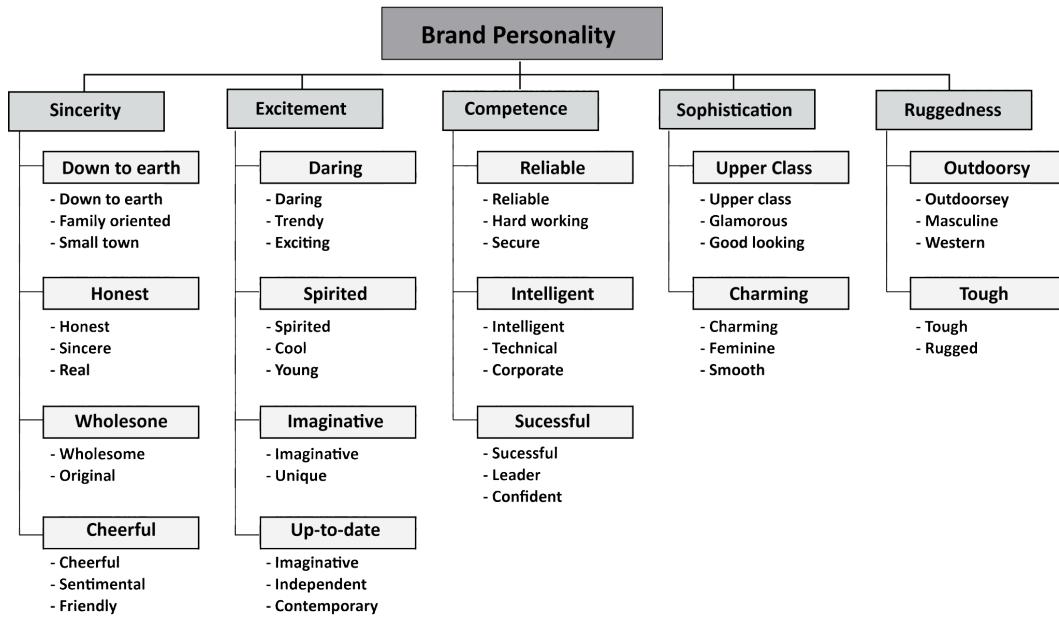


Table 5. Brand Personality, Aaker (1997)

Aaker says that brand personality (as showed in table 5) can map people's perceptions and attitudes towards a brand. Brand managers are able to build, develop and differentiate between the brands using their specific personality and associated imagery. The more powerful brand personality is the more long-term it will become, because brand personality interacts with the brand and its environment making it impossible for competitors to copy all their attributes (Aaker, 2002).

2.1.3.6 Brand Archetypes

According to Martins (table 6) in the process of brand building, emotions can trigger desire. Emotions are able to mobilize and add value to a brand. If we have two brands that are quite similar to one another its their personality in the end that determines our choice. Brand personality must be true to itself. If a brand creates high expectations on a consumer and then does not deliver them, the consumer will not buy its products again. Products are created to attend to objective consumer needs, but brands are created to attend to their emotional ones. The brand archetypes is where brand can find their strength, its their essence and it summarizes its meaning. The author identifies twenty-six brand archetypes to define brand personality (Martins, 1999).

Energy Flow	I'm a star
Playful	Aesthetic Balance
Source	Senses exaltation
Possessive Instinct	Power Game
Warrior	Unconscious Search
Socialization	Idealism
Every-day-life scenes	Expansion
Formalization	Expression
Rational	Visionary Leader
Big Finish Line	Global Tribe
Self-Esteem	Cosmic Feeling
Rebel	Sensitivity
The intimate	Sense of Union and Mankind

Table 6. Brand Archetypes, José Martins, 1999 (translated by the author)

Jansen also talks about brand archetypes (figure 9); he believes that by developing the brand identity based on an archetype the brand can connect within the unconscious sphere of consumer's ambitions and aspirations. And by doing that its possible to development a significant relationship with the consumer (and other relevant stakeholders) (Jansen, 2006).

The archetype theory actually derives from psychiatrist Carl Jung human behaviour theory. Jansen says that this instinctive urges can be applied to brand identity. With archetypes such as: sage, creator, jester, and lover for e.g. Jansen believes that they will relate to the consumer and be able to provide a way to maintain and further develop their relationship (Jung, 1963).



Figure 10. Brand Archetypes, Jansen (2006)

Keller and Donald believe that the most direct way of accessing brand personality is by asking questions and supposing that the brand were to come alive as a person. Questions such as: What would the brand be like? What would it do? Where would it live? What would it wear? Who would it talk to at a party? (What would it talk about)? (Keller and Donald, 2006).

2.1.4 Brand strategy

Gelder (2003) believes brand strategy aims to develop a plan that specifies a direction for the brand in the long run. This will help maintain and built sustainable competitive advantage over its competitors (Gelder, 2003). It is necessary to have business strategy knowledge in order to make sure its consistency over the years. Corporate strategy and brand strategy need to be aligned to create stakeholder value (Gelder, 2003:p.16).

Kotler and Pfoertsch (2006, 2007) say brand strategy is mainly the brand essence, its values and associations using building blocks as brand mission, brand architect, brand positioning, brand value proposition, brand promise and brand personality (Kotler and Pfoertsch, 2007). Brand strategy is a process by which a company selects the essential brand elements needed to create the right brand and identifies which brand elements are necessary to create the proper and feasible brand proposition to the target group (Kotler and Pfoertsch, 2006). As a result, brand strategy should involve a holistic approach throughout the organization and embraces employee's roles as being ambassadors of the brand.

Author Gelder defines brand strategy by what the brand is supposed to achieve in terms of consumer attitudes and behaviour (Gelder, 2003). Arnold (1993) states that the brand strategy plan is about the specific direction and scope the brand will take over the long term, this will allow the brand to support and build a sustainable competitive advantage over the competition (Arnold, 1993). We need to have strategic consistency to understand business strategy, both the corporate strategy and the brand strategy should be aligned in order to create stakeholder value (Gelder, 2003). Brand strategy is based on brand core, values, associations and uses them

as building blocks for brand mission, brand architecture, brand position, brand promise and brand personality (Kotler and Pfoertsch, 2007).

2.1.5 Brand Leadership

Aaker and Joachimsthaler created a model where the brand manager is able to develop a strategic role in the business strategy.

This model develops the way brand strategy should be integrated into the business strategy, it incorporates some of the topics we talk about in the branding section of this thesis. The authors underline the importance of having consistency between business strategy and corporate culture and vision. They divide the model into four tasks that brands should do in order to become brand leaders (Aaker and Joachimsthaler, 2000). See figure 12.

1. Organizational structure and processes to build an effective and efficient brand organization.
2. Brand architecture to guide and develop a strategic brand direction.
3. Brand identity and brand position to differentiate the brand(s) within the appropriate markets.
4. Brand building programs to plan, create, develop, implement, execute and monitor effective brand building programs.

Consumers use brands as means of production according to (Arvidsson, 2006) brand management differs from modern marketing as it is not about imposing ways of using goods, or behaving or thinking as a consumer. It is about proposing branded goods as tools or building blocks that consumers can create their own meanings.

With the introduction of this new brand leadership model by Aaker and Joachimsthaler (Aaker and Joachimsthaler, 2000) the traditional model (originally explored by Kapferer) was left behind. The brand leadership model emphasizes both strategy and tactics, as the previous one focused only on strategy and there was no room for planning tactic in the long run. Also the brand manager has a higher rank than in the traditional model, he has a longer time job horizon and works both as a strategist and a communication team leader. Previously he was just part of the chain of command, not even with a high rank. The brand leader builds brand equities and further develops ways to measure brand equity as they get more complex and structured the focus now is on multiple brands, multiple products and multiple markets. Now the motivation is creating brand value through out strategy. Aaker and Joachimsthaler show how the classic, tactically oriented brand model that was pioneered by Procter & Gamble is shifting towards a new strategic management paradigm. This new approach revolutionizes organizational structure, systems and culture. The authors state that there are four challenges to address as you can see in figure 11.

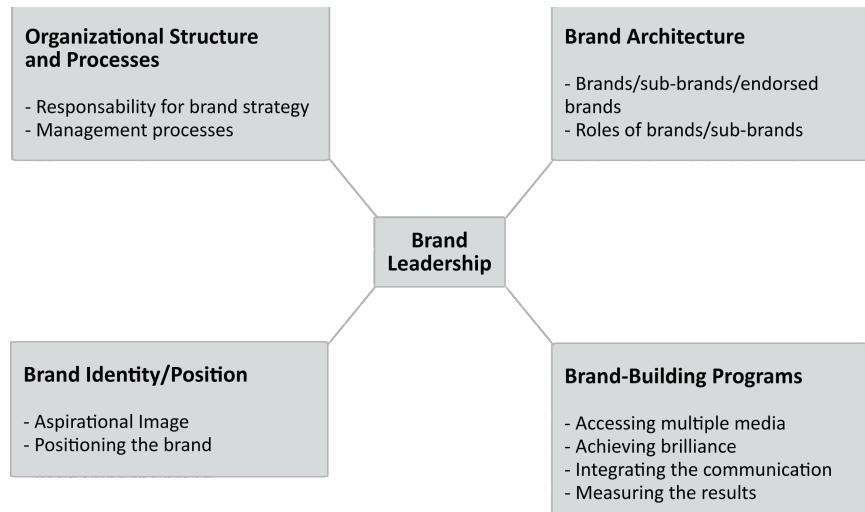


Figure 11. Brand Leadership Model, Aaker and Joachimsthaler (2000)

The brand leadership model allows you to create structures and processes that lead to strong brands, having a strong brand leader to each product or market. It also aims to establish common ground for communication such as: common vocabulary, tools, and an information system that allows sharing experiences and initiatives. McWilliam and Dumas say that it is important that everyone on the brand team understands the brand building process so they can transmit the values of a firm accurately. In the brand architecture challenge or the brand portfolio strategy it is important to identify brands, sub-brands and also their relationships, their scope and respective roles and to be able to extend them accordingly. It is necessary to understand what is being offered to the consumer and to reinforce synergies between brands to promote the leveraging of brand assets. The third aspect of this model is brand identity and position, which consists of assigning a brand identity to each, managed brand and place them effectively in order to clarify things. The fourth and final challenge is the brand-building program. This aims to create communication programs and brand building must do what is necessary to improve consumer perceptions, reinforce their attitudes and create consumer's loyalty (Mcwilliam, 1997).

With this model one is able to create and further explore brand identities and use the brand relationship spectrum to its potential with the harness sub-brands and endorsed brands. It is also possible to understand the consumer a little more and focus advertising efforts in order to get to him more clearly.

Ulrich, Dave and Smallwood (2007) want leaders to be able to figure out how their daily decisions can increase or protect the intangible value of their companies. He claims that a more practical focus can shift the responsibility of generating positive intangibles from the financial and senior managers who have strategic direction. Ulrich states that leadership tools should be accessible to leaders of all functions and at all levels of an organization and that value can be created at all levels of the organization in order to have a stronger impact (Ulrich, Dave and Smallwood, 2007).

With the discussion on brand value and how to measure a brand's intangible assets came the need to develop ways to define and measure these variables. Authors Ambler et al. (2002), Doyle (2000) and Srivastava, Shervani and Fahey (1998) believe brands and brand value themes have become increasingly popular in marketing practices and in academia because of the growing importance of accountability and marketing metrics (Ambler et al. 2002) and to link several marketing activities with the ability to measure corporate value as shareholder value (Doyle, 2000) and (Srivastava, Shervani and Fahey, 1998).

2.1.6 Brand Equity

Keller says brand Equity has been examined from two different perspectives: financial and customer based. The first perspective is the financial asset it can create in the business franchise. The second and most common perspective is that there is a consumer response to a brand name (Keller, 1993).

Recent years have seen an increased emphasis on customer-focused marketing approaches, especially in terms of maximizing brand equity and customer equity. The business press now proclaims that the customer asset can be a company's most valuable asset and that firms should do everything in their power to create and sustain customer-based equity.

Brand equity comes from brand image and was created by the totality of brand associations perceived by customers. It is a perspective that brings the customer to mind and allows for his opinion to be noticed while elaborating the brand strategy (Michell et al., 2001). Similarly, the business press has also proclaimed that "the brand is the thing" and that firms must properly build and leverage their brand equity (Ambler et al., 2002).

Upshaw (1995: p.14) defines it as being "the total accumulated value or worth of a brand; the tangible and intangible assets that the brand contributes to its corporate parent, both financially and in terms of selling leverage." A brand's net worth, financial and otherwise (Upshaw, 1995).

It can be understood as a balance between brand values, a set of resources and deficiencies inherent to a brand, that come together or are subtracted to the value that a product or service provides, in the benefit of a company and their target consumer (Aaker, 2002). Keller defines it as consumer based, i.e., the differential effect of the awareness of a brand as a consumer's response to the marketing it produced (Keller, 1993).

"Customer-based equity is defined as the differential effect of brand knowledge on consumer response to the marketing of the brand" (Keller, 1993: p.8). In order for that to happen marketers compare consumer responses to specific brand marketing and then with the marketing of fictitious version of a product or service. A favourable consumer response and a positive customer based equity leads to enhanced revenue, lower costs and an increase in profits (Keller, 1993).

This concept of brand equity started to be widely used in the eighties by advertising professionals (Barwise, 1993), and was made known by Aaker in his best-selling book about the subject (Aaker, 1991). Other important academic contributions were made in the 1990's by Srivastava and Shocker (Srivastava et al. 1998), Kapferer (1992) and Keller (1993, 1998). Advertising agencies like Leo Burnett, DDB Needham and Young & Rubicam, have developed their own measurement systems to access brand value.

The brand equity concept has been much explored by several authors. According to Farquhar it is the added value that a brand provides a product (Farquhar, 1989). Aaker identifies four sources of brand equity: brand awareness, perceived quality and brand associations (Aaker, 2002). Keller believes it is the combined efforts of brand awareness and brand image that allows for brand equity (Keller, 1993).

However in literature, brand equity is defined in many different ways, which can cause conceptual misunderstanding (Farquhar, 1989). Krishnan (1996) can identify three different perspectives of the examination of brand equity: first, the practical and second, the strategic. Also, Feldwick (1996) talks about three different approaches to brand equity: 1) the brand description approach, the 2) brand strength, and also the 3) brand value. Many authors have developed their own ways of measuring brand equity that convey these approaches, for example: (Keller, 1993), (Farquhar, 1989), (Kapferer, 1997) and (Srivastava et al., 1998).

As there are different methods to define it, there are also different methods to try and measure it. The need to define and measure a brand lead to the rise in brand studies such as Sattler's in 1994. He did forty-nine studies related to brand equity and manage to identify twenty-six different methods to measure brand equity (Sattler, 1994).

Keller (1993, 1998) states that there are two different approaches to measuring brand equity - the indirect and direct approach. The indirect approach tries to measure sources of brand equity by attempting to measure brand knowledge. These indirect methods can be further differentiated by using qualitative (e.g. Aaker, 1997; Boivin, 1986; Durgee and Stuart, 1987; Krishnan, 1996; Zaltman and Higie, 1995) and quantitative research methods (e.g. Keller, 1998; Lassar, Mittal, and Sharma, 1995; Low and Lamb, 2000; Martin and Brown, 1990; Rio, Vazquez, and Iglesias, 2001). The direct approach tries to measure brand equity by assessing the impact of brand knowledge on consumer response. Keller (1993, 1998) took it a step further and differentiates them as being comparative and holistic. Comparative methods can have a brand analysis, marketing analysis or both (e.g. Blackstone, 1990; Lee, Lee, and Kamakura, 1996; Rangaswamy, Burke, and Oliva, 1993). Holistic approaches can have either a residual approach (e.g. Kamakura and Russell, 1993; Park and Srinivasan, 1994; Swait et al., 1993) or a valuation approach (e.g. Kapferer, 1998; Seetharaman, Nadzir, and Gunalan, 2001; Simon and Sullivan, 1993).

Brand equity has also been defined as "the enhancement in the perceived utility and desirability a brand name confers on a product" (Lassar, Mittal and Sharma, 1995: p. 13). High brand equity is considered to be a competitive advantage because firms can begin to charge a premium. Brand equity is often associated with an increase in customer demand. When its well

established it gets easier to extend a brand, communication campaigns become more effective and to the point, there are better trading leverage, margins can be greater and the firm becomes less vulnerable to competition (Bendixen, Bukasa, and Abratt, 2003). So brand equity can generate a differential effect, raise the brand knowledge and even increase a consumer response (Keller, 2003a), which will lead to better brand performance both from a financial and customer perspective as you can see from figure 11.

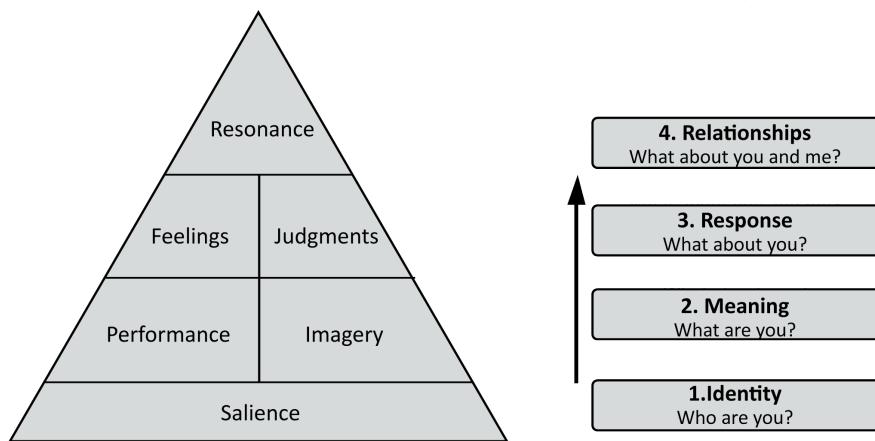


Figure 12. Consumer-Based Brand Equity Pyramid, Keller (2003)

Balmer (1995) argues that brands have the tendency to be associated with products or services but there has been a refocus on corporate branding. A strong and positive corporate brand is seen as a competitive advantage in today's market environment (Balmer, 1995). Ackerman believes that the corporate brand is able to offer a comprehensive discipline for clarifying, humanizing, organizing and communicating how the company is able to create value (Ackerman, 1998).

2.1.7 Corporate branding

Corporate branding is the practice of using a company's name as a product brand name. It is an attempt to use corporate brand equity to create product brand recognition. It is a type of family branding or umbrella brand. Disney, for example, includes the word "Disney" in the name of many of its products; other examples include IBM and Heinz. This strategy contrasts with individual product branding, where each product has a unique brand name and the corporate name is not promoted to the consumer.

According to Hatch and Schultz (figure 13) a strong corporate brand acts as a focal point for the attention, interest and activity stakeholders bring to a corporation. Like a beacon in the fog, a corporate brand attracts and orients relevant audiences, stakeholders and constituencies around the recognizable values and symbols that differentiate the organization. Corporate branding is not only about differentiation; it is also, about belonging. When corporate branding works, it is because it expresses the values and/or sources of desire that attract key stakeholders to the organization and encourage them to feel a sense of belonging to it. It is this attraction and sense of belonging that affects the decisions and behaviours on which a company

is built. A strong corporate brand taps this attractive force and offers symbols that help stakeholders experience and express their values and thereby keep them active (Hatch and Schultz, 2001).



Figure 13. The Corporate Brand, Hatch and Schultz (2001)

Corporate branding can result in significant economies of scope since one advertising campaign can be used for several products. It also facilitates new product acceptance because potential buyers are already familiar with the name. However, this strategy may hinder the creation of distinct brand images or identities for different products: an overarching corporate brand reduces the ability to position a brand with an individual identity, and may conceal different products' unique characteristics.

It has been argued that successful corporate branding often stems from a strong coherence between what the company's top management seek to accomplish (their strategic vision), what the company's employees know and believe (lodged in its organizational culture), and how its external stakeholders perceive the company (their image of it). Misalignments between these three factors, in turn, may indicate an underperforming corporate brand.

The most recent turn in branding literature emerged in the mid-nineties. Businesses began shifting their focus from product brands to corporate branding (Chernatony, Leslie De and McDonald, 2003) and (Hatch and Schultz, 2001). The corporate brand perspective supports, and could be a consequence of, the strategic view of brands. King (1991) is considered to be the first author to make a clear distinction between product and corporate brands, emphasizing the importance of a multidisciplinary approach in order to manage them. It is after 1995 when more research on corporate branding is published. Balmer and Gray's literature review on corporate branding presents different visions that have been developed during prior years. They conclude that corporate brands are leading to the development of a new branch of marketing which should be known as "corporate-level- marketing" (Balmer and Gray, 2003).

Aaker defines a corporate brand as a brand that represents an organization and reflects its heritage, values, culture, people, and strategy (Aaker, 1991). Corporate branding congruent with the strategic brand vision (Hatch and Schultz, 2001) dwells on developing brands at an organizational level (Knox, Simon and Bickerton, 2003) which requires managing interactions with multiple stakeholders (Balmer and Gray, 2003), (Hatch, Schultz, 2001) and (Aaker, 1991).

Urde states that corporate brands must reflect organizational values. In other words, an organization's core values must be the guiding light of the brand building process, both internally and externally. They must be built into the product, expressed in behaviour, and reflected in communication. "Core values influence continuity, consistency and credibility in the building of a corporate brand" (Urde, 1999, p.1036).

According to Balmer and Gray corporate and product brands are different in terms of their composition, constituencies, maintenance, management, and disciplinary roots (Balmer and Gray, 2003). Hatch and Schultz distinguish six differences between product and corporate branding (Hatch and Schultz, 2001):

- 1) The shift in focus from product to corporation of the branding effort;
- 2) The different exposure the organization is subject to, which makes the firm's behaviour and its interaction with society much more visible;
- 3) The relation of the brand to all company stakeholders, not just customers;
- 4) The requirement of organization-wide support;
- 5) The temporal dimension of corporate brands includes past and future, not just present;
- 6) The greater reach of corporate brands than product brands means that they take on more strategic importance.

Given these differences, they describe a corporate branding framework, which is based on three elements: strategic vision, organizational culture and corporate image. They argue that developing the corporate brand involves articulating and aligning these three elements, which can be achieved when an effective dialogue between top management, external stakeholders, and members of the organizational culture is established. Given the fact that corporate brands concern multiple stakeholders, Knox and Bickerton suggest that this framework should be extended in order to include a fourth variable: the competitive environment of the organization, both from the perspective of its current image and current culture (Knox, Simon and Bickerton, 2003).

With the emergence of social media, consumer empowerment and interaction, a new concept of consumer democracy appeared. Gobé with his book 'Emotional branding' re-invented the way business, commerce and management could leverage the power of the web. This approach breaks up with mass media and opts for a more targeted and culturally relevant way of communicating, social media. Emotional branding privileges the individual and the niche market, allowing for renewed sensitivity towards traditional marketing research (Gobé, 2001).

2.1.8 Emotional branding

Gobé (2001) believes that the emotional aspect of brands is what makes a key difference for consumers. He argues that people are interested in buying emotional experiences, and he calls the brands that are able to create an emotional bond with their client's emotional brands. According to him, emotional brands share a set of common values that make them highly sought. These values are:

- A great corporate culture focused on people;
- A communication style and philosophy that stands out;
- An emotional hook that draws consumers to their promise.

Marketing literature suggests that emotion can stimulate buying interest, guide choices, arouse buying intentions, and influence future-buying decisions. All these popular beliefs about the power of emotion have received research support. Thoughts about buying are not listless mental acts. They can be exciting and can involve strong likes and dislikes, anxieties, and aspirations. Just think about the emotional component of buying a new car. Emotions intensify wants and desires and intensify motivation. Even ethical behaviour can be suppressed because of a failure to generate the emotion needed to motivate moral action.

In the words of Marc Gobé "Emotional Branding is the conduit by which people connect subliminally with companies and their products in an emotionally profound way". He further asserts that branding strategies should be about mindshare and "*Emotions Share*" rather than market share. It is a means of creating personal dialogue with consumers. It brings a new layer of credibility by connecting powerfully with people on a personal and holistic level. A unique trust is established with the audience. He further adds, "commitment to product or institution, the pride we feel upon receiving a wonderful gift of a brand we love, having a positive shopping experience in an inspiring environment where someone knows our name or brings an unexpected cup of coffee- these feelings are at the core of emotional branding."

Gobé (2001) says that while communication and visual identity focus mainly on sight and sound, an accurate poly-sensorial identity integrating touch, smell (and taste when applicable), sends a more powerful emotional message to consumers, multiplying the connections or touch points through which the consumers can be attracted, convinced and touched by the brand. It enables and encourages consumers to "feel" and "experience" the brand (product or service) with their "emotional brain" (figure 14).

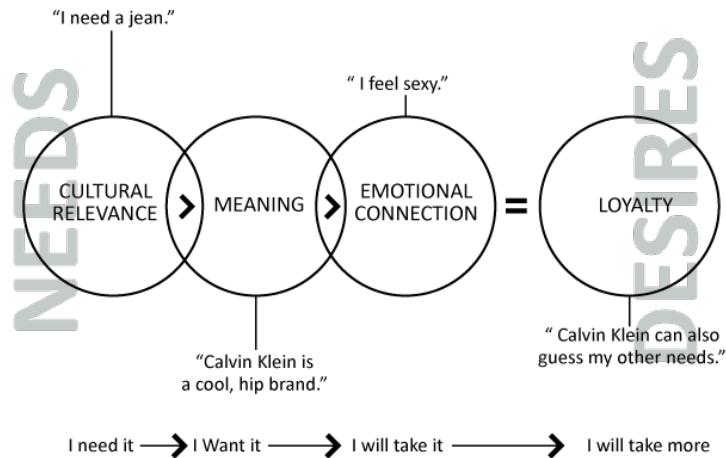


Figure 14. Emotional branding, Gobé (2001)

As Martin Lindstrom, author of best-selling book *Brand Sense* states, success lies in mastering a true sensory synergy between the brand and its message (Lindstrom, 2005).

Proclaiming that business success in the 21st century depends on "how a brand comes to life for people and forges a deeper, lasting connection," designer and branding consultant Gobé (BrandJam) presents a thorough update to his 2001 guide to engaging with consumers "on the level of the senses and emotions." Among other techniques, Gobé prescribes a divide-and-conquer approach to demographic appeal: African-Americans respond to respect and personal contact; Women, the "new Shoppers in Chief," require "products, ads, and businesses that are without comparisons to a man's world"; Generations X and Y answer appeals to individuality and authenticity, respectively. He also emphasizes simple but easy-to-overlook strategies for enticing the five senses: Apple's use of colour was one of the principal reasons for the brand-rehabilitating success of its original iMac; Acoustiguide, the headsets used by museums to guide visitors through exhibits, could be the next hot megastore shopping aid. At times, Gobé's enthusiasm for shopping (he considers it an art, and looks forward to the integration of theme parks and shopping malls) seems a bit over the top, but his passion should prove highly useful to marketers looking for smart and imaginative ways to bond with consumers (Gobé, 2001).

Norman (1988) believes emotional design is related to emotional branding. Norman believes that the emotional side of design is more critical to a products success than its more practical elements. He says that attractive products work better and that beautifully designed products make people feel happier (Norman, 1988). In the business this is getting acceptance with authors like Postrel saying that the look and feel of people, places and things are more important than we think (Postrel, 2004).

Norman fits with the concepts of cognitive science that believes emotions are inseparable from and a necessary part of cognition. In developing a user-centric design we should regard beyond functionality and accommodate for aesthetic elements to appeal to the user's emotions. He believes that there are three levels of design: the visceral, that embodies sensory aspects such as look, feel and sound. The second level is the behavioural that allows for users to form their

perceptions about a particular object through its specific use. Third aspect is the reflective level with gives meaning to the product in the consumer eyes. It accounts for the sense of identity that consumers maintain with the object through out its consumption. Marketing is believed to be important at this stage because it can help design incorporate this reflective element in a product. With the interaction of these three levels of design comes the sense of emotional design with a new holistic approach on designing products (Norman, 1988).

Branding does not always apply to corporations, businesses, products or services. It can also be effectively used for charities, counties, places and even people. It is important to look into these branding aspects as they all emerge in social media today. We can also learn how branding is being applied in these situations and on how can this help brands design their social media presence more efficiently.

Principles of branding apply in equal measure to countries as they do to corporations. But methods are different. Countries will compete daily with neighbours or block regions for tourism, inward investment and export sales. There's only so much business that can go around. Those countries that start with an unknown or poor reputation will be limited or marginalized. They cannot easily boost their commercial success.

2.1.9 Personal branding

Extending his ideas, Gobé (2001) says that today consumers do not want to be romanced by brands, but want to establish multifaceted, holistic relationships with them. People's emotional bond with a brand is influenced by how well the brand behaves and if they (the brand) are actively involved in making the world a better place. People not only expect brands to be good philanthropists, they want them to become compassionate friends or familiar neighbours. Therefore, Gobé introduces the concept of "citizen brands" which exist in firms that take into consideration the impact on people, both internally and externally, of every decision they make. In other words, a citizen brand is a socially responsible brand (Gobé, 2001). This is a highly important concept for social media as consumers are actively producing content for their own 'personal brand' and relating themselves with existing brand presences online that allow for them to build up their persona.

Labrecque et al, say that branding of people is a relatively new concept within the branding area. This concept has grown rapidly and its importance is increasing. Our purpose of this thesis is to describe how a strong personal brand is developed and how it is sustained. We also want to highlight what factors that determine who will succeed to develop a strong personal brand and who will not and if the associations that other people have of you can be determined by the brand owner (Labrecque et al., 2011).

Gustafsoon et al, state that in order for successful personal branding to happen people need to have a clear understanding of who they are, it is important to be consistent in the messages that they communicate in order to avoid confusion among other people. They need to have a strong

personal brand, and be well-known among more people than just your family and friends (Gustafsson, Karin and Mattsson, 2006).

Personal branding is to a large extent about how other people perceive you and the author argues that you can to some extent affect this image by being consistent and clear about who you are and what you stand for. People cannot see your thoughts, only your actions.

We all have a personal brand but Gustafsson, Karin and Mattsson believe that the process to develop their personal brand depends on what goals they have with it and what they want to accomplish. All people do not gain anything by having a strong personal brand but they believe that all people can use some parts of the concept in order to know who they are and what they stand for.

A personal brand on the other hand is something that every person has. It is not something that you are, but something that you have. A personal brand is those values that a person stands for and communicates to the surroundings. Runebjörk says that everything a person does will contribute to the picture that the surrounding has of that person (Runebjörk, 2004).



Figure 15. Personal branding, McNally, Speak (2002)

McNally and Speak (figure 15) say that personal brand dimensions including our (1) roles, (2) standards, (3) style, "show you what you look like to someone else." Our roles are our relationships with others. For example, you can be a consultant, a co-worker, a mother, and a friend. Examples of standards are non-judgmental listener, proficient net-worker, open-minded, or unfocused, situational values, undisciplined. They can be positive or negative, depending on the perceptions of the other person. Those perceptions are built on your actions, not intentions. Style is "your brand's personality." Style (e.g., outgoing, caring, warm or arrogant, bossy, uptight) is the most difficult dimension to measure. Again, it is in the eye of the beholder (McNally, David and Speak, 2002).

Branding Today

In the article "The lure of global branding" by David Aaker and Erich Joachimsthaler it is said that most companies are viewing the world as their potential global market, and that brand

builders want to globalize their own brands in a worldwide dimension, following what appears to be a market trend. They are attracted by high profile cases of success but have no idea about how risky it all could be. According to David Aaker and Erich Joachimsthaler in order to create a global brand we have to have global leadership. Global leadership is not obtained instantaneously; companies must use structures, processes and cultures to allocate brand-building resources in a global way. Aaker and Joachimsthaler describe four methods to achieve global brand leadership. Firstly, they believe that companies have to stimulate the sharing of insights and feedback for best practices across countries and try and embrace change instead of just saying: "it would not work here". Secondly companies should rely on a common brand-planning process, consistency across markets and products. Thirdly they should assign global managerial responsibility for brands in order to fight local bias. And fourthly they need to develop and execute brilliant brand building strategies before stepping into the global market, otherwise branding will just happen on its own, and it could as easily fail or succeed, but you'd have no control over it (Aaker and Joachimsthaler, 1999).

Every year Interbrand evaluates brands that make a great deal of investment in their businesses. Neumeier (2003) says that even though they invest a lot of time, energy, resources and study in their brands, most of them, still care more about sales, services, quality and marketing and brand just happens while they are undertaking other endeavours.

Companies are trying to isolate brands from their other assets in order to study, measure, manage and influence it, rather than just let it happen. However brand managers, strategists and researchers are discovering that it takes more than strategy to build a brand, it takes strategy and creativity (design) together (Neumeier, 2003).

Neumeier says that in most companies the Marketing Department is separated from the design Department. Designers learn about what the Marketing Department is doing when they receive their briefings for some advertising campaign, sub-brand creation, sales launch, event promotion, and so on. Neumeier states that on one side we have the strategists and marketing people who favour left brain thinking and on the other side we have the designers and creatives who favour right brain thinking and what happens is that the left brain does not always know what the right brain is doing and vice-versa. When this happens, strategy and creativity separated from one another, we have a brand gap. "It can cause a brilliant strategy to fail where it counts most, at the point of contact with the customer, or it can doom a bold creative initiative before it is even launched, way back at the planning stage" (Neumeier, 2009).

The author also states that if the gulf exists it can separate a company from its customers so completely that they are not communicating any message to them at all. A brand gap can have two possible outcomes: 1) "it creates a natural barrier to communication and 2) it creates a natural barrier to competition". And that companies who can manage to overcome that gap have a strong advantage over the others who cannot. A strong and clear brand communication goes straight into people's minds without any message distortion. Brands who can reach out to people and overcome this gap can start to build a relationship with their customers and initiate the foundations of their charismatic brands. The charismatic brands often appear in everyday culture, are of constant topic and can be characterized by people's belief that there are no

substitutes for them. Therefore charismatic brands usually dominate their market's shares from around 50% or higher, and get the highest price premiums also (Neumeier, 2003).

Brands have enjoyed a meteoric rise according to Kornberger (2011) and are the mechanism that tries to connect organizations closer to people. Nowadays brands seduce us into consumerism but at the same time they are also cultural forms that allow us to express ourselves. For example: legitimizing advertising as social engineering and at the same time turns it into an art form. Brands enable the individual to construct one's identity on the basis of one's consumption patterns. Brands have become the resource for identity formation. They are like ready-made (Warhol, Duchamp) elements for styling our lives. Holt, Douglas says that consumers want to be the protagonist of their own lives, but they want the story written out for them. So brands in that perspective could provide the narratives they live by, because they represent values not functionality. They are able to turn products into social meanings and consumption into a social phenomenon. Above all in this overdrive information driven world brands provide a safe haven because they provide us with some certainties, clarity and stability (Kornberger, 2011).

As far as society goes, Institutions have been the source that generated trust and meaning, but they are now being replaced by brands that generate meaning and trust as part of market relations. One could say that brands might be taking our free will, but rather they exercise a positive form of power according to Kornberger. Bauman (2007) states that coercion has been replaced by stimulation, the obligatory patterns by seduction, the policing of behaviour by public relationships and advertising and the normative regulation by the awaken of new needs and desires. Brands encourage our "freedom" and do not discipline us, after all we live in a consumer's democracy, even though the choices we have in the supermarket can hardly be called "freedom of choice". What brands now actually offer is a choice between limited alternatives and we should not confuse what they prefigure in hope for a better world. Nonetheless brands have the potential for challenge and change.

However the problem has changed, and Kornberger (2011) says that the challenge now is not so much controlling the internal production process but to interact with one's environment and engage with it in a co-creative and innovative activity. Culture extends beyond the organizations and can engage consumers in forming brand communities that are being pro-active about brands, and consumers now have information and communication technologies on their side, and this brand communities describe a new form of social organization mediated by brands (Kornberger, 2011).

"The brand is the only interface for co-creation. Especially in the non-mediated media of the internet, brands are the only anchor point that provides stability and recognition." Consumers are relating to brands more directly as organizations lose control over production and distribution. "Brands are emerging as a new interface between consumption and production." They are becoming the link between consumers and products and they've brought back the meaning to money by adding value to it, bringing back meaning to the exchange of goods. With most companies outsourcing their production process to globally connect value chains, we are left with managing meaning. Though production has become global the ability to give meaning

to a brand is built locally. Meaning is managed and objectified in lifestyles (Kornberger, 2011:p.5-6).

The world is facing globalization and this will impact brands as well as the economy changes we are shifting from a service based economy of the late 20th century into the “experience economy” or, as the Nomura Economic Research Institute describes it: “The age of creativity”.

Ellwood says brands need to match the shifts expressed by the economic model and develop experiential customer interfaces. These will fall into the 5 I's brand dimensions of: identify, inform, imagine, immerse and intrigue. Businesses need to define a balanced strategy for the bricks-to-clicks paradigm, as well as the new economy of clicks-to-bricks. They need to create synergy across the traditional and the new media rather than remain purely with one (Ellwood, 2002).

According to Meyers and Gerstman most of the cyberspace entrepreneurs believe that the Internet is just another way/tool to communicate their message, and that they do not need to resort to different strategies (other then the ones they have already) in order to promote and sell their products and services (Meyers, Herbert M. and Gerstman, 2001).

According to Zyman (1999,p.1) *“Traditional Marketing is not dying – it is dead”*, and that the ability to move the masses has been lost from Mass Marketing partly because of technology. Technology has created a consumer's democracy because it gives people a wide range of choices, and in order to have consumer's attention you need to find ways to relate/speak to small groups of people and individuals instead of trying to appeal to the masses/wider audiences. So it is important to know the individual and their individual groups. An interesting way to approach this could be studying the field of social networks (Zyman, 1999).

Ollins (2003) says that brands are ideally suited for the age of the global village. Marketers created such brands from big corporate companies in order to seduce costumers into selling them their products created them. The branding mechanism was designed for and by modern techniques to sell products by creating and projecting simple and clear ideas, over and over again. Today, branding has become more successful then what its creators expected.

Meyers et al. say that if this turns out to be correct the Internet has offered the perfect solution for marketers to solve their communication problems with their clients. There are unlimited opportunities to explore individuals and small-targeted groups at any given moment whenever and wherever they are by interfacing. Even if a product is not sold directly on the Internet their marketers use it to communicate a positive brand personality and increase its value towards consumers (Meyers, Herbert M. and Gerstman, 2001).

Brand presence on the Internet has to have continuity and interface/interact with other communication media in order to survive. According to the authors, some brands are classifiable as “Instant”. Such brands surface the Internet daily and have a short life span. Developed by people who are captivated by the benefits that technology could bring them, ignoring the fact that in order for a brand to succeed it has to be developed and maintained with

thoughtfulness foresight and always in context with the target audience. So technology, if used frivolously, can work against the company itself (Meyers, Herbert M. and Gerstman, 2001).

Upshaw (1995:p.10) states that "The splintering of conventional media and the advent of interactive communications has presented marketers with a two-edged blade: New media offer more opportunities to seed brand messages via narrow targeting, but they will also make it more difficult for many brands to efficiently reach large enough audiences to create profitable volume levels"(Upshaw, 1995).

Although Marketers control the placement of their brands and packages on store shelves, they cannot control it on the cyberspace and this has become a major concern.

Zyman says that a brand is now the image consumers have of it, it is no longer what advertising agencies say it is. Modern-day branding has to adapt to an environment where consumers can talk to each other and their conversations are spread far and wide and are even archived and available to inform future users. Everyday consumers blog about their preferences and explain online how a company treated them. Consumers can review and rate products and give each other feedback and recommendations. A brand shouting its message is no longer the only source of information; consumers have many other sources of trust and objective opinions (Zyman, 1999).

A brand can say its famous for their great customer service, but the ultimate factor is going to be how consumers actually perceive the brand and how they describe it to others has far greater weight in the minds of future consumers. Further, digital channels break through information and geographic boundaries. Consumers can now compare features and prices of dozens of similar products - e.g. digital cameras - rather than rely on the few in-store selection and the limited information they have. Conley believes consumers can also now buy products that better suit their needs, even if those products aren't available in their local stores – e.g. online. branding claims are *irrelevant*. Consumers are empowered now and will speak up (Conley, 2008).

Conley states that a brand's reputation is earned over time and the brand is a symbol of this reputation, which helps new customers, simplify their purchase decision. Fake brands, on the other hand, are the ones that make up what they think customers should think or feel about them; typically, they shout the loudest at consumers writes Conley (2008).

Branding as come to a point where it is hardly impossible to convey to all of the consumer's habits and expectations. So we need to innovate - "true innovation" as Conley (2008) calls it is hard work. But in this day and age we have the tools and venues where feedback from customers is readily and continuously available. Advertisers can review user feedback, comments, and archived suggestions. Instead of branding, practice brand stewardship. Brand stewardship is constantly being aware of what your customers think of your product and what they need. With this knowledge, advertisers are empowered to innovate their products and services to substantiate their promise to customers and earn a reputation over time -- i.e. the brand. Good brand stewardship is not branding.

Conley introduces a new concept called brand gravity, which is the accumulated reputation that attracts new customers to buy and keeps current customers in orbit. The new branding is true and rapid. It calls for continuous innovation, informed by real-time consumer feedback that leads to consistent delivery of stellar products and an earned brand reputation is earned. That is why branding (as we do it today -- shouting made-up messages) is ineffective, irrelevant, irritating, and impotent. There is a correct way to do "branding" excellence (Conley, 2008).

A concept that has arrived in branding literature has connections with design and could be one of the touch points that could benefit branding. It could be one of the answers to 'branding excellence'. Quesenberry, Whitney and Brooks talk about storytelling and stories, that have been connected with user experience design as: scenarios, storyboards, flow chats, personas and other techniques that are used to communicate how a new design will operate. As part of a user experience design, storytelling serves to ground the work in a real context. It enables design to connect with ideas for the people who will eventually use the product or service (Quesenberry, Whitney and Brooks, 2010).

Parrish says design stories can be useful tools in several phases of the design process, including the design phase, the design communication or documentation phase and in formative evaluation (Parrish, 2006). Hatch and Schultz say many organizations try to manage corporate images through a mix of corporate advertising, corporate storytelling, customer relationships management and other marketing models referred above as well as marketing communication and public relations techniques (Hatch and Schultz, 2003).

2.2 Branding Conclusions

The branding theories we discussed in the previous chapters originate from the need to understand the current processes of branding used in business. By the end of the 80's many marketing theories were developed with the need to understand how relationships could benefit both companies and customers. Research was done regarding this topic and new theories and models were compared and compiled. With the ever changing nature of the markets in with the age of social media existing theories can prove to be insufficient and there will come the need to bring out new modified theories (Hampf, Anders and Lindberg-Repo, 2011).

Branding started out by being a way to differentiate products and services. It used to be about creating a strong and distinctive image. Nowadays the markets are more competitive and information and advertising is everywhere. Kapferer says that a brand is a living organism and invaluable as a source of promise for the consumer. O'Malley says consumers have their experiences and expectations of a brand and a brand needs to be able to build strategic awareness from that (Kapferer, 1997), (O'Malley, 2010).

Kornberger (2011) believes brands are the new interface between consumption and production and are becoming the link between consumers and products. The meaning has been brought back to the table and emotion now plays a very important role in the exchange of goods. Zyman states that the way marketing is done nowadays is not the best approach for the future. He says that marketing is dead and advertising is no longer the only source of information about brands that people have (Zyman, 1999). Could design be the answer to this problem?

From what we discussed above, brands need to embrace design because nowadays branding transcends identity itself and must create customer interactions that go beyond clicking a website and seeing an ad. Brands encompass the intangible element and therefore it is up to the designer to create new sources of meaning and tangible through brand touch points. Leonhardt and Faust (2010) suggest design has been under-leveraged in building brands but it can play the most significant role by being the choreographer of its overall presence, digital and otherwise.

The use of the brand models in this chapter can help create synergies and clarity to business, but they can also generate confusion and inconsistency. A lot of the branding models that we discuss here are solely based and constructed upon existing models. They use theoretical framing and take it a step further. All in all there is no correct way of doing it, instead there are different approaches to the subject.

However the existing model approaches are far from being completely 'bullet proof', this is because, according to Leonhardt and Faust branding has its ups and downs and is not a linear process. Nowadays brands are becoming more and more intangible and, for that reason getting harder to measure. Brands today are playing a new and evolving role, just to keep up with the ever-changing marketplace. Therefore future models need to be highly adaptable and dynamic in order to represent the ever-changing nature of the marketplace.

For the purpose of this thesis we regard *branding as strategy*. Brand strategy aims to develop a plan that specifies the brand direction in the long run. Regarding branding as strategy, is crucial because it involves a holistic approach through the organization to support and build a sustainable competitive advantage over the competition. Other models were also taken in consideration in the elaboration of the research findings models: Brand Identity [Figure 7. The core of Brand Identity, Upshaw (1995)], Brand Leadership [Figure 10. Brand Leadership Model, Aaker and Joachimsthaler (2000)] and Brand Equity [Figure 11. Consumer-Based Brand Equity Pyramid, Keller (2003)].

Brands are becoming powerful catalysts of change and are no longer perceived as being about creating consistency, continuity and meaningful relationships with the customer. Brands must be visionary and embrace the different levels of potential that await them. With the coming of social media and social media branding, brands need to be proactive towards that change and embody a vision for the future (Leonhardt and Faust, 2010).

Each company has its different values and voice, creating a dynamic and informed brand has to come from a blend of design and strategy. The visual and verbal elements work to express the

companies' products or services and this sets them a part from the competition and is the road to creating an image for the future (Leonhardt and Faust, 2010).

2.3 The importance of design in branding

Author Shaughnessy (2013) argues that working in branding allows designers to get involved in many industry aspects, from logo design to advertising, copywriting and slogans. The goal in branding is to make a company unique and recognizable and to project a desired image. Lucas Conley says that branding is more than marketing, advertising or positioning, it's all in one (Conley, 2009). So what is really the importance of design to branding? The role of design in branding is about the symbolic creation or the outward face of companies, institutions, products and services. If we accept that the logo, the graphic architecture and all imagery is a way to recognize and identify all brands, then we must accept that designers are hugely important when it comes to the making of brands, perhaps more important than most factors in the making of brands. If we accept this, then designers have real power over brands (Shaughnessy 2013a). This author also states that by making branding into something that is only a graphic design discipline control over design falls into the hands of non-designers. According to marketing, PR and management, brand management would be a lot easier if design were only a minor part of brand building. This allows for two major side effects to occur, first the design language might become poor and second design becomes just a junior partner in brand creation. He adds that designers imbue the brand appearance with the values that they want, and business and institutions have to earn those values by themselves, they can not be simply imposed by the design, slogan or promise, they have to be real (Shaughnessy, 2013).

Pribble III (1992) believes that design, in its various forms (product, environmental, information and corporate identity), is a powerful tool that should be used in every area of an organization's operations to provide a strategic competitive advantage and to achieve corporate objectives. Recognizing the need for more and better design work, a two-way education process must occur. Marketers must develop an understanding of the design process and designers must develop an understanding of the marketing process. Higher education, in both design and marketing, could play an important part in creating awareness and understanding of the potential of the integration of these two disciplines (Pribble III, 1992).

Healey, Matthew (2008) talks about the importance of design for branding in his book 'What is branding'. He believes design in branding starts with product development, later to progress into packaging, labelling, advertising, and all the resulting marketing material, such as: webpages, brochures, signs, clothing, gifts, that are appropriate for the brand. The author believes that design is the single most important tool in branding because it concerns the visual and tactile. The other senses can also be designed but not frequently. Designers have an understanding of how people interact with things in their environment and play a valuable role in brand development. As trained problem-solvers, designers can aid and inspire the brand regarding possible issues that may arise. Designers are also crucial in creating a brand identity

that is meaningful and lasting. It is discussed in advertising and branding agencies that designer should be able to collaborate directly with the client in brand development.

In the branding chapter we defined branding and talked about its contemporary importance. We also discussed branding's connection with design and how both areas can learn from each other. We talked about different branding theories, categorizations and respective models. The next chapter discusses design itself, defines design and examines its importance to both branding and social media.

3. Design

In the previous chapter we addressed branding and came to the conclusion that design plays a relevant role in that area. In this chapter we pay a closer look at design. We will discuss the different meanings of the word design and relate it to design management and strategy development with regards to branding and business innovation.

It is important to understand what we mean by design when we use the word in discourse. The word design has different meanings depending on how it is being used. We begin the design chapter of this thesis by considering the different definitions design in use today.

Possibly one of the first uses of the concept 'design' was according to the Oxford Dictionary, in 1588, it reads:

- a plan or scheme devised by a person for something that is to be realized,
- a first graphic draft of a work of art, or an object of the applied arts, which is to be binding for the execution of a work.

In the transition from the 20th to the 21st century Bürdek has proposed another definition and lists some of the tasks design is able to fulfil.

- Visualize technological progress;
- Simplify or make possible the use and operation of products (hardware or software);
- Make transparent the connections between production, consumption, and recycling;
- Promote and communicate services, but also;
- Pursued energetically enough;
- Help to prevent products that are senseless. (Bürdek, 2005).

The word design comes from Latin, from the verb "designare" which means "determine". Design uses continual differentiation to transform the vague to the definite. So design "designation" in a more abstract concept is determination through representation (Boom, 1994). A definition for design has been a matter of much concern in the former German Democratic Republic. Horst Oehlke (1978) says that design was understood as a part of the social, economic and cultural policy and that a designer should satisfy the needs of society and individuals. According to the Internationales Design Zentrum Berlin in 1970 a good design cannot be just about technique, it must express its individuality through appropriate fashioning; the function of the product has to be understood immediately by the user; the latest technical developments must be transparent; design must take into consideration the green aspect such as: ecology, energy conservation etc.;

it must take inspiration in the relationship between humans and objects regarding the shapes it uses (Bürdek, 2005).

Design has many definitions, Collins English Dictionary refers to “design” : as a verb, meaning to work out a structure or form, sketching for example, to plan and/or make something artistic or with skills, to visualize, invent, to intend for a specific purpose, to plan, to form or conceive in the mind (i.e., visualize); invent; (*verb*) to intend, as for a specific purpose; plan; (as a *noun*) a plan, sketch, or preliminary drawing; (as a *noun*) the arrangement or pattern of elements or features of an artistic or decorative work; (*noun*) a finished artistic or decorative creation; (*noun*) the art of designing; (*noun*) a plan, scheme, or project; (*noun*) an end aimed at or planned for; intention; purpose (Walsh, 1996).

Walsh says that in academia the term design is used in many ways and tends to relate to different activities and outcomes. It is used as a synonym for innovation, R&D and product development, other authors however say design “involves the creative visualization of concepts, plans and ideas” (Walsh, 1996: p.513).

This lack of agreement as to the meaning of design can also be found in the world of business, for instance, a Design Council’s National Survey study shows that three quarters of their participants agree that design is “ used to develop new products and services’ (i.e., it is at least part of the new product development process) and a similar proportion agreed that it is ‘about how products look’ (i.e., design is, at least in part, styling). The study also showed that two thirds agree that design is “about products working to meet client needs”, about half agreed that design is ‘a creative thinking process’, and a similar proportion claimed it is ‘used to produce something that will sell’. Only a third however claimed that design can be a strategic business tool and can be used to differentiating the business from its competitors, indicating that, for most businesses, design was not recognized as integral to their competitiveness.

Since the early 1980’s design has been experiencing a global boom. Bürdek suggests design emerged worldwide because of the rise of the postmodernist movement, which started at the end of the seventies, especially by the Memphis group. It is believed that design’s importance will continue to rise into the 21st century. Corporations and institutions across the world recognize the strategic value of design, and are busy cultivating it to a high degree of perfection. According to Bürdek, these days, design is everywhere (Bürdek, 2005).

In the eighties a group of business economists understood that design was not only useful for aesthetic purposes but also had an economic impact. A series of doctoral thesis discussed the issue (e.g., Sybille Kicherer (1987), Heinrich Spieß (1993), Carlo Rummel (1995), and Hans Jörg Meier-Kortwig (1997) cited by Bürdek (2005). At this time design also left behind its craftsmanship roots and assumed a place as a research discipline.

Gorb says that the eighties were, for many countries the “design matters decade” and it became their central concern. In previous decades production and productivity were of upmost importance especially after the second war. The focus on behavioural sciences such as marketing came after that and there was an increasing need to stimulate consumers to buy more and more products that were only available in the wealthy and developed countries. Then,

in the seventies, competition from Japan started and the only way to differentiate products from competitors was through design. So, in the early eighties, design matters started to be discussed in the United Kingdom and this was supported by the government. It allowed for money and manpower to be allocated into promoting the design cause. In parallel, other countries such as France, United States of America and Japan were also developing design activities (Gorb, 1990). Design is now considered to be a powerful tool in the hands of management who used it to sell their products, develop effective working environments and communicate better with consumers, customers, shareholders and others (Gorb, 1990). Gorb believes that if design management is to hold to its position in the industry it must do like marketing and operations management and embrace a wide range of management concerns. These concerns might be:

- 1) Innovation and the place it holds in the process of creating profit;
- 2) Quality control and maintenance in production and service organizations;
- 3) Development of effective lines that managers expressed in terms of education, training and development.

Gorb brought to our attention the need to clarify the multiple meanings design management can have (Gorb, 1990). It is agreed that design as an activity has its roots in the Industrial Revolution when the manufacturing and conception was separated. Before, the maker of the object was the originator of the design, this system can be called craft production. In craft production the design of an object remained unchanged through generations, however with the beginning of industrialization and mass production it became more economical to use a designer who would supply instructions to the factories.

In the nineteenth century we have examples such as William Morris and the Arts and Crafts Movement of designers and industrialists who have attempted to reform the design practice in Britain. They include the Council for Arts and Industry (a direct antecedent of the Council for Industrial Design), the British Institute of Industrial Art, and the Design and Industries Association (DIA). Jackson, A., University of Brighton, Aiga (2011) believes that designers are ideal to understand the human-centred solutions that can help people's lives.

The American Institute of Graphic Arts, AIGA (2011) says "designers bring empathy and creativity to social challenges. The first helps to understand the human-centred solutions that can make a real difference in real people's lives; creativity can defeat habits with innovative approaches to making a measurable difference". Design has the ability to solve complex problems and that is part of their approach. Designers are willing to take risks and transcend traditional views of problems, and thinking outside the box can be a strategic advantage. Designers are encouraged to become engaged with socially relevant projects in order to use their creative talents to their highest and best purpose and to demonstrate the value of designers and design thinking.

Bürdek says the designer started to deal with the whole process of making following the tradition of craft production, and after World War I the design of furniture, glass, ceramics, and textiles was selling a lot (Bürdek, 2005).

Design history has become more than the story of objects and their designers, it is now the history of relationships among things, people and ideas. According to Bill Brown: " They are questions that ask not whiter things are but what work they perform... about the subject-object relation in particular temporal and spatial contexts."

Fallan, K. argues that Brown's wording implies a dichotomy in the causal connection between the ideal and the real. The author states that a greater emphasis on the relational and reciprocal dynamics of idea and object, mind and matter, ideology and practice in design history studies is needed (Fallan, 2010).

The word "design" has an interesting double meaning: it can denote something intrinsic to any object – inherent patterns and structures irrespective of that object's natural or human provenance. Things have designs. On the other hand design is an act of conception and an agenda for construction. This meaning takes the word back to its root in the Latin word, *designare* or 'to mark out' (Terzidis, 2007). Design involves a certain kind of agency. People 'do' design (Kalantzis, Mary and Cope, 2011).

According to Findelli, design is more often considered to be an abstract-technical or intrinsic-aesthetic phenomenon. Design, in other words, was understood more as an object than as a form of action. Becoming a designer was a process of learning how to conceive and execute objects. The meaning of the word was biased towards the sense of design as morphology (Findeli, 2001). What is clear is that design refers to both processes and outcomes. The process (e.g., 'a creative thinking process') can involve things (e.g., models) or can be abstract (e.g., visualisation) and the outcome (e.g., design is 'about how products look') can also be tangible (e.g., a product) or intangible (e.g., a vision or concept).

Some authors believe that design is widely used and every time we introduce a product, service or process we use design. The Design Council's National Survey asked what role design played in their business. The largest proportion of the firms (37%) claimed that design had no role, only 16% claimed that it had a significant role and just 12% claimed it was an integral part of the business. The International Council of Societies of Industrial Design (2005) believes that design is a creative activity that aims to establish versatile qualities in objects, processes, services and systems. They believe that design has no room when the solution is dictated by strong social conventions or technological constraints.

Cooper says design is often criticized for lacking a more thorough theoretical base but as a practice and theoretical discourse it has drawn on a wide and diverse field of knowledge and skills (Cooper, 2011).

Walsh talks about the four C's in design, like the four P's in Marketing (product, price, promotion, point of purchase) (Walsh, 1996):

1. **Creativity** – The creation of something;
2. **Complexity** – Decision making on different options and variables;

3. Compromise – Balancing multiples and often conflicting requirements;
4. Choice – Choosing between different possible solutions for all levels of problems.

For De Mozota designers have a prescriptive job, they suggest how their approaches might be taken into consideration and are futuristic at some extend. Their process is experimental and not purely ideational, it produces sketches, drawings and models (Borja de Mozota, 2006).

Holt talks about three types of design processes:

1. The Analytical process – used for low risk projects (which we know the outcome);
2. The Iterative process – used for medium risk projects;
3. The Visionary process – used when the problem is vague and cannot be defined (Holt, 1990).

Regardless of having an analytical, iterative or visionary process the design process follows different phases, which are similar to the creative process and are shown in the table below.

PHASES	OBJECTIVE	VISUAL OUTPUTS
0. Investigating	Idea	Brief
1. Research	Concept	Visual Concept
2. Exploration	Choice of Style	Roughs of ideas, sketches. Roughs of presentation. Reduced-scale model
3. Development	Prototype Detail	Technical drawings. Functional model. 3D mock-ups for visual correctness and working capabilities.
4. Realization	Test	Documents of execution. Prototype
5. Evaluation	Production	Illustration of the product.

Table 7. The design Process, Borja de Mozota (2013:15)

Fallan says that design is taking a positive value in itself, adding " extra" value to ordinary objects, transforming them into exclusive, stylish ones. Terms such as " design furniture", " hair designers", " nail designers" have turned regular professions into pretentious ones. The discriminatory use of the term design in these examples has no place in design history (Fallan, 2010).

Several authors believe design is changing in a larger social context. In the early stages of the Industrial Revolution value was attributed to fixed capital, tangible goods and production. Recently this has changed and we are now focusing on other valuable resources such as: innovation, creativity and design. At a corporate level, value is also located in the "intangibles"

of branding, technological ingenuity, product aesthetics, intellectual property, product customizability and customer service relations (Frankel and Racine, 2003), (Von Hippel, 2005) and (Peters, M. A., Marginson, S. and Murphy, 2008).

Whether it is graphic design in branding, industrial design in product aesthetics and product customizability and service design in customer service relations, design professions contribute to these intangibles (Martin, 2002), (Kalantzis, Mary and Cope, 2011). Davenport and Prusak, and Cope and Kalantzis, all refer this value shift from tangible to intangible. Now the major concern is how to manage these intangibles (Davenport & Prusak 2000), (Kalantzis, Mary and Cope, 2011).

At a macro level, the shift is reflected in the discourses of the knowledge society (Peters, M. A., Marginson, S. and Murphy, 2008), (Kalantzis, Mary and Cope, 2011). These authors' believe that in order to achieve competitive advantage one has to have technological know-how, product aesthetics and service relationships, whether that is a person, a community or a nation.

The author's Cope and Kalantzis believe that design professions are now at a strategically vital place because of the changes referred above. This could mean that, "*today's design contributions differ from their traditional specialized techno-functional and aesthetic roles. Design is located deeper and more pervasively in the socio-economic system. For these reasons it needs to refigure relationships with users. It needs to become a more broadly interdisciplinary practice. It needs to take broader responsibility for the consequences of design action* (Kalantzis, Mary and Cope, 2011).

Azoulay, Kapferer and Bürdek believe that we may benefit from a shift in semantic tone, in making design a fluid and dynamic process of agency. Most people's lives would be unimaginable without design. It is present in our daily lives. Design is present at home, work, in our free time, in education, all through the many services available to us and in transportation and goods in general, as well as the public space, everything is designed intentionally. Design determines not only existence but also ourselves; through the products we use to communicate to others, the ones we use to define ourselves as part of a tribe, social group. That itself is a type of personal branding, where we find our place in society, we design as a sign of times (Azoulay and Kapferer, 2003), (Bürdek, 2005).

Nowadays we study design from a multitude of disciplines and refer to scholars in many fields. Design is highly connected with the social sciences, psychology, sociology, management, science and engineering and the humanities (Kalantzis, Mary and Cope, 2011).

Cope and Kalantzis discuss the principles and practice of design in this time of social change. They talk about notions of creative economy and knowledge society. Design is considered a process of transformation; nowadays there is a shift in balance from the bottom up production, decision-making and engagement itself. The role of design is changing and we should start talking about design and compare it to design. As design is located more centrally in society's agenda, it means that as the authors articulate, designers need to create greater relationships and take on an expanding range of responsibilities (Kalantzis, Mary and Cope, 2011).

According to Julier, design is maturing as an academic discipline too. Design has been the focus of consumption, leisure, public entertainment but also a vehicle for political coercion and symbolism. Design has grown in the past two decades and could be considered an informal indicator of economic performance, of cultural regeneration and of social well-being (Guy Julier, 2007).

Julier suggests design has become global, the new capitalist context generation of design consumer's is emerging and the remit of design practice has been there during the same period. It is no longer perceived as the "added value" of objects, rather it could be for example planning and shaping digital interfaces for computer games or the creation of a country's public image (Julier and Hudson, 2004).

The author Borja de Mozota believes design can create differentiation through branding because design is crucial to achieving coherence and it can bring together elements of performance, product and service messages, marketing and support communications, employee behaviour and appearance and also both digital and physical spaces that represent the company. The design profession has grown side by side with the brand development, particularly in the fields of graphic and package design (Borja de Mozota, 2004).

Julier also states that design is present in a wide range of levels. The more common notion of design is viewing it as a commodity, meaning modernity and desirability. On television the range of home improvement shows in the 90's drew attention to design as a process of expert decision-making and implementation (Guy Julier, 2007).

Other academic from non-design areas have stepped into design territory, for example the interrelationships of society, politics and technological innovation. Disciplines so diverse as humanities and social sciences but also cultural studies, politics, anthropology, geography (e.g. sociology and economy) have recognized the importance of design in the global economy's growth. All of them provided a diverse and important theoretical framing for design even though these formal perspectives do not approach specific design examples for the deconstruction and contextualization of it. It appears to be mainly focused on the material and visual relationships of production and consumption (Julier and Hudson, 2004).

3.1 Design in branding

Healey (2008) believes that design is the process of giving aesthetic form and that branding starts with product design, following packaging and labelling, advertising and also collateral marketing material such as Webpages, brochures, clothing and so on. Design is the single most important tool in branding because it deals with the visual and tactile, other senses can also be designed. A designer is quite valuable in brand development because they understand how people interact with their environment. They are problem solvers who can be crucial to creating meaningful and lasting brand identities. What happens nowadays is that designers have a go-between (the account manager) working directly with the client. Some advertising agencies believe the designer should collaborate directly with the clients in brand development.

The Brand Building Process		
Innovation	Strategy	Design
Opportunity Identification for sustained brand/business leadership	Unique and meaningful brand promise	Express of brand strategy through experimental brand assets
Brand Vision	Brand Meaning	Brand Expression
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Inspire the future consumer and marketplace. - Core Innovation - Product Innovation - Commercial Innovation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Understand consumer, shoppers, market and brand - Establish Brand Promise - Establish Brand Positioning - Establish Brand Architecture 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Create identity interface - Establish individual equity assets - Integrate through holistic execution across franchise - Create guidelines for aliegant implementation

Table 8. The Brand Building process, Best (2008)

According to Best, design is part of the brand building process that includes innovation and strategy as well (Best, 2008). Best's "The Brand Building Process", as seen on table 8 above, includes three elements for the brand building process: innovation, strategy and design. Innovation can create an opportunity for business leadership, strategy for a unique and meaningful brand promise and design to express brand strategy through experimental brand assets. Design can create differentiation through branding and that can have a serious impact on consumer behaviour, which can help companies sell their services and/or products more efficiently. Design incorporates cognition, emotion, message and also the social relationship with the consumer. Consumers have aesthetic preferences that may come from design principles and can be quite diverse according to their experience with design itself. Design in conjunction with brand identity development builds brand equity and brand architecture (see previous chapter).

Simmons created a model to explain to clients where exactly design fits into their business plans. The model is exemplified in figures 15 and 16. Simmons considers the model to be about managing their expectations regarding design but also about its true selling value. Only the inner layers affect the outer, not the other way around. Which means that for the author design has absolutely no effect on the leadership's vision, the quality of staff, quality of the product or its strategy (Simmons et al., 2010).

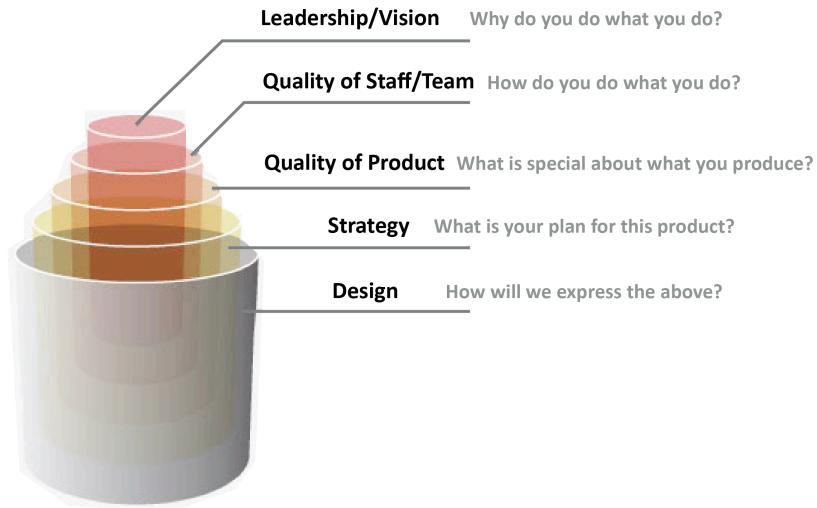


Figure 16. Concentric model of a strong brand, Simmons (2010)

Figure 16 is a model by Simmons, C. and at the core of this model is leadership, a group of people whose vision founded the organization. Next are the staff, the managers, directors, employees, members, volunteers, people who are in tune with the leader's vision and contribute to the organization, sharing a purpose. After that comes the product. The product is the result of what people make, it is believed to be well made when they share a common purpose. Strategy comes right after and should support the product or the service. The strategy is the plan that will help with the product's success. It helps deliver the product to the right people in the right way. Then, we have design, the author believes that *"design is the language that supports the strategy that promotes the product, which is imagined by people that believe in the vision."* According to him some may say that this is an outmoded view of design but he does not believe that and adds another model to his explanation:



Figure 17. Concentric Model of a Strong Brand (detail), Simmons (2010)

In the model of figure 17, it is suggested that design is at the end of the process. The author says that there is another ring beyond design where the consumer exists. We can see from the above figures that design is at the centre of the mediating process between consumer and product, between message and audience.

Fraser (2007) says that whatever the sector or the nature of the business, any organization can benefit from the “design way.” It naturally taps into team intelligence, creativity and the ambition to make a meaningful impact in the customer’s life, both functionally and emotionally. The process itself is easy to follow, but should be embedded into an organization’s strategic planning practices to realize the full potential of design thinking. At its core, the design approach is about combining the essential three gears of design with a “design mind-set,” and allowing an organization to discover opportunities to capitalize on new and unmet needs, exploring possibilities outside their activity system and then setting the strategies to evolve their business model (Fraser, 2007).

Fraser talks about the true “design organization” and asks three questions of every opportunity: What is the need driving this initiative? Have we pushed out on the possibilities to best serve that need? How can we embed that into our business model to create a sustainable advantage? It is the power of all three gears that drive breakthrough strategies (Fraser, 2007).

Fraser says that once embedded into an organization’s DNA, design methods can help generate on-going possibilities for growth and evolution, recognizing that as the marketplace evolves, the needs of the user evolve and thus the business model must evolve to avoid extinction. The more an enterprise sees its business model or “activity system” as a living organism rather than a fixed model, the more a company will be poised to respond to on-going opportunities to meet new needs. A company that views “design thinking” not as a one-shot vaccination but rather an on-going fitness program for strategic growth will be better conditioned to stay ahead of the curve in an increasingly competitive global marketplace.

Fraser believes that design will bring bigger breakthroughs in thinking, more innovative strategies for success, and development of new business models to better meet user needs and create greater economic and human value (Fraser, 2007). Cooper believes design as a practice and a theoretical discourse has, and always will, draw on a wide and diverse field of knowledge and skills. Scholars benefit, but society in general also eventually benefits from these insights as they seep into the design profession (and thus their actions) through education and research (Cooper, 2011).

3.2 Design Disciplines

According to author’s Cope and Kalantzis disciplinarity in design can be considered in many different ways such as contents (architecture, industrial design, graphic design, engineering for e.g.) however the list would get longer each and every minute because, we can also categorize them in other many different ways, such as: methods used, (conception and planning for e.g.) as concepts (vector, consultation for e.g.), as sites of apprenticeships (school subjects, departments for e.g.), peer communities (workplaces, relationships with colleagues for e.g.) , as modes of public communication (for e.g. conferences, blogs) (Kalantzis, Mary and Cope, 2011).

Mozota does a brief introduction to the different disciplines design holds, we shall categorize and present them by what it is referred to as content wise (Borja de Mozota, 2003b).

We can also look at the design disciplines according to the dimensions of the created product, as you can see below in table 9:

2-D Design	3-D Design	4-D Design
Graphic Design	Furniture Design	Digital Design
Information Design	Fashion Design	Interactive Design
Illustration	Interior Design	Web Design
Textile Design	Industrial Design	
	Environmental Design	

Table 9. Types of Design Disciplines, Borja de Mozota (2003)

Buchanan (2001) and Body (2008) talk about four orders of design that can be summarized in table 10:

	Communication signs and words	Construction Things	Strategic planning action	Systemic integration thought
Inventing	Signs, symbols and images	→	→	→
Judging		Physical objects	→	→
Deciding			Activities, services and processes	→
Evaluating				Systems, environments, ideas and values

Table 10. Buchanan's Matrix (1998)

1. Graphic design looks at visual symbols, and is aimed at communication in words and systems. The purpose is to get people to think by making a persuasive argument.
2. Industrial design produces tangible artefacts, usually mass-produced, to provide a physical experience.
3. Interaction design is concerned with how human beings select and use products in daily life. While the profile of interaction design has been lifted by the rise of digital

products, the concepts of interaction go back further than this and apply to all types of products. Interaction design is about people and how they interrelate with the product or service. It allows for a customized experience.

4. The fourth order of design is concerned with systems and environments. The systems that designers are concerned with at this level involve humans, not about material things. There is a recognition that people cannot experience a whole system, but rather experience their personal pathway through the system."

Cope and Kalantzis say that although design disciplines appear different and hard to categorize and classify they all agree on an epistemic frame of knowing and, professionally speaking they have the designer's identity which gives them the feeling and thinking "*of the world or some aspect of it the world with a particularly studied focus, interest, responsibility, even obligation*" (Cope, Kalantzis, 2011:p. 53).

Therefore, we will provide an introductory investigation into the different design disciplines and then expand on the categories, which are crucial for this thesis, namely design management and design strategy.

3.2.1 Industrial Design

Sigfried Giedion described how the industrial designer appeared in the twentieth century, beginning with a clear separation between the technical and artistic work on the product. This led to an increase towards styling and fashioning. The term industrial design was first used in 1948 by Mart Stam who drafted, sketched and planned. He believed that designers should present in every area of industry, especially in the development of new materials (Giedion, 1987).

Product design is an integral part of the wider process of developing new products. In most cases, this will be for volume production. The product design process should ideally dovetail with every part of the wider development process, but typically it is much more involved at the beginning of the process than at the end (Council, 2007). Borja de Mozota believes that product design is the only publicly known type of design because industry created designer "stars" in the furniture, fashion and automobile fields. They intervene in practically all sectors from engineering design (particularly mechanical engineering), original concept designs for a system (eg. conceiving products/lines that offer original and out of the box ways to solve a problem), adaptation design (eg. Adapting a new system to a new task that needs new designs) and restyling, which aims to change the look and feel of a system without changing its function or principle (Borja de Mozota, 2003b).

The Bureau of Labor Statistics, U.S. Department of Labor says Industrial designers are responsible for the design of everyday products and they combine art, business and engineering

to do it. Every manufactured good is the responsibility of the designer who sets its style, function, quality and safety. Industrial designers can be specialized in one particular product category; this can be the automobile industry or other transports, appliances, technological goods, medical equipment, furniture, toys, any type of tool or equipment and even house ware (Statistics, 2010b).

Industrial designers have to determine the client's requirements for the project; they have to know its purpose to further develop it according to the customers or users tastes. In order to develop a new product design, designers must do a lot of context research. They have to find out product characteristics: size, shape, colour, materials, cost, efficiency, and safety matters. To gather all these information designers often meet with clients and conduct market driven research, gather publications regarding the issue, go into design fairs, talk to suppliers and manufacturers. The next stage is the sketching and conceptual ideas, after research analysis and consulting with the team of experts designers start sketching their ideas by hand or using computer aided software design. These computer models help to speed up the design process as they can be machine-readable. This can automate the production and develop the prototypes which are later presented to the clients or users. Industrial designers work together as teams and sometimes with other professionals such as engineers, accountants to better determine project costs and efficiency. Industrial designers can also help in the usability and safety tests when a product is completed. They look into consumer's use of the objects and make the necessary adjustments to their design in order to better suit the users.

Industrial designers work together with the marketing department in order to develop a more cohesive corporate strategy that better fits the company's business strategic vision. They aim to develop new products that will appeal to the majority of consumers. They work hand-in-hand with the company in order to develop a line of products that reflects the company's ideals (Bureau of Labor Statistics, U.S. Department of Labor, 2010-11).

Companies that are able to communicate a certain meaning (e.g. prestige) through the appearance of a product design can create a competitive advantage in the market and increase the product's chance of success (Lewalski, 1988; Bloch, 1995; Hertenstein, Platt, and Veryzer, 2005; Yamamoto and Lambert, 1994; Chang and Wu, 2007). According to Krippendorf (1989), the products of design should be understandable or meaningful to someone. The meaning and appearance of a product helps to communicate its functional, aesthetic, symbolic or ergonomic assets. These assets play a role in the overall product appraisal. For example, when a product looks modern, it has a positive effect on product appraisal when consumers are motivated to assess a product on its aesthetics (Creusen and Schoormans, 2005). In practice, designers often face the difficulty of how to incorporate an intended meaning in a product design. When the product meaning that is communicated is not clear to the consumer, he or she will have difficulty assessing the product and will appreciate the product less. Therefore, it is valuable to provide designers with guidelines that can be used during briefings at the beginning of the design process or in product evaluation studies at a later stage of this process

With the competitive market and the emotional needs of consumers. Design evaluation concerns function and innovation of product design. Products concern emotional factors as well

and inherited relations amongst brands and products. Also, product design also refers consumer's recognition of the brand and products are the ultimate factor judging its success. It is also for companies, in order to gain initiative in market gain. Zhou et al., say a brand is therefore vital to establish competitive advantage towards the background of industrial production homogenization (Zhou, Ying, Xue, Chengqi and Ling, 2008).

It is generally agreed that analysing data from social networks to influence consumer's purchase decisions can be a useful strategy. However not all social network can influence customers according to Kirtiş and Karahan (2011).

Mozota believes package design is an integrated part in product design, graphic design and three-dimensional design. The package of a product or service is the first thing a consumer sees, the first contact he/she has with the product. Its conception is also part of the brand development process, the designs are there to protect, seal and also differentiate from other products in the market. It began as being mainly to preserve the product but has now moved to being an important element in its communication (Borja de Mozota, 2003).

The Design Council says that packaging design is more than making things look good. Packaging must appeal to consumers and must stand out from its competitors on the supermarket shelves. Other than trying to catch the eye of the consumer, they have to inform the consumer about what they are buying, the ingredients it is made of and recycling proceedings. Packaging is also the 'face' of the brand, and often is the first impression consumers have of the brand. The packaging industry started out with relatively simple packaging but now companies compete for the most attractive design (Leese, 2010). We will often see a brand's rebranding packaging strategy be followed closely by most of the brand's competitors (Gancho, 2008).

"Though the example is used to death – Apple products embody this view perfectly. Jonathan Ive, their product designer, has as much of a handle on the packaging as the products. One could almost say that the packaging forms part of the product. The campaigns are entirely product led and therefore shows a great joined up story" (Leese, 2010).

Hirschman and Hollbrook believe that package aesthetics are a crucial part of the shopping experience and that consumers really enjoy it. Brand personality is relevant when designing packaging for new products or rebranding existing ones. When developing the brand identity, designers should research what characteristics the individual of a targeted culture prefer, in order to implement them into the package design (Holbrook, 1982).

Product managers and designers are using social media monitoring tools to learn what customers do not like about their products and their competition but also to improve upon design and understand what new functionalities consumers want from packaging.

3.2.2 Graphic Design

The Design Council (2010) states that graphic design is the process of choosing and organising words, images and messages in order to communicate and influence the audience. Graphic designers use visual communication e.g.: drawings, paintings, photography or computer generated images in order to communicate. They are also responsible for the written texts, letterforms, and typefaces. It is a creative process that combines art and technology to communicate ideas. They use a variety of communication tools in order to convey a message from a client to the public, using image and typography (Poggenpohl, 1993).

According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, U.S. Department of Labor graphic designers are responsible for solving communication problems. Graphic designers deal with the conveying of messages in the printing and electronic media, by that they use colours, typefaces, illustrations, photography or even animation in different medias and layout techniques. They are in charge of the print media such as magazines, newspapers and other. Graphic designers also design promotional displays, packaging, brochures, logo and environmental graphics (signage systems). They also design for the web, whether its webpages, interactive media or multimedia projects (Statistics, 2010a).

According to Poggenpohl designers are the link between the client and the audience and graphic design is no exception. On the one hand, a client is often too close to the message to understand various ways in which it can be presented. The audience, on the other hand, is often too broad to have any direct impact on how a communication is presented. It is usually difficult to make the audience a part of the creative process. Unlike client and audience, graphic designers learn how to construct a message and how to present it successfully. They work with the client to understand the content and the purpose of the message. They often collaborate with market researchers and other specialists to understand the nature of the audience. Once a design concept is chosen, the designers work with illustrators and photographers as well as with typesetters and printers or other production specialists to create the final design product (Poggenpohl, 1993).

The first step in developing a new design is to determine the needs of the client, the message the design should portray, and its appeal to customers or users. Graphic designers consider cognitive, cultural, physical, and social factors in planning and executing designs for the target audience. Designers gather relevant information by meeting with clients, creative or art directors, and by performing their own research. Identifying the needs of consumers is becoming increasingly important for graphic designers as they continue to develop corporate communication strategies in addition to creating designs and layouts.

Graphic designers prepare sketches or layouts by hand or with the aid of a computer—to illustrate their vision for the design. They select colours, sound, artwork, photography, animation, style of type, and other visual elements for the design. Designers also select the size and arrangement of the different elements on the page or screen. They may create graphs and

charts from data for use in publications, and they often consult with copywriters on any text that accompanies the design.

Designers then present the completed design to their clients or art or creative director for approval. In printing and publishing firms, graphic designers also may assist the printers by selecting the type of paper and ink for the publication and reviewing the mock-up design for errors before final publication.

Designers develop images to represent the ideas their clients want to communicate. Images can be incredibly powerful and compelling tools of communication, conveying not only information but also moods and emotions. People respond to images instinctively based on their personalities, associations, and previous experience. In the case of image-based design, the images must carry the entire message; there are few if any words to help. These images may be photographic, painted, drawn, or graphically rendered in many different ways.

Image-based design is employed when the designer determines that, in a particular case, a picture is indeed worth a thousand words. In some cases, designers rely on words to convey a message, but they use words differently from the ways writers do. To designers, what the words look like is as important as their meaning. The visual forms, whether typography (communication designed by means of the printed word) or handmade lettering, perform many communication functions. They can arrest your attention on a poster, identify the product name on a package or a truck, and present running text as the typography in a book does. Designers are experts at presenting information in a visual form in print or on film, packaging, or signs (Poggenpohl, S., Aiga, 1993).

Social media is rapidly growing and consumers are exposed to a lot of texts and messages on the web and in their mobile devices. There is a need to view and review images in seconds, with even smaller screens. Graphic design plays an important role in building brand awareness and recognition by attracting user's attention.

Smith (2012) believes graphic design plays a role in how the product or service can be perceived in social media by the user. By using an attractive design, the brand is strengthened and this builds trust with the consumer and makes the company more visible and present. The user is also free to share, comment and direct potential new customers back into the companies website or viral campaign.

Smith also states that with the rise of the digital natives, people who were born during this advent of digital technology, there is little that grabs people's attention. Instant gratification is the theme and the use of digital cameras, computers and smartphones is rising. With these overwhelming stimuli, that technology delivers; it is becoming extremely hard to catch the consumer's eye. They are becoming desensitized, so only by designing a campaign that covers all communication channels, including social media can help brand excellence (Smith, 2012).

3.2.3 Service Design

Sangiorgi states that in the last decade service design research has been dedicated to legitimating why designers should be working on services. With the introduction of the interaction paradigm, service design started to build its identity and legitimacy to work within services. This interaction paradigm refers to the concepts, values and tools that come from the interpretation of services, starting from the interaction between user and supply system (Sangiorgi, 2009).

Stickdorn et al. say the approach of service design refers to the process of designing rather than to its outcome. These outcomes can be: abstract organizational structures, operation processes, service experiences and sometimes, concrete physical objects (Stickdorn, Marc and Schneider, 2010).

The Design Council offers the following definition of service design: *"design is all about making the service you deliver useful, usable, efficient, effective and desirable. A service design project is more a strategic project that combines design techniques; collaborative ideas generation, prototyping and testing to fulfil the client's requirements in helping them solve problems. Service design is future focused and cost conscious and aims to simplify. Service design might turn your business into a more competitive one, it can help distinguish it from other competitors, provides for improving their offer and/or facilities through innovative services"*.

Another definition from the design Council is that: *"Service designers visualize, formulate and choreograph solutions that are not yet available. They watch and interpret needs and behaviours and transform them into potential future services. In the process, exploring, generating and evaluating approaches are used similarly and a redesign of existing services is just as much a challenge as the development of new innovative services"* (Mager, B., Design Council, 2010).

Service design is a relatively new discipline that asks some fundamental questions: what should the customer experience be like? What should the employee experience be like? How does a company remain true to its brand, to its core business assets and stay relevant to customers?

Design is a highly pragmatic discipline. Aaltonen (2010) says that service design is important for business because it gets results. Instead of building a system, solution or process that is generic, standard and non-adaptable its heart lies in the idea of experience. The methods and ideas behind service design can equally be applied to any sector. Service design methods can help design experiences be more efficient and more effective (Aaltonen, 2010).

Evenson (2005) says we view designing for service as a meta activity. It is the activity of conceiving and planning a service system or architecture to deliver resources that combine an experience that others design. When the company is able to provide the optimal mix it will produce a resonating service system and deliver an experience advantage (Evenson, 2005).

Dubberly and Evenson (2010) believe that service design brings together skills, methods and tools for creating and integrating systems to interact with customers. This is useful to provide

long-term relationships between business/service providers and their customers. He states that the real power of service design as a way to build brands lies where its user value focus is combined with a creative way of thinking about what a good user experience is (Dubberly and Evenson, 2010).

Brand consultancies are very different from one another, and their work output is different as well – from the very conceptual, intangible work of agencies that are basically management consultants with a brand focus, there is a long way to the hands-on graphic design-based approach of others. Lindberg (2010) says that the basic approach of many of these agencies is that a brand is an intangible asset, that can be shaped and controlled with the help of the tangible means of communication: visual identity, advertising, and lately, social media. More extensive brand models place "the product" as an integral part of the brand, as opposed to the brand being something that adds to it. Still, traditional brand building focus has been on communicating and persuading. The branding practice has evolved to include an ever larger perspective – much brand theory today is more concerned with organisational culture and abstract value propositions than with the humble design work once associated with it – the author says that it would be wise to include the repertoire of service design in its tool box (Lindberg, 2010).

In the age of information economy, it is no longer manufacturing but knowledge, service and information industries that have an answer. Businesses can exploit the new economy by developing new services and further expand brand loyalty. The challenges are complex and they include the integration of physical and virtual world as well as a desire to live in a more sustainable world. With the Internet expanding service innovation had its big explosion. People are becoming more interested in experiences as they interact with a product or service and its getting progressively harder to please a customer and get their loyalty to a brand for life. Product design exists in the realm of tangible objects as service design deals with the intangible and the conceptual. Service designers look at problems like never before because the design process involves taking the problem apart (Aaltonen, 2010).

3.2.4 Design management

Although design management has developed as a discipline since the 70's in the UK, it has not gained the attention that marketing and strategy have. This is perhaps because there is a lack of agreement of what the term "design management" really means (Sun et al., 2011).

Companies learned that they could achieve meaning through design and use it to position products in the market. The European automobile industry, which made great success from a large number of different vehicle types, is an example of it. What became evident was that beyond individual projects, images and brands – or the process today known as branding – play an increasingly important role, (Bürdek, 2005).

Design's effectiveness is closely linked to design management, the concept has to do with management activities, methods and skills that are needed to optimize and manage design processes (Knošková, 2011). Design management "*is the function of defining a design problem, finding the most suitable designer, and making it possible for him to solve it on time and within a budget. This is a consciously managed exercise which can apply to all the areas where designers work*" page 48 (Cooper, Rachel; Junginger, Sabine and Lockwood, 2013).

Design management encompasses all the visual elements of the company, which are: management of the formalisation of products, communication, visible spaces in the company and some staffing issues.

The design manager needs to know the fundamentals of all management tasks and knowledge of administration and control. It needs to know of his or hers tasks such as design but also all related functions such as marketing, communication, production, engineering and R&D. Design managements needs to be able to transmit the importance of design in the corporate strategy, and they need to be able to influence the decision making process (Montaña, Jordi and Guzmán, 2007).

Design management is connected with the rise of businesses awareness of design as a value creator. Although design was recognized as able to add value to business, the role of designers was still not prominent in the majority of organizations (Sun et al. 2011).

Borja de Mozota (1998) believes design management combines design with management and studies how to manage design regarding its use in a project, organization or nations. It is independent from other management contents because of design nature and characteristics. Design management studies the controversy between design and management and tries to bridge the gap between them.

Design management can have different meanings, scopes and contexts. It has been developed by academics from different backgrounds such as: design, economics, management, marketing and even psychology (Qian Sun, Alex Williams and Martyn Evans, 2011).

Design managements 'consists of the introduction of design as a formal programme of activity within the organisation, demonstrating the importance of design in the long term corporate objectives and coordinating and incorporating design resources at all levels of company activity in order to meet those objectives' (Montaña, Jordi and Guzmán, 2007).

There was a need to create awareness for the design management professional in the business world and this need was identified by Gorb and Dumas in their study in 1987. They explored the interaction between design and other business functions and came up with a term called "silent design" that characterizes the activities done by non-designers who are not aware that they are participating in a design activity. (Gorb, Peter; Dumas 1987).

Authors Kotler and Rath talk about design as being an important strategic tool that can give companies a competitive advantage. They believe that most companies neglect design as being strategic and do not understand how design is able " to enhance products, environment, communication and corporate identity" (Kotler and Rath, 1984: p. 16). The authors also talk

about how difficult it was to implement design management within a company that is used to operating a certain way. They believe that both marketers and designers have to learn from one another in order to better incorporate design into the marketing planning process of a company.

The author Knošková, talks about the strategic role of design of how design's role in products and services differentiation is becoming increasingly important but also how design's contributions to an organization are more understood and valued. The author links the effective use of design to design management: " The concept of design management relates to certain management activities, methods and skills that are required to optimize and manage design processes" (Knošková, 2011). A study done in 2009 looked into the effects of design investment and business performance and the overall role design plays in that. The following hypothesis on the results were that (Chiva and Alegre, 2009):

- design management boosts business performance;
- design investment is positively related to design management;
- design investment only influence business performance when the company has a design management structure in place;

Chiva and Alegre's (2009) hypothesis relate to Borja de Mozota's four powers of design. These authors both see design as a good investment as it increases good business, brand value, ROI, market share, increasing overall sales. They also see it as good for performance but Borja de Mozota also adds the "design as differentiator", giving a competitive advantage to businesses, and as an "integrator", for being able to improve product development processes.

Borja de Mozota believes that design acts have four values in the value chain and act as a differentiator, integrator, transformer and good business (Borja de Mozota, 2006).

1. Design as differentiator: design being the source of competitive advantage on the market through brand equity, customer loyalty, price premium, or customer orientation
2. Design as integrator: design being a resource that improves new product development processes. Favouring a modular architecture of product lines, user-oriented innovation models and fuzzy-front-end project management
3. Design as transformer: design as a resource for creating new business opportunities, for improving the company's ability to cope with change or as an expertise to better interpret the company and the marketplace
4. Design as good business: design as a source of increased sales and better margins, more brand value, greater market share, better ROI, design as a source for society at large (inclusive design, sustainable design).

Table 11. Four Powers of Design, Brigitte Borja de Mozota (2006)

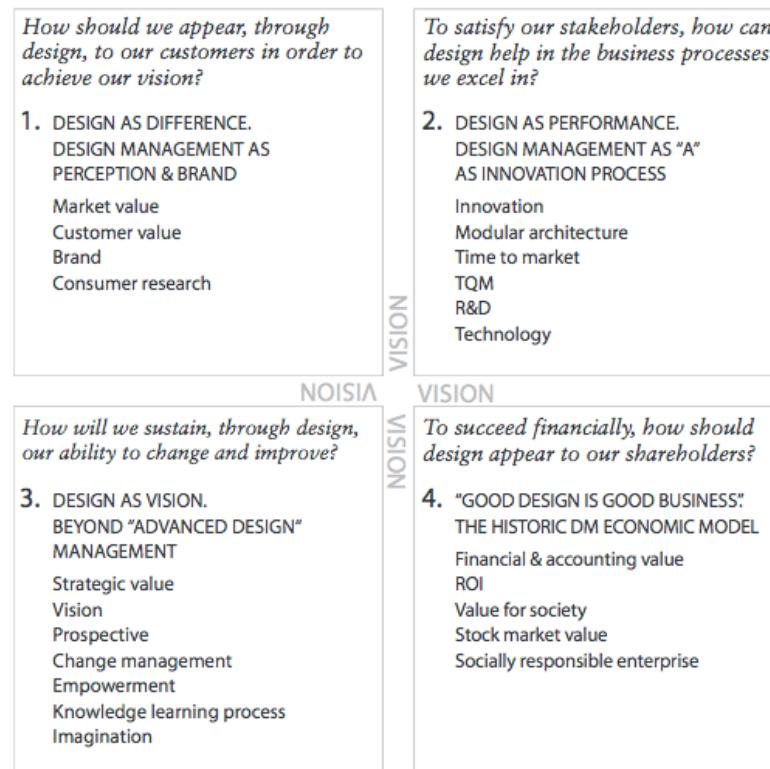


Figure 18 - Design Value - Balanced Score Card model. R. Kaplan and D. Norton

Borja de Mozota believes that the four perspectives of the balance scorecard model by R. Kaplan and D. Norton (figure 18) relates to the four powers of design. Those values are: customer perspective (design as differentiator), process perspective (design as coordinator), learning perspective (design as transformer); finance perspective (design as good business) (Borja de Mozota, 2006).

The author states that the scope of design management has changed from project design management to strategic design management.

DESIGN AS STRATEGY	Controlling design ROI & business performance and brand value.	Design leadership. Coherence of the design system and driving the future “advanced design.”	Design as resource for the challenges of contemporary managers—Socially responsible enterprise.
DESIGN AS PROCESS	Design research methods—ethno design, etc. DM as managing the design function.	Integrating design in other processes: brand, innovation, TQM. DM as improving the performance of processes.	Integrating design in management decision processes. DM as inventing the future and “sense building” in a changing environment. DM for the quality of staff.
DESIGN AS STYLING	Integrating design in marketing, R&D, corporate communications. DM as managing a design project.		
MANAGEMENT AS COMMAND & CONTROL	MANAGEMENT AS ART OF COLLECTIVE ACTION	MANAGEMENT AS MANAGING CHANGE	

Figure 19. Design as strategy, Process and Styling, Borja de Mozota (2006)

Literature on design management also shows that design is key in strategic positioning and in the process of building a competitive advantage. Designers are able to create perceived value. (Borja de Mozota, 2003a).

3.2.4.1 Design management models

Authors Hase, H., Hinz, K. and Schnackengerg talk about the three vectors of design management and how design/layout, communication and management relate to the concept of design management.

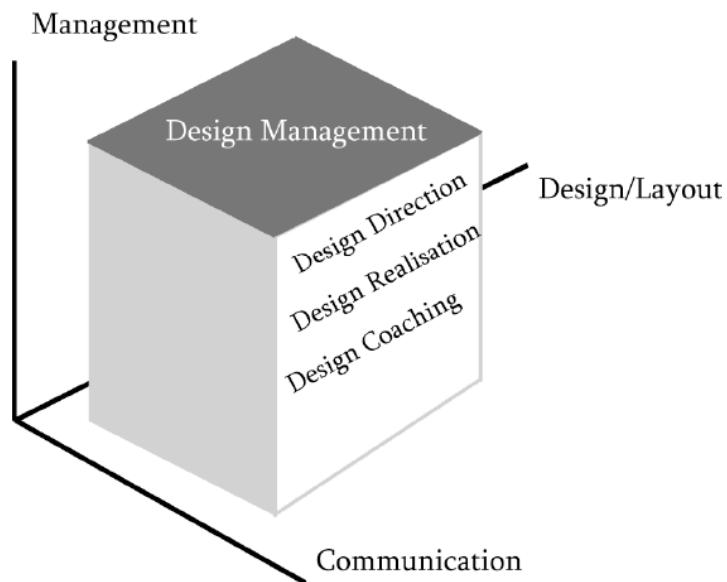


Figure 20. Design Management - H. Hase et al (2006: p.24)

This means that design management plays different roles in all stages of a project. According to the model above, in between the design, management and communication, design management is responsible for (Hase, H., Hinz, K. and Schnackengerg, 2006):

- Design direction,
- Design realisation, and
- Design coaching.

Danish design ladder

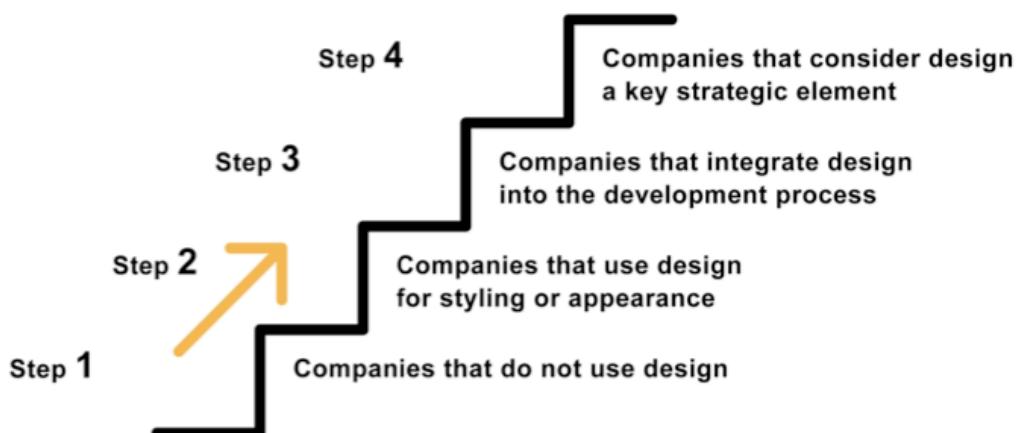


Figure 21. Danish Design Ladder

The Danish design ladder is a framework that facilitates the evolution of the use of design by a company. This is a four step model, on the first step there are companies that do not use design, on the second they have companies that only use design for matters of styling, on the third step there are companies integrating design into their development process and on the final fourth step, companies that consider design as a key strategic element. This model is helpful because in assess the different ways companies are integrating design. Ideally the authors say that they would like companies to consider design in the forth step. Another way to look at the maturity of the use of design is the following framework:

Design management staircase

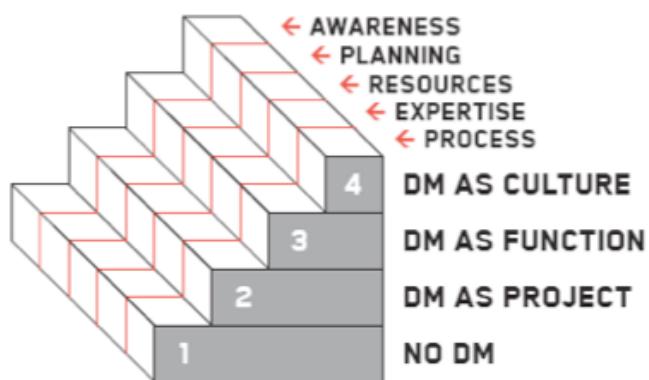


Figure 22. Design Management Staircase, Koostra (2009)

The design management staircase is based on the Danish design ladder we have explained previously (figure 19). Kootstra developed this staircase that focused on the maturity of design management, as the previous one was focused on the use of design by companies. This is also a four stage model that also has five factors in it: awareness, planning, resources, expertise and process, that complements the model (Kootstra, 2009):

Level 1 – no design management: On this level companies do not or rarely use design as a differentiator.

Level 2 – design management as project: These companies use design on an ad-hoc basis, mainly as a marketing tool but not as adding value through new product and service development.

Level 3 – design management as function: Early involvement of design into product and service development processes takes place and specialized expertise for innovation is deployed where needed.

Level 4 – design management as culture: design is “a way of life” in these companies. (Acklin, 2013).

This model illustrates the typical behaviour towards design management in four different levels. The starting point on level 1 is the immature level and the top level is where design management is of strategic nature and embedded in the company’s culture. This model suggests

that the higher a company is in this staircase the greater design is seen as of strategic importance.

Chiva and Alegre talk about the levels of design management skills through a Likert scale:

- *Basic skills* include managing basic activities of the design process like designing high quality, manufacturability, designing and launching products faster, and low cost.
- *Specialized skills* entail abilities to manage activities like cost estimation of new products, to use the latest computer-aided design tools, to test manufacturability of new products during the design process, and to find people with excellent design skills.
- *Involving Others* includes the skill to involve customers and suppliers in the design process and getting new product ideas from customers.
- *Organizational Change* is about the ability to change the way things have traditionally been done in a company; it also contains getting different functions in the firm to work together or replacing sequential with concurrent design (Chiva and Alegre, 2009).

Another model

According to Qian Sun, Alex Williams and Martyn Evans (2011) design management is a relatively new concept as compared to design practice or management. Most models consider design management from an organizational perspective instead of contextualizing it with its design practise. By isolating this contextualizing perspective it can be difficult to track design industry emergent trends. The authors come up with a model, which aims to conceptualize design management practices addressing the concerns of the sector's stakeholders.

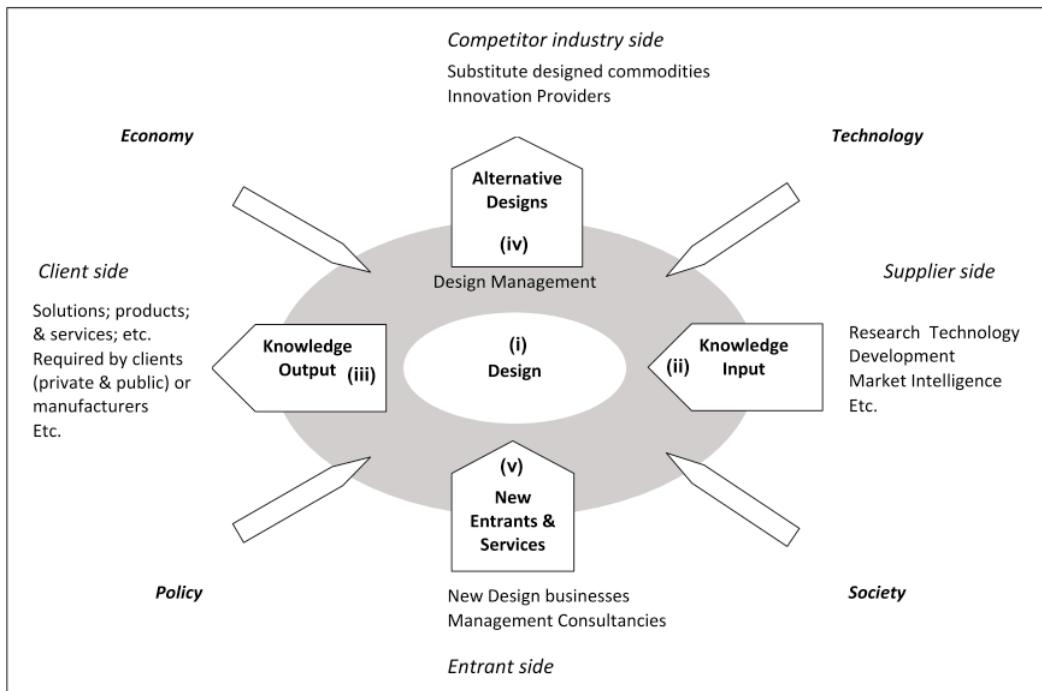


Figure 23. Model by Sun, Williams and Evans (2011).

Stevens, Moultrie and Crilly talk about ways in which design can be strategic and add strategic value (Stevens et al., 2008):

- in conceiving and creating high-value products;
- in building product (or brand) differentiation and customer intimacy;
- as an integrator and mediator between professional domains, both within the organization (e.g. marketing, production) and outside (e.g. suppliers, distributors, partners);
- as a hard-to-imitate tacit knowledge resource;
- in shaping, communicating and reinforcing an organization's internal culture;
- in exploring uncertainty and assessing trade-off, through prototyping and visualization;
- in stimulating creativity and providing fresh perspectives in the strategy context. It is suggested then that design's strategic relevance can be considered in three ways: competing by 'high design' can be a strategic position in itself; an integrated, coherent design approach can help implement strategic positioning; design methods (so-called 'design thinking') can inform strategy formulation.

3.2.4.2 Design management and branding

As we could see from the previous chapter on design management, brand and design management are disciplines that combined can add to brand value. We have analysed several models that relate the importance of branding and design Management. Approaching branding through design Management can add to Brand strategy.

Design management can be integrated with the brand building and new product development processes. It makes it easier to create products and services that generate positive interactions with the customer (Veryzer, R. W., & De Borja de Mozota, 2005).

These categories overlap and there are many examples of design that are hard to fit in one of these categories. It is important to understand the interdisciplinary or rather multidisciplinary nature that design represents. This multidisciplinary nature can aid business leaders create working groups for solving complex problems (Abbing, 2011).

Authors Erik Roscam Abbing and Christa van Gessel provide an explanation on the shifts brands took. Table 12 explains the evolution of branding from the old paradigms to the new ones. Previously branding was focused on creating promises and now it is all about fulfilling them. The entire organization owns the brand as opposed to before when it was just the marketing department. The new branding paradigms have more to do with strong organizational and stakeholder insights and should be about stakeholders aspirations (Abbing & Gessel 2008).

Aspects of branding	Old branding paradigm	New branding paradigm	Implication
Focus	Creating promises	Fulfilling promises	There is a strong new focus in brand management on touch-point design and offering innovation.
Ownership	Marketing	Entire organization	The "usability" of the brand for all stakeholders becomes increasingly important.
Place in process	At the end	At the beginning	The brand as foundation for business process has to be rooted in strong organizational and stakeholder insights.
Content	About the strengths of the organization	About the relationship the organization aspires to have with its stakeholders	The brand as relationship has to be based on insights within the organization and its stakeholders.

Table 12. Shifts in the way brands are managed, Abbing & Gessel (2008)

The brand needs to provide vision, focus and direction. Design and branding have a shared understanding of a common goal (Abbing & Gessel, 2008).

The authors also provided a four-step method for brand-driven innovation that explores the role of design in branding and innovation (table 13). They call it the Brand Driven Innovation (BDI) framework;

Phase 1. Brand usability
Phase 2. Innovation strategy
Phase 3. Design strategy
Phase 4. Touch-point orchestration

Table 13. Brand Driven Innovation, Abbing & Gessel (2008)

The authors talk about each phase as either a separate field or phases in a process. Brand usability is about brand relevance to the organization and the end user. It is used by marketing and product development and it is key to acquire insights of how these two stakeholders interact.

In the above table we see innovation capable of delivering value and creating opportunities with design taking a lead role as the source for meaningful ideas and a linking force among disciplines. Design is taking a leading role in the convergence of branding and innovation. In order for brands to achieve their potential they have to innovate in order to fulfil their promises.

3.3 Design Conclusions

Best says design is seen as an economic advantage. Its use as a communication and strategic business tool has placed design management in the heart of a business plan. Design is also important in other social issues such as ecology, new technologies, innovation and cultural processes and enterprises. Design is linked with the way society, the environment, and businesses interact. Today's organizations are integrating design in their practices and approach design in a more managed way (Best, 2006)

The author states that design affects management in different levels and can be active on strategic, tactical and on operational levels. It can set long-term to day-to-day goals. " design is a function, a resource and a way of thinking within organisations and one that can be active in the strategic thinking, the development of processes and ... the implementation of projects, systems and services; the ways in which an organisation connects with its customers and stakeholders" p.16 (Best, 2006).

Authors Cooper and Evans say consumer-centred product design is becoming a best practice for industries and market research techniques that help with the data translation into sensory dimensions, like ethnography, anthropometrics, and other observational techniques, are becoming more important in the new product development process (Cooper and Evans, 2006).

Design is a tool for creating integrated brand experiences and this is because visual symbols have a greater value than words in the marketplace (Borja de Mozota, 2003). Brands are turning into symbolic signs that focus on creating influences and experiences (Salzer-Morling, M. and Strannegard, 2004). Positive aesthetic product designs lead to positive brand evaluations and facilitate product and brand categorisation and consumer interaction. The aesthetic aspect of design helps to satisfy the consumer's experiential worlds and generates loyalty and a sense of exclusiveness. Design aesthetics are added value to the customer and produce positive effects on the performance of the organization (Kreuzbauer & Malter 2005).

As is stated in the previous chapters, design disciplines, are using social media tools, such as monitoring, to learn more about consumers needs. On the other hand social media can also profit from design expertise. Graphic and Industrial design play a role in building brand awareness and recognition. Design disciplines offer a way to fulfil brand promises into a meaningful experience for the user (Abbing & Gessel 2008).

Chiva and Alegre's research has proven that design management is able to enhance a firm's performance. Design management is the organizational and managerial skill that allows a company to develop efficient design, which relates to firm performance. They also proved that investing in design not only improves design management skills but it also enhances other skills (Chiva & Alegre, 2009).

As we refer in the previous chapter design and branding, the role of the design management is becoming more and more important as the "world" tries to approach different communication platforms such as the Internet and more recently social media networks. The models presented in the Design Management chapter were the most relevant to further develop this study and to fully understand design's dimension in branding and in social media. Models like: Four Powers of Design, Brigitte Borja de Mozota (2006), Design as strategy, Process and Styling, Brigitte De Mozota (2006), Danish Design Ladder and the Design Management Staircase, Koostra, G.L. (2009) were key to develop the survey and establish the basis for the interviews.

4. Social Media

This chapter will focus on the last area of this study: social media. It is important to characterize its impact in relation to branding and design but also to understand how it emerged and how it is currently working. Brands have always been eager to be where the consumer is and in this day and age it is becoming more and more important to understand social media as a communication channel. As the previous chapters illustrate there is a body of knowledge with regards to brands in social media and its importance but there is need on literature concerning the relationship between design and social media.

We have watched rapid developments on the Internet, such as new networking sites, blogs and web applications that are receiving a lot of attention from several audiences. These new mediums are called 'social media' and they can be viewed as new opportunities for business to build brands and to better communicate with customers. With social media (e.g., Facebook, Twitter and Flickr), companies are able to interact directly with customers. Customers can share knowledge with each other and can participate in on-going conversations (Robinson et al., 2009). This creates a whole new perspective in the way companies are used to conduct their businesses, and also on the way we are used to communicate with others and with companies themselves.

Jenkins characterizes it as convergence culture: media convergence, participatory culture and collective intelligence. Social media was developed in this unique convergence of these parameters (Jenkins, 2006). Media convergence altered the 'relationship between existing technologies, industries, markets, genres, and audiences'. This altered the logic 'traditional media' operated on and by which consumer's process news and entertainment. The author believes this convergence is a process, not an end-point and we are already living in this culture for quite some time now.

Erik Qualman talks about the age of instant communication and transparency calling it the "glass-house effect". He refers to social media as the tool to deal with the excess information on the Internet. The marketers no longer need to create and push messages, they need to listen, engage and react to the potential and current customer needs. Marketing and business models have changed and they need to shift to fully adapt to the impact and demands of social media. Companies receive feedback from customers using social media such as a Blog or Facebook, whether is good or bad reviews about a product this is changing how business is made. Companies can take the feedback as an opportunity to act and adjust it to better suit the needs of their public. People take their friends and peers opinion when it comes to choosing a restaurant for example rather than just using a research engine to search for it (Qualman, 2009).

According to Liana Evans with the recent hype of social media, companies think it is easy to succeed online, thinking that all they need is a Facebook page to hit their audience is not enough. People will continue to share conversations and experiences without a company's

involvement. The appeal for social media is cross generations, some of the fast growing demographics are those of above 40 years. There are different types of social media and the authors refers: social news sites (sites that allow news stories, articles, blog posts, videos and photos to the community e.g.: Digg, Reddit and NewsVine); social networking which allows community members to upload photos, create groups, add fans, invite friends to events, post comments on photos, videos, tag friends ex: Facebook, Google+); social bookmarking: sites that allow you to bookmark and share your favourite websites with an entire community ex: Delicious and Magnolia; social sharing – a common feature among social media websites; social events; blogs; micro blogging; wikis; forums and message boards (Evans ,2010).

Kaplan and Haenlein define social media as 'a group of Internet-based applications that build on the ideological and technological foundations of Web 2.0, and that allow the creation and exchange of User Generated Content"(Kaplan & Haenlein 2010). It can describe different types of collaboration applications such as projects (e.g., Wikipedia), blogs/micro-blogs (e.g., Twitter) content communities (e.g., YouTube), social networking sites (e.g., Facebook), virtual game worlds (e.g., World of Warcraft), and virtual social worlds (e.g., Second Life).

Li and Bernoff categorize six types of social media technologies in the table below (Li, C and Bernoff, 2008).

Activity	What	Purpose
People creating	Blogs, user-generated content, podcasts E.g.: Wordpress, Blogger, Youtube	People acts as publishers, creating and sharing information, knowledge, opinions on other. Content creators comment and connect with other content creators, as well as content consumers, through discussion areas.
People connecting	Social Networks and virtual worlds E.g.: Facebook, Second Life	Facilitates relationship by enabling users to add other people to their networks and giving access to each other's profiles with personal info.
People collaborating	Wikis, open source E.g.: Wikipedia, Firefox, Linux	Communities evolving around collaboration to create core product E.g.: online encyclopaedias and software.
People reacting to each other	Forums, rating, reviews E.g.: Commenting and rating products on Amazon, IMDB.com, TripAdvisor, Blackberryforums.com	People helping each other by e.g. recommending or discouraging various items, or getting/giving help from/to other people by engaging on forums.
People organizing	Tagging content E.g.: Digg, Del.icio.us, StumbleUpon	Classify and organise the online world; content is tagged in video and photo sharing services, blog posts, bookmarking tools. Tagging tools allow for sharing, which in turn can be a part of people's personal brand.
Accelerating consumption	RSS and widgets E.g.: An RSS feed might be the posts from a blog, a widget can be a news ticker running on your desktop	Tools that brings content to the user rather than the user having to find. Increase efficiency by allowing people to monitor more social activity.

Table 14. Social media Classification, Li and Bernoff (2008)

As shown on table 14, Li and Bernoff categorise different types of activities one can do in social media. Those activities are: Create, Connect, Collaborate, Reach out, Organize and Consume. These different activities all refer to different types of social media and have different purposes. For example, when one wants to organize content, one can use Digg, Del.icio.us, StumbleUpon or Pinterest and 'tag' their pictures into different categories. There is a classification and organization being built on the online world. Content like videos or photos can be found more easily and shared with other users. This is increasing the user's sense of their personal brand.

4.1 Evolution of social media

When we think of social media we often think of social media platforms such as Facebook or Twitter, which are popular amongst most people, but we cannot forget that a wide range of social media technologies also exist. These are available to do different things and enable many types of behaviour. It is also important to look at the evolution of social media and how it has affected consumers and brands through decades. Table 15 and figure 22 presents a framework from two Forrester reports (Owyang, 2009) and (Stelzner, 2012).

Stelzner (2012) categorizes different areas of social manifestations such as Social Relationships (1995-2003-07), Social Functionality (2007-2010-12), Social Colonization (2009-2011), Social Context (2010-2012) and Social Commerce (2011-13). What starts out to be just a way to connect people with each other through online groups (1995) becomes social networks (2007), which leads to most webpages having to present a social dimension (2009). Furthermore, websites then deliver personalized content to users (2010) and the social media mechanism lead to a situation where there are more online groups then brands (2011).

	Era of social relationships	Era of social functionality	Era of social colonization	Era of social context	Era of social commerce
Start; Maturity	1995; 2003 to 2007	2007; 2010 to 2012	2009; 2011	2010;2012	2011;2013
Descriptions	Individuals assemble and connect with each other in online groups	Social networks become operating systems	Every Website is now social, even if it doesn't choose to be.	Websites deliver personalized content to visitors.	Online groups supplant brands
Consumers	Use simple profile and discussion features to share with each other	Embed Web applications and widgets on their profiles to make experience more fun and useful	Lean on their peer's opinions to make decisions about products	Opt in to share their identity in return for a more relevant Web experience	Work with peers to define the next generation of products; also purchase in groups
Brands	Join online groups using conversational marketing or sponsorship, or create their own community	Advertise, then sponsor, then create applications to provide utility to consumers	Focus on influencers and including social recommendations	Provide specialized content for visitors; get rid of registration pages	Lean on groups to define products
Social Networks	Struggle with monetization	Share as developers to monetize applications	Aggregate all implicit and explicit data, creating a new type of social inbox	Become the identity system of the Web	Offer features to help with product design and vendor management
Other Media	The world is more connected	Office apps become social; even solitaire games have social leaderboards	Mobile devices trigger in-store displays to show custom content.	TV offers personalized interactive channels for viewers	A new PR agency emerges that represents online groups – not brands

Table 15. The evolution of the social web affects consumers, brands and social networks, Stelzner (2012)

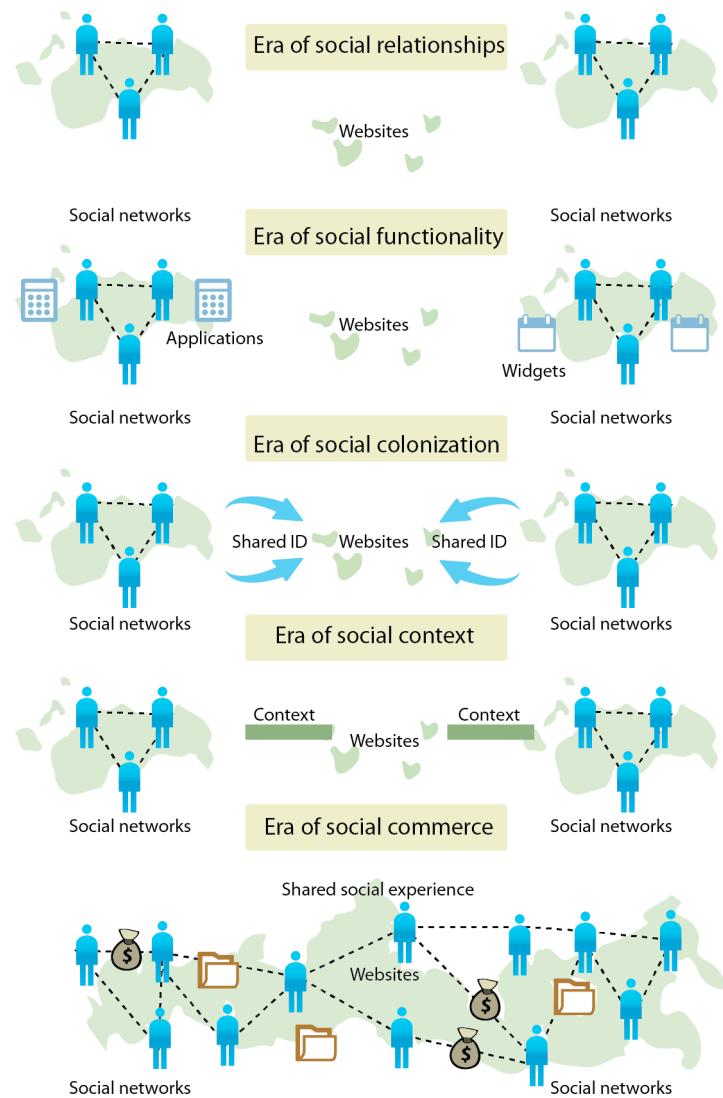


Figure 24. The five Eras of social media, Owyang (2009)

To summarize it:

- 1) Era of Social Relationships: People connect to others and share
- 2) Era of Social Functionality: Social networks become like operating system
- 3) Era of Social Colonization: Every experience can now be social
- 4) Era of Social Context: Personalized and accurate content
- 5) Era of Social Commerce: Communities define future products and services

Source : Forrester Research

Raman says social media is transforming the web into a “two way conversation”. In the social media world, customers are influenced by each other on preferences for products and services. They are also influenced by new ideas; insights and different experiences from others (Raman, 2009).

On one hand consumers can work together with their peers to better define the next generation of product or service and also buy it in groups. Consumers can share ideas, images, and thoughts and make profiles in order to improve their web experience. On the other hand brands are joining in the social media by means of conversational marketing, sponsorship or by having their own online community. Brands are providing more personalized information for consumers and focus on influencers such as group leaders or community leaders. The phenomenon is leading social media into the new identity system of the web and it is changing the way companies manage their brand, and people manage their own personal online brand/persona.

4.2 Social media and brands

McKee proposes a social media model (Figure 25. The social media Trinity Model). The author divides social media into “The Social Media Trinity Model”. The model consists of dividing social platforms into three dimensions, by a particular purpose: networking, conversation and community. This is a business making and brand awareness-raising model, in which the brand is at the centre, surrounded by the community, networking and conversation (McKee, 2010).

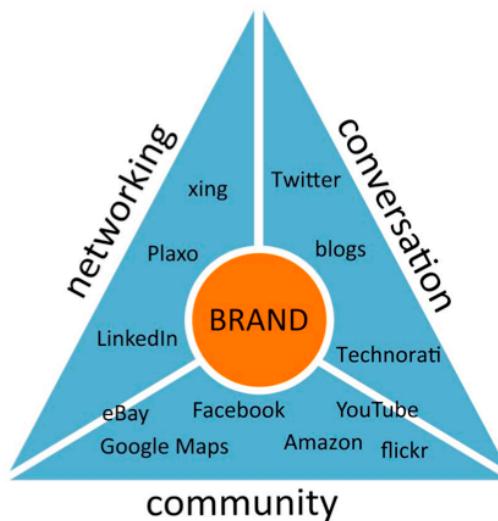


Figure 25. The social media Trinity Model

Conversation: Where one can share views, opinions and ideas while engaging in conversation with their peers. In order for a brand to succeed in these channels it has to contribute with something valuable for the customer, not just try to sell its products or services.

- “Conversation creates opportunities which creates revenue”(McKee, 2010: p. 183).
- Community: Where one can communicate for a wider audience. A place with participative communication (McKee, 2010,:p. 187).
- Networking: Where one can participate in groups relevant to the industry (LinkedIn) connecting with other professionals. Connect with friends and family and even their own brands, musicians, restaurants, etc (McKee, 2010: p. 191).

This model aims to give power to the brand by making its presence relevant in conversation blogs such as twitter, community technologies such as Facebook or YouTube but also in networking websites like LinkedIn or Xing.

In this other model the brand image is no longer defined by what is being said about a brand through out advertising inputs but what people are talking about it in social networks. “The brand custodians have little control over the brand – a source of worry for most of them” (see figure 25). User-generated content happens through a peer review process, e.g., referrals, blogs and tagging. So if a customer has more information and interaction with the brand he is more likely to be a potential buyer. (Raman, 2009).

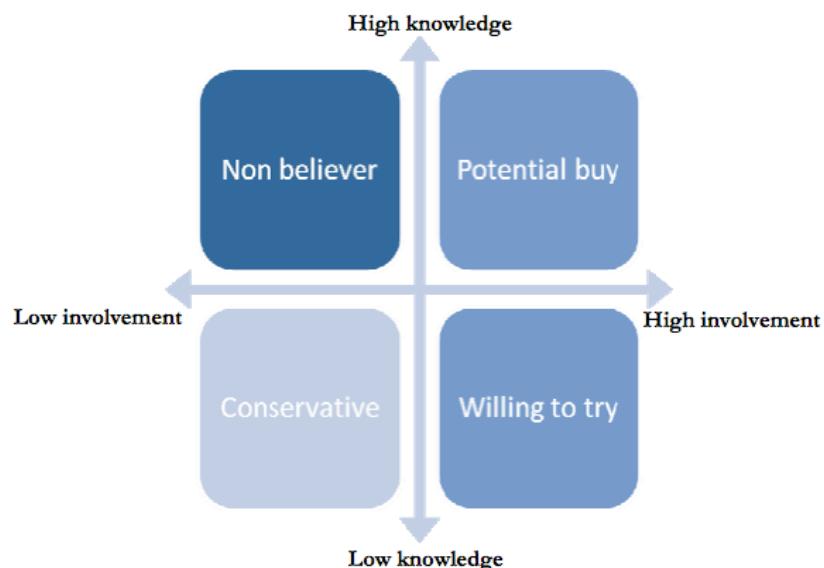


Figure 26. Raman Model

Studies by Charlene Li and Josh Bernoff show twenty-five case studies in which companies increase their market knowledge, save income and encourage employers using *social technologies* (Li, C and Bernoff, 2008).

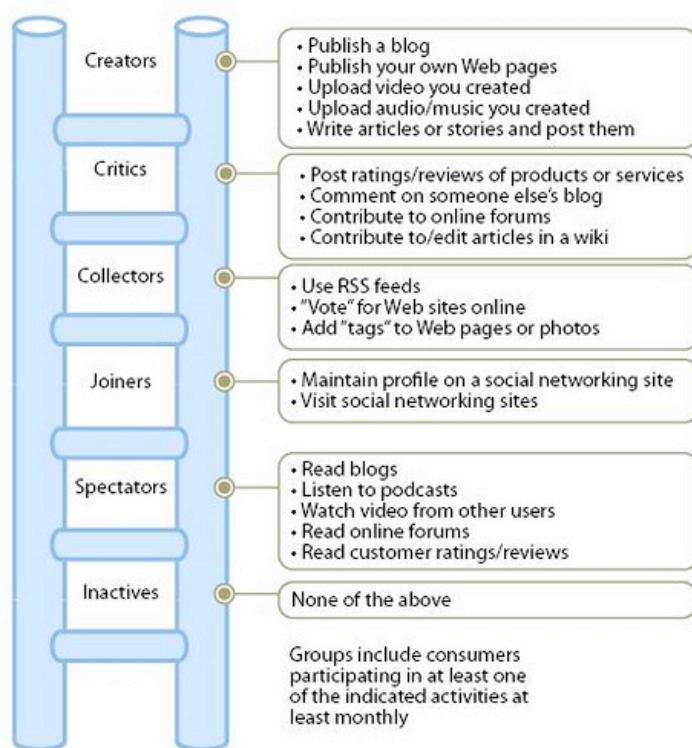


Figure 27. Groundswell Model, Li and Bernoff (2008)

The authors consider the social movements of a person sharing with others, instead of relying on companies directly to get their information. Companies no longer have absolute control over the brand communication. Social media has been increasing in relevance on a brand's communication strategies. Li and Bernoff say that it is highly important to understand how relationships come about in social media. Technologies have changed, but it is the impact on personal relationships that is more intense (Li, C and Bernoff, 2008).

Rajagopal (2013) says that consumers are becoming more active in co-creating marketing content with companies and brands. Therefore, companies are looking into online social media programs and campaigns to better reach their consumers, because they also *live online* (Rajagopal, 2013). It appears that the development of social media strategies on YouTube, Facebook and Twitter is not part of an integrated system of advertising and rather a separated event. Hanna, Rohm, and Crittenden, Berthon, P.R., Pitt, L.F., McCarthy, I. and Kates, also refer to this phenomenon and say that consumers are no longer passive in the marketing exchange process (Hanna et al., 2011), (Berthon et al., 2007).

The amount of consumers that are active and co-create everything from product design to promotional messages is increasing. Garretson says: "Consumers increasingly use digital media not just to research products and services, but to engage the companies they buy from, as well as other consumers who may have valuable insights" (Garretson, 2008).

Jenkins characterizes it as convergence culture, i.e., media convergence, participatory culture and collective intelligence (Jenkins, 2006: p.2). Social media was developed in this unique convergence of parameters (Jenkins, 2006).

Erik Qualman (2009) talks about the age of instant communication and transparency calling it the *glasshouse effect*. The author refers to social media as the tool to deal with the excess of information over the Internet. The marketers no longer need to create and push messages, but instead listen, engage and react to the potential and current customer needs. Marketing and business models have changed and need to shift to fully adapt to the impact and demands of social media. Companies receive feedback from customers using social media such as a Blog or Facebook, whether it is good or a bad review about a product, and this is changing how business is made. Companies can take the feedback as an opportunity to act and adjust it to better suit the needs of their public (Qualman, 2009).

According to Liana Evans (2010) companies believe that with the recent hype of social media it is easy to succeed online, thinking that all needed is a Facebook page to hit the audience. But that is not enough. People will continue to share conversations and experiences without a company's involvement. The appeal for social media is cross generation, and some of the fast growing demographics are those of above forty years. There are different types of social media and the author refers a few. Those are the social news sites (sites that allow news stories, articles, blog posts, videos and photos to the community ex: Digg, Reddit and NewsVine); social networking which allows community members to upload photos, create groups, add fans, invite friends to events, post comments on photos, videos, tag friends ex: Facebook, Google Plus); social bookmarking, i.e., sites that allow the bookmark and share of the user's favourite websites with an entire community, e.g., Delicious and Magnolia; social sharing, which is a common feature among social media websites; social events; blogs; micro blogs; wikis; forums and message boards (Evans, 2010).

Social media is therefore often used as a branding tool, both for commercial brands and for *people's* brands. A study by Herder shows that 82% of managers in America use a form of social media tool (Herder & Law 2009). According to eMarketer (Figure 26 – Business uses of social media) 57% of marketing business functions within a company use social media, followed by Internal and Collaboration business that are at 39% (eMarketer (ed.) 2012).

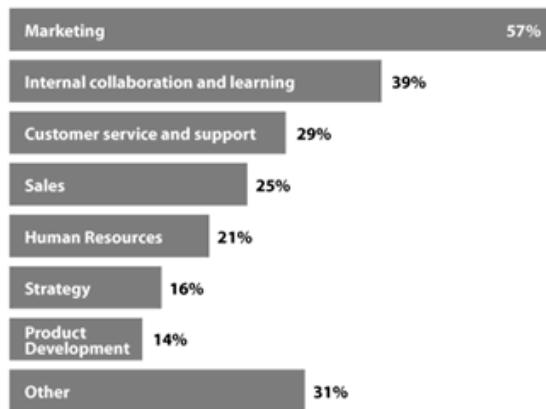


Figure 28. Business uses of social media, eMarketer (2012)

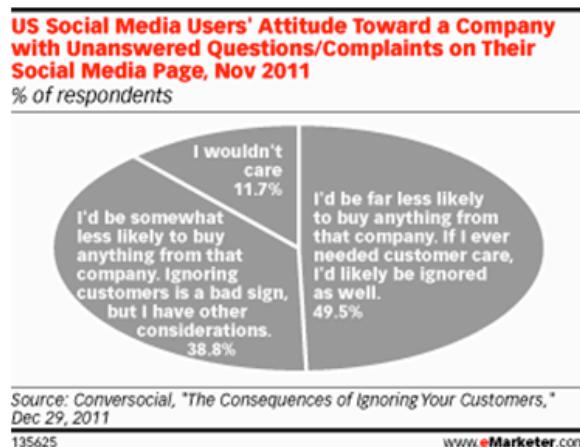


Figure 29. Attitude toward a company with unanswered Questions on their social media Space, eMarketer (2012)

From the answers showed figure 29, the users are more likely not to use a company who has unanswered questions and complaints on a social media space, because as the company ignores other customers, it may ignore the user as well when it comes to good customer care. This means that brands need to operate successfully in all social media spaces where the company operates, in order to answer customers promptly. It is no longer brands who hold all the power. Now consumers have a say and opinions about brands, and are willing to share it with other users on social media communities. If brands do not adapt and improve the engagement with people, the company will lose clients in the long run and ruin future chances of increasing the client numbers (Emarketer (ed.) 2012).

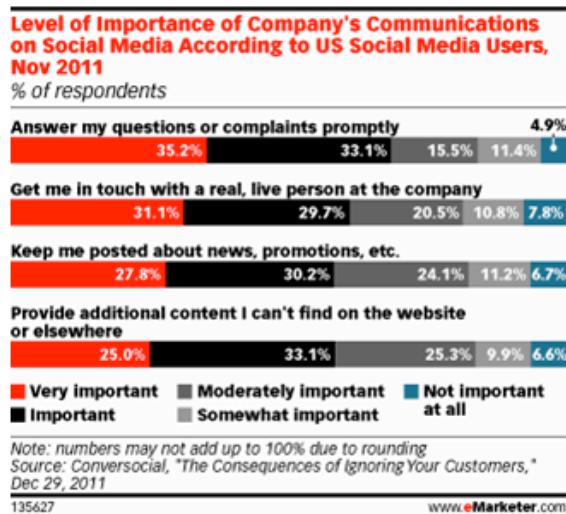


Figure 30. Level of importance of Company's Communication on social media according to US social media Users, eMarketer (2012)

Figure 30. Level of importance of Company's Communication on social media according to US social media Users (from an eMarketeer study) shows us that 35.2% of customers expect their brands to answer questions posted on social media tools. Customers also want that the contact come from a real person who works in the company. Customers want to be updated on news and promotions, but also on additional content that cannot be found on the company's website. Does this mean that companies should have a real person, specialized on social media business-customer relationship, to better address these issues?

Kotler and Pfoertsch (2007) say that as we see globalization becoming highly important it only increases the relevance of branding. With these new channels of communication where there is more efficiency, improvement of logistics, companies are selling their products all over the world without transportation cost being unbearable. The reduction of trade barriers is making international trade more viable. It becomes easier for small and midsize companies to enter the worldwide market (Kotler & Pfoertsch, 2007)

EMarketeer states that as a result of globalization we now have hyper competition, which makes business branding become more relevant. A strong brand has a better chance to compete because it has added value, which is hard to achieve. This makes branding an efficient tool to differentiate from competitors in the long-term. Figure 31 illustrates the relation between the current environment and brand relevance (Kotler & Pfoertsch, 2007).

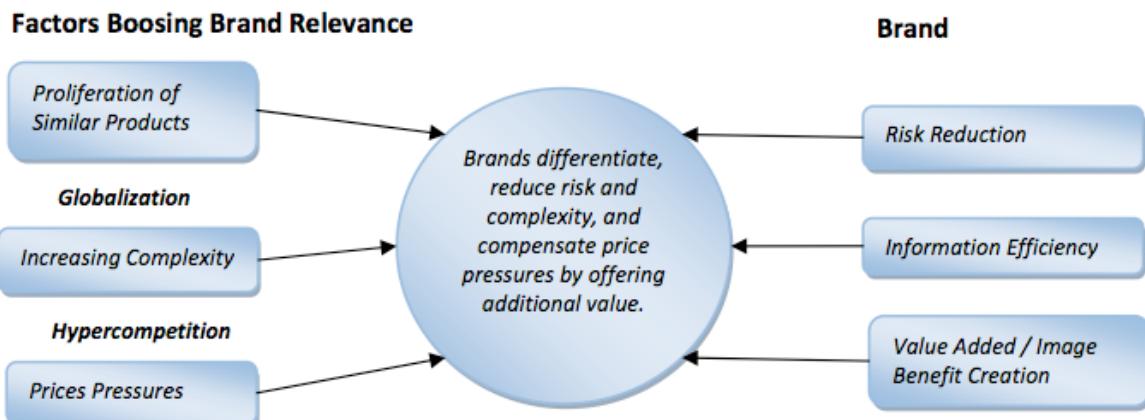


Figure 31. Brand Relevance and Brand value in a B2B environment, Kotler & Pfoertsch (2007)



Figure 32. Social media Ecosystem, Schultz (2007)

Figure 32 illustrates an overview of the social media ecosystem by Schultz. (Schultz 2007). The ecosystem is divided in three media types according to Corcoron: Owned media, which is controlled by the marketer (e.g. company's website). Paid media, bought by the marketer (e.g. sponsorships). Earned media, which is not controlled by the marketer (e.g. viral marketing and word of mouth) (Corcoran, 2009).

Li and Bernoff determine there are five different types of social behaviours: Creators; Critics; Collectors; Joiners and Spectators. The creators publish and maintain information and messages circulating, Critics say their mind and comment on it, Collectors share the messages, Joiners connect and bring people to the information and Spectators read about it. Now the influential

part is up to the consumers who comment about products and services. Li et al (2008) suggest that Marketers must learn to integrate these multiple platforms, understand the different types of consumers and their behaviour, because not all of them engage with social media in the same way (Li, C and Bernoff, 2008).

Wyshynski (2009) says that the social media ecosystem has its focus on the consumer experience. The author quotes Mike DiLorenzo, director of social media marketing and strategy for the NHL (National Hockey League) "social networks are all about experiences". The experiences begin when marketers can successfully incorporate integrated marketing communication strategies into social media and combine it with traditional media (Wyshynski 2009). Hanna et al (2011) believe that some companies create social media platforms and operate it independently, not as an integrated strategy that brings the consumers experiences to the forefront. Social media does not replace traditional media, but it can expand marketing's ability to engage with consumers and achieve attention and influence (Hanna et al.,2011).

Hanna et al. (2011) say that interactions between companies and consumers are quite different. The whole dynamic has changed and now consumers are dictating the rules. The consumer's influence over brand messages and meaning places the public's opinion as an input when thinking about a product or a service.

By the end of 2010 there was an increase on the amount of money spent on social media. According to the 2010 social media marketing bench, from MarketingSherpa, companies planned to increase social media budgets. Although a lot of companies do not know how to manage this increase effectively. Most marketing plans include strategies for presences on YouTube, Facebook and Twitter, even though there is no systematic approach on understanding and managing this presence as a social media strategy. Companies need to know where is the target, on which social media platforms are the targets present, what is the company message and how to spread the word about a brand (Hanna et al., 2011).

Authors Leek and Christodoulides (2011) believe that managers need to break free from the industrial age paradigm of branding and embrace the fact that there are a number of factors beyond control. Consumers now know all about brands. Consumers read about the brand in numerous sources of less formal media (blogs and discussion boards). According to the author, what consumers think and say has become more important than anything marketers have to say about brands. He adds that brand managers have to 'let go' of keeping control and ownership of brands, otherwise things like what happened to Gap might happen to other brands (Leek & Christodoulides, 2011).

Furthermore, user generated content websites such as YouTube and Wikipedia are part of the top five global brands for 2011: Coca-Cola, IBM, Microsoft, Google and General Electric (Interbrand, 2011). Now communities and social networks are claiming ownership of brands and have a say in individual brand choice, and also companies decisions.

Christodoulides stated that marketing is turning into a service-dominant logic and that it needs to focus on the integration of brand in value adding processes. These processes create and

modify consumer experience, dialogue and learning. The author believes that now is the age of co-creation, and that value can be created in a dialectical process. Consumers are now equal partners in developing mutual value, not just passive recipients of marketing messages. Brands should engage in people, in order to re-connect with the audience. The author proposes a more holistic view of consumers as people, giving emphasis on the different roles consumers have and focus on the target's needs. The next case is an example of how a company's integrated strategies added value to their brand while offering at the same time value to the consumer (Christodoulides, 2009).

Christodoulides also discusses the "New age branding" and how it is now focusing on relationships rather than marketing communications. The traditional model seems inadequate in this new reality, i.e., marketers cannot depend exclusively on advertising. With social media there is an interaction with individuals and communities according to their particular interests and needs. A brand is now a relationship builder in this new age branding (Christodoulides, 2009).

One of the problems with dealing with brands in social media is the fact that they can fall into the same errors as previous viral email and web strategies. When there is no interaction between brands and consumers, then they are missing out the point of using social media. Social media has to be highly sociable and there has to be interaction and engagement, otherwise you are having the same 'interaction a pamphlet that is dropped in your mail box and goes directly to the bin' (Yan, 2011).

Through blogs and social networks people can try to understand the companies and personalities behind them. This can be extremely helpful for smaller companies, because the CEO could be the one writing all the Facebook updates and tweets. Such organizations can become more responsive to audiences and consumer demands. It can provide feedback from the public. Getting data from audiences online provides a competitive advantage (Slater & Narver 1998). Brands, however, need to be supported by additional media. Providing a leader for brands to be understood internally and externally is quite important (Gilmore & H, 2002).

A company can write about its accomplishments and tweet in a formal way, using complete sentences, no abbreviations, while still providing useful information to followers. A musician can supply samples online that people can download and listen, comment and share with others. A unique voice can differentiate brands for their competitors.

There seems to be a lack of strategy development coordination coming from companies when it comes place brands into social media. Companies seem eager to enter this new communication medium as quickly as possible in order to beat the competition to it. Some social media brand presences are not well thought through at all. These mostly exist only to be a presence on those channels. Such strategies do not bring any benefit for the user or the brand, because there is no information being shared. Social marketing has developed some social media strategies and the following section will discuss how companies are developing their strategies for social media.

4.3 Social media Strategies

It is generally accepted that it is important to have an online presence on the web, but how can business be sure that their brands are being relevant in all platforms? How can it maintain a position of relevance and consistency in all the different types of channels?

Christodoulides (2009) states that because of the Internet phenomenon, brand strategies have gone through significant transformations. In order to succeed in a computer/mobile mediated environment brands need to build relationships, enable interactivity and better tailor offerings for the online world (Christodoulides, 2009).

McDonald (2007) says the social media presence needs to be developed strategically to coordinate the different views of the organization, its aims and activities, in order to plan the different opportunities that arise in social media and social networking (McDonald, 2007).

A business-aligned social media strategy addresses how social media and social networking processes and technologies can be applied to an organization's operations in order to fulfil its goals. Social media are collections of data and sources of information, these are developed collaboratively and shared interactively between individuals and groups (Baldassarri, 2011).

Social media strategy is about establishing and nurturing authentic relationships in order to build loyalty with your institution or brand. Some of these steps might include:

- Listen to what is being said about the brand/product/service/company on the internet, specially your own social media network channels;
- Respond by engaging with people who talk about your brand or organization;
- Establish relationships with people in an honest and transparent way, and then keep them in an enthusiastic and engaging way;
- Bring to your attention the insights of the people who engage with your brand/company. Evaluate that feedback and what implications it might have for your organization (Bottles & Sherlock, 2011).

4.4 Social media Models

Several authors propose social media strategies models to answer the above questions, and we will discuss some of them. Social media strategy is concerned with addressing how social media and social networking processes and new technologies can be applied in the organization, in

order to help it achieve its goals. A website called social media models.net proposes several ways to categorize social media models (Altimer Group, 2011).

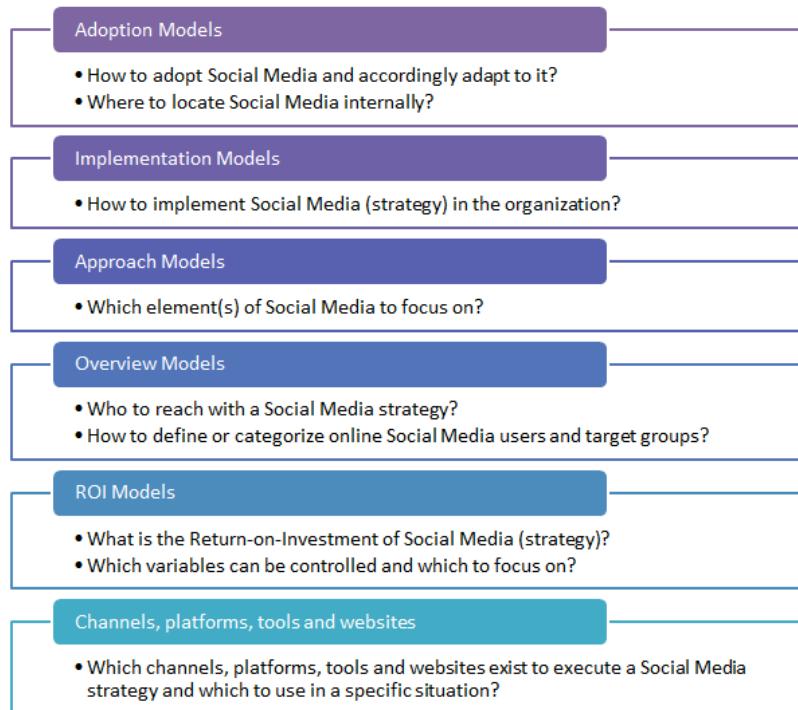


Table 16. Social media Models

There are different types of social media models available, those are: adoption models, implementation models, approach models, overview models, ROI models and models more focused on channels, platforms, tools etc.

4.4.1 Customer Triangle Model

There are some models for social media strategy loosely based on Kotler's model of social marketing, and the company has to decide which adoption model makes the most sense for the organization. A groundswell of unofficial activity could be a good way to start, and can even be improved with "word of mouth" for promotion.



Figure 33. Customer Triangle Model, Kotler, Zaltman (1971)

Social marketing can be based on a simple model by Kotler and Zaltman (1971), in which the consumer lies at the centre. According to them, social marketing is a systematic application of marketing itself, with other notions and procedures, to try and achieve a concrete behavioural goal in order to benefit the target audience.

- **Customer:** It is important to understand the customer, their knowledge, attitudes and beliefs. It is also important to understand their social context of life and work.
- **Behaviour and behavioural goals:** There should be a focus on understanding existing behaviour and what influences it. These can be structured in actions and steps, phased over time.
- **'Intervention mix' and 'marketing mix':** Using different methods in order to obtain a particular behavioural goal. If used at a strategic level is referred as the intervention mix, when used operationally is part of the marketing mix.
- **Audience segmentation:** The need to focus audience segmentation in order to target the customer more effectively.
- **'Exchange':** Understand what is expected of people and the cost to them.
- **'Competition':** This concept aims to understand the factors that impact on people and that compete for their attention and time.

4.4.2 Social media Initiatives Model

McDonald, D. discusses four social media models: Top down, Bottom up, Inside Out and Outside in (see figure 31 – Social media Initiatives), (McDonald ,2007).

In the first model, the leader does the implementation of social media techniques. In the bottom up strategy it is up to the company workers to blog, use wikis and social networking to advance their jobs. In the inside out strategy network tools are used internally by the organization and that will show on external markets, members and the organization itself. Lastly, the outside consists of the marketplace, especially consumers.

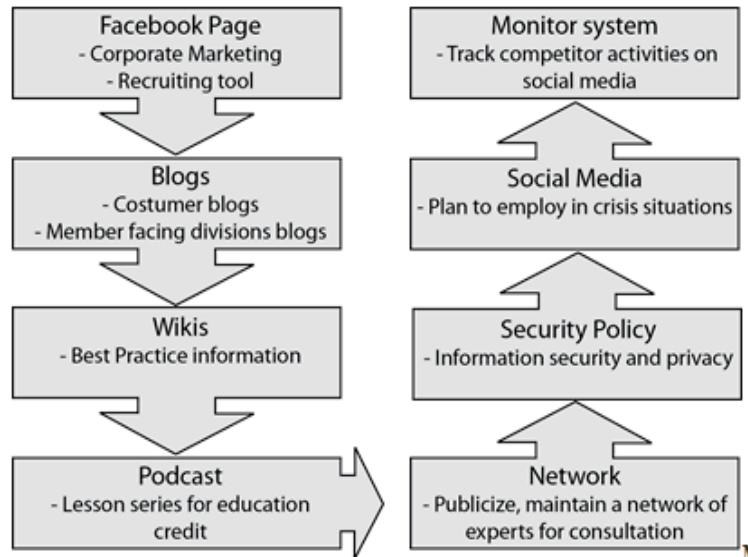


Figure 34. Social media Initiatives

4.4.3 Social marketing total process planning model

The social marketing council (Corcovan, 2009) total process-planning model (figure 35) defines a process planning methodology focused on five stages. The first stage “Scope”: examines and defines the important issues of the campaign. This preliminary evaluation helps clarify aims and goals, and segments the audience by identifying behavioural influences and engaging with stakeholders. In the “Develop” stage the campaign proposition is tested and a plan for action is decided. The “Implementation” stage is where the campaign management begins. In the “Evaluation” stage all of the outcomes and processes of the campaign are evaluated. The impact of the campaign and whether it has reached its proposed goals are analysed. The last stage begins the capitalization of the campaign successes and a review of following campaigns is elaborated. This model emphasizes the stakeholder’s involvement in social media (Corcoran, 2009).

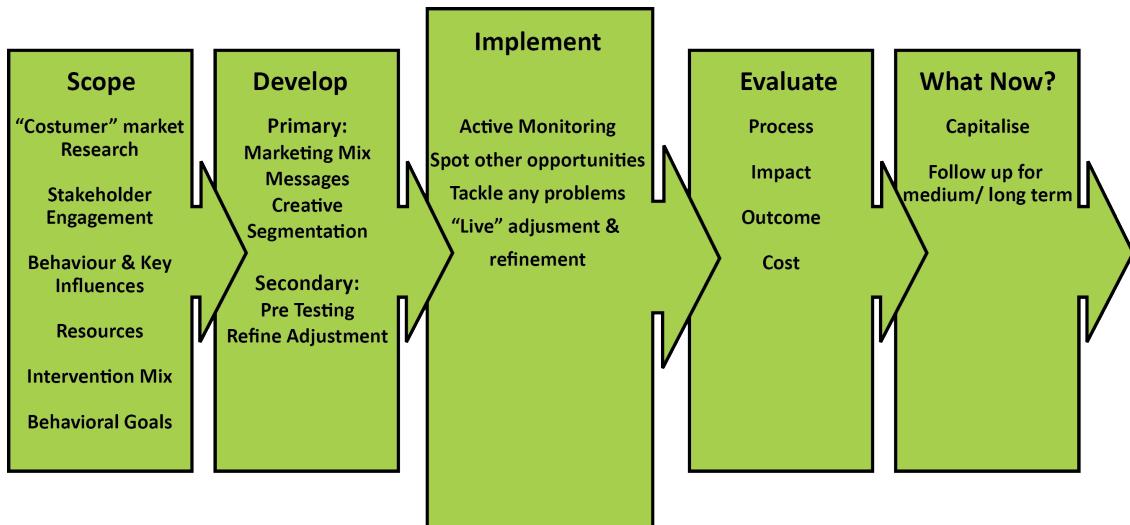


Figure 35. Social media Council Total process planning model

4.4.4 Six social spheres of social media marketing model

Brian Carter shows on figure 36, the six social spheres of social media marketing. It is a process with different actions and approaches. The stages in red are part of the marketing/Advertising and branding strategy, which aims to get more costumers by using Facebook or blogs, for example. The orange and green stages are part of the relationship building process (Carter, 2009).



Figure 36. The six spheres of social media marketing, Brian Carter (2009)



Figure 37. The six spheres of social marketing and the 4 phases of social marketing, Brian Carter (2009)

According to Carter (2009) figure 37 shows that organizations should have strategy and branding planned before its establishment in the social media world. Being present in social media makes the brand more present in people's minds. Engagement creates a relationship and

brings affinity to the brand. Return on investment (ROI) becomes important when the organization has built these relationships.



Figure 38. Understanding where prospects are at in the 6 phases (detail), Brian Carter (2009)

Brian Carter (2009) (see figures: 36,37,38) refers to universe as being everyone that could be a potential buyer, consumer, or referral. The size of this group depends on the extent of the area or subject matter. The goal is to get people's attention by applying the marketing acronym AIDA (Awareness, Interest, Desire and Action) (Carter, 2009).

The Engage stage on figure 38 refers to when people are aware that the brand or organization exist and interact with it. The degree of strength of the relationship is not strong enough, so the organization needs to work on the Interest part of AIDA.

In the stage of social media List, people are interested enough to become a fan on Facebook and follow the organization on twitter.

People who go to the organization's website have reached the personal area where, the organization have the most control. Everything that the organization's website has to offer can make a possible visitor become a regular one. The website must engage with people in order to get to the next stage in the relationship – desire.

The pre-conversion stage means that the person is part of the organization's mailing lists, has visited the website but never bought anything. The user comments and follows the organization social media websites (Carter, 2009).

In the last stage, the person has bought something and is an active member of the organization's social media network.

4.4.5 POST-method model

Li and Bernoff present a social media strategy based in four-steps called the POST-method. (Li, C and Bernoff, 2008). The strategy aims to help organizations build their social media strategy. The POST-method has four steps:

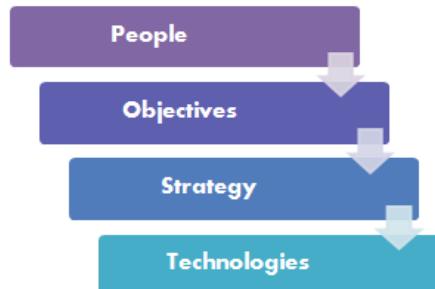


Figure 39. Post-method Model

P (People): Access how the target audience of an organization is engaging online, and build on that.

O (Objectives): Be clear on the objectives the organization wants to achieve, whether it is seeking customer insights or extending marketing indicatives to an interactive channel.

S (Strategy): The first two steps are the basis for the strategy. Next, the organization needs to plan for the future, think about the consequences and how could its relationship with the customers be improved.

T (Technology): Choosing the right technologies and platforms according to the organizations target audience, i.e., which tools and tactics are better for each target.

4.4.6 Weinberg's ROI Model

Weinberg describes a model to determine social media's ROI (return on investment).

Reach	Frequency & Traffic	Influence	Conversation & Transaction	Sustainability
<p>How far does your message reach?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Links generated by messages. • Tweets about your message • People who talk about your message • Acquired new connections 	<p>Quantify factors</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Visits • Unique visitors • Returning visits 	<p>What is the reach of a conversation? And to what influence?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussions about a message/content • Comments about a message/content • Retweets • Quantity of sharing and sending message 	<p>What is the call-to-action and is it working?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Frequency of click-throughs • Downloads • Sales 	<p>Is it just one transaction or are people becoming clients and ambassadors?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sustainable member of a community • Loyalty • Frequent coming back visits

Table 17. ROI model, Weinberg (2009)

This model has five measuring categories:

Reach – Understand how far your message is going in all channels: 'links generated through messages, tweets about messages, quantity of people talking about your message and acquired new connections by generating valuable content.'

Frequency and Traffic – These are quantity factors such as : likes, visits, shares.

Influence – What is being said and how does it reach people? Does it actually have an influence? These include: 'discussions about a message or content, related comments, retweets and quantity of sharing and sending the message'.

Conversation and Transaction – Is your campaign working? How many times is your site being clicked? Content being viewed in relation to sales?

Sustainability – Understand the visitors, if they are returning, ambassadors for your brand/product/service. Understand their loyalty and frequency of visits (Weinberg, 2009).

4.5 Word-of-Mouth

McConnel et al., say social media makes it easier to share conversations, and this also extends the reach of word-of-mouth, because people are talking and sharing experiences with each other. A specific story about a company that is being shared by a user can have a significant impact on a brand's reputation, either negative or positive, depending on what is being said. Social media makes this situation grow exponentially, creating a widespread of excitement or

negative buzz without resorting to the traditional marketing channels (McConnell, B. & Huba, 2007).

A brand has a life of its own in social media. Through targeting social media in a systematic way a company can mitigate the effects of wanted and unwanted exposure.

According to MarketingPower the word-of-mouth concept is not a new and marketing researchers have been interested in it for over five decades. It can be defined as sharing information about a product, a promotion or a sale between a consumer and a friend, someone they know whether in a personal or professional way (MarketingPower, 2010). Word of Mouth has proved to have an influence on consumer's attitudes and behaviours, even up to seven times more than traditional print advertising media.

4.6 Viral marketing

Authors Kaplan and Haenlein state that viral marketing is the electronic word-of-mouth. Social media applications help spread the word about an organization, brand, product or service, and it has been growing exponentially. Viral marketing is defined by two network elements: a growth element, where each receiver will pass the message to at least one person; and the use of social media (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010).

These networks are particularly good to spread the viral marketing message into a large group of people. Some researchers refer to the terms viral marketing and social media marketing interchangeably (Kozinets et al., 2010).

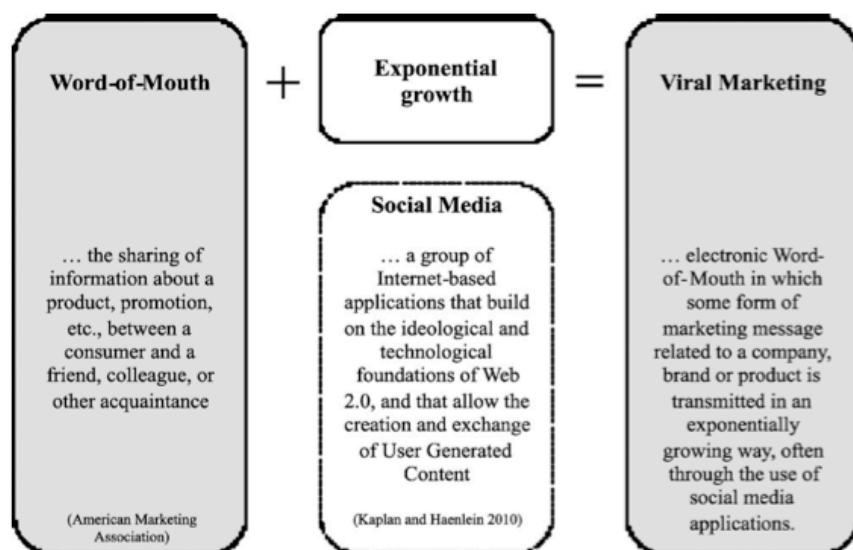


Figure 40. Relationship between word-of-mouth and viral marketing

Viral marketing is quite recent and is also sometimes referred to as the word-of-mouth. Jeffrey Rayport first mentioned it in an article. The author compared the spreading of viral marketing with some sort of epidemic flu (Rayport, 1996).

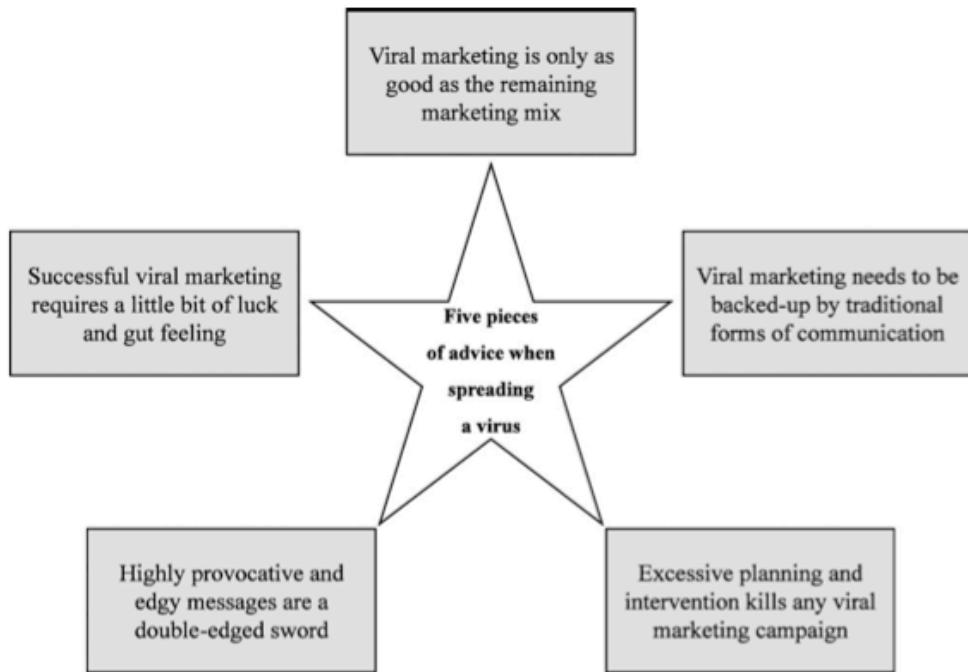


Figure 41. Five pieces of advice when spreading a virus

This figure by Kaplan and Haenlein (figure 41) shows the five rules stating that, in order to have a good viral marketing message, organizations need to make it both memorable and interesting. The focus must be on the message, and backed up with traditional media, without assuming an edgy or inappropriate position (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2011).

All of these models provide us with different outlooks on social media depending on what we need to focus on. For example the costumer triangle model has its main focus on the costumer and everything is about that. Other models talk about the different ways social media can happen for a brand, like the social media initiatives models that concerns the bottom up strategy. The social marketing total process planning model allows for a more methodical way to organize and structure social media strategy and represents all the different stages a brand needs to focus on, from scope to follow up.

In this study we use the model on figure 35 for the online survey questionnaire in order to categorize social media strategy to better understand in which stage of the social media total process planning is more important for design to be involved. This is because the six social spheres of social media marketing model is more global model that involves other areas then marketing, it includes human resources, advertising and branding. The post-method model and Weinberg's ROI model are more about analysing the situation and defining priorities for the strategy. Of course all of this has to be supported by word-of-mouth and viral marketing. These

models are just one way to theorize this area but each company needs to develop their own ways and adapt when needed.

4.7 Users in social media

Owyang (2009) suggest that it will be possible to deliver customized online experiences to social media users. Today, it is the approach implemented by Facebook ('like'), YouTube ('like' and 'dislike') buttons, but also within some brand social media websites, where customers can rate and comment on acquired products or services, and even share with friends. He identifies a convergence of platforms where sites, service, networks and people are highly interconnected, and such could be achieved by sharing the login from Facebook or Google with other systems (Owyang, 2009).

The phenomenon indicates that people's barriers to revealing their identities to websites will be lowered, making companies work easier by identifying and following the active users of its communities and websites. In order to manage several personality perceptions, "people" need to be able to project subtle variations of their own personal image towards different target audiences. It may be through a formal presence for work colleagues, a relaxed one towards friends, and even an obedient posture towards parents or elders. Brands that understand how people manage these multiple selves will be more successful than those that approach identify definition as static and mono-dimensional.

To build a strong brand DNA, the social needs of the consumer target group must be understood and used as input to the brand proposition and brand personality. How these represent and enable those shifting multiple social personalities will be crucial to the brand's success. Group membership is one of the key elements of the social world.

Owyang (2009) says that the sense of social self is not just directly connected with other people. It can also be the fictitious other present in peoples' minds. This means that there is a "little voice" inside a person's mind telling them what they should buy or do based on general public behaviour. So, the choice of toothpaste brand may not be exposed to the public, but a person still have a sense of what others would think about the subject, if it were public knowledge. Other people influence particular personal choices in the sense that if a person what's to be perceived a certain way it should buy specific brands or products. This invisible peer pressure is no less influential on affecting brand purchases than that of real friends or relatives.

It is expected that there will be an increase of people trying to connect with each other, instead of with institutions. Social networks are being adopted by consumers and by brands even during the economic recession (Owyang, 2009).

Owyang (2009) believes that today's social experience lacks a coherent sequence. He suggests that this happens because consumers have separated identities for each social network they use. The author states that a technology that empowers consumers to have a portable identity will appear soon, and that it will change the world of marketing, ecommerce, CRM and advertising (Owyang, 2009).

One could argue that in 2014 that is already happening, with more and more websites using the social media Facebook, Twitter, etc. 'plugins' to allow users to login without registering with the website directly. In 2009 Owyang believed this was just the 'tip of the iceberg'. He believed that this would evolve from different separate social websites to a global shared social experience. The online decisions consumers make will be based on peers, even if brands are not present. This will shift the power away from brands, and CRM systems as connected consumers will strengthen these communities and make way for the next generation of products. Technologies will trigger changes in consumerism and brand will have to follow.

Author Sashi says customer engagement has increased with the evolution of the Internet and the emergence of social media. The interactive nature of social media and the ability it has to establish conversations between users and companies has interested brand in content generation and value creation in order to better serve its potential customers and their needs (Sashi, 2012).

Sashi (2012) believes that in order to build customer engagement there needs to be an adaptation of the marketing mix to better take advantage of the new technologies and tools available in social media. Social media provides the opportunity to connect with customers using rich media with immense reach. The interactive nature of social media allows brands to share and exchange information with their customers and vice-versa. Brands can start forming relationships with new customers and form communities that interact with each other and collaborate. They can also identify and understand customer's problems and develop solutions that better suit them. Often these interactions are a big change in the traditional roles of seller and customer. With this new perspective customers can become big brand advocates and influence other consumers purchase decisions, but the reverse can also happen as well (Sashi, 2012).

Metrics and Analytics

According to Clifton (2010) social media can be hard to manage and like all forms of media it needs to have a distinct measurement approach in order to analyse and manage (Peters et al. 2013). Clifton believes that in order to be effective on the web there needs to be a refinement and optimizations of the online marketing strategy. This includes: site navigation, page content (online and offline) press releases and communications that interact with your online presence. Web analytics concerns different methodologies or data-collection techniques. Tools that can help measure the opportunities, visibility, comments and sentiment about your company or brand on the Internet (Clifton, 2010).

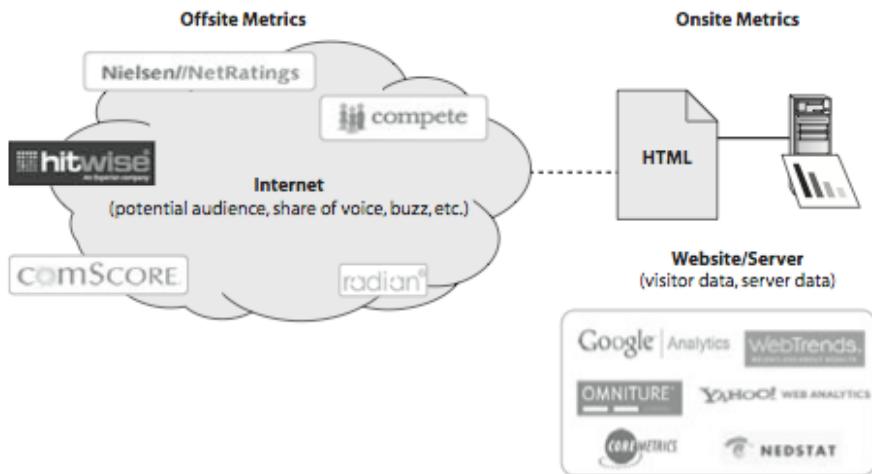


Figure 41. Onsite versus offsite web analytics

Lovett (2011) talks about four different types of social media metrics in his book *social media secrets*. These metrics are:

Foundational measures: These are measures that persist across channels and apply universally to measure all sorts of social activities. These are: interaction, engagement, influence, advocates and impact. These metrics are used to build and define other measures of success; they are building blocks of social analytics. These measures must be calculated consistently every time in order to better suit your business.

Business value metrics: These are metrics that reflect how your social media efforts are contributing to achieving corporate goals such as revenue, market share and customer satisfaction. They hold significant meaning for stakeholders across your organization. These metrics need to be developed for different departments and managers within the company.

Outcome metrics (key performance indicators – KPI's): These are measures that work towards an objective such as generating awareness, creating dialogue, encouraging interaction, facilitating support, promoting advocacy or fomenting innovation. These metrics will vary according to business needs and depend on which type of social campaign you are working on. These metrics allow you to manage progress towards your desired outcomes. These metrics will allow for an evaluation of social media activities from varied perspectives such as before, during and after a campaign.

Counting metrics: These metrics are the lowest level of measurement. These refer to fans and followers, fans, visits, views and clicks. This data may or may not have an impact on your business. These metrics measure how much and how many but hardly measure your success in social media (Lovett, 2011).

A company needs to be able to quantify their social media efforts in order to track their progress towards their goals.

Brogan, Chris (2010) believes that metrics and reports are important to weight the value of the organization efforts. Companies need to understand these goals in order to better take advantage of social media (Brogan, 2010).

4.8 Social Media Conclusions

The previous chapter illustrated how social media is pervasive and how it has disseminated to everywhere we go. It is integrated into our everyday lives, present and distributed in both our personal and work time.

An ever-increasing number of people have access to a computer, at home or workplace, and/or use smart phones to log in the Internet. These changes and the new trend of internet-based communities increase participation, dialogue and content sharing. Platforms like LinkedIn.com, Facebook.com, YouTube.com, Wikipedia.org and Twitter.com have exploded in growth. These new *social media* channels are enabled by advancements in both information technology and globalization.

As social media is in its 'infant years' it is hard to predict what might happen to brands and users in the process. However, it is already being highly used as a ROI tool for marketing and branding. Literature indicates that social media should have its own separate campaigns, but integrated in the long-term business strategy plan. The previous social media chapter indicated that strategy should target consumer's adequately for each platform.

Nowadays we see a hand full of brand disseminating information using every social media channel available, with no regard to which ones to target in order to engage with their prospective/actual consumers. Strategies have been developed to address this issue, but every brand and consumer is different. Therefore, when an organization develops a brand strategy, it should seriously consider which platform is adequate, in order to have a global social media strategy that delivers different information throughout the different channels.

Owyang says users and brand consumers also operate in the social media world, and now have more power over brands than ever. Consumers are considered as equal partners in developing mutual value and are not just marketing recipients. This leads to brands being challenged to engage with consumers in order to capture more audience, and keep the audience present on several social media channels (Owyang, 2009).

There is a more holistic view gaining momentum, where consumers are perceived as people and the emphasis is given on the different roles consumers have and focus in responding to their needs.

Beuker and Abbing believe brands need to realize that if they want to use social media in their marketing mix, different metrics apply, the content that is shared in those means and the interaction between the brand and the customers is the central part. This interaction is often unmentioned and it is exactly that that will allow brands to win on the web (Beuker & Abbing, 2010).

Briggs say that social media can drive meaningful connections and provoke conservations with actively engaged audiences (Briggs, 2010). Social media demands social brands that are able to

provoke conversations and inspire resonant stories. Social media can be a space for authentic brand narratives. An established, well-known and sharable brand story is able to provide the basis for gathering like-minded individuals.

Now social media is everywhere, in our everyday life, turning the borders between out work and spare time more diffuse. Everybody has access to a computer, at home or at their workplace, people can use their smart phones to log in the internet.

Social media is used for branding, a study shows that 82 % of managers in America use it. (Herder & Law, 2009). As social media is currently at the beginning stage, although it is already very important for marketing and branding. Brands have been managed by marketers and the social media is a new challenge for them if they want to keep control of their brands (Jensen, 2009).

Marketers approach branding for social media in a very quantitative way, using metrics and analytics to measure, compare, take conclusions and adjust their social media strategy efforts. Users are becoming more aware of these marketing tactics and knowingly or not, allow their data to be used by companies'/brands for data analysis and statistical purposes. Eventually users will become more interested in these matters and expect customised experiences and a better engagement with the brands they follow/like and interact with.

Marketers are usually in charge of brand management, and social media presents a challenge on how to keep control of your brand online. The models presented on this thesis are an aid to better understand the dynamics of such a rapid changing area as social media. Figure 25. The social media Trinity Model gives us a sense of how the brand is at the centre of everything, surrounded by the multiple social media platforms and their respective keywords: Networking, Conversation and Community. Other models like the Figure 26. Raman Model and Figure 27. Groundswell Model characterizes the different types of users in social media. Regarding social media strategy we have built our online survey with the model from the social marketing council total-process planning (figure 35) because it introduces all the stages in the social media process and presents a step-by-step strategy for social media.

Section Conclusions

In the section conclusions we will determine how the literature review areas contribute to create the research focus that we follow in the methodology chapter.

The previous literature review chapters give us a better understanding of the relationships between branding, design and social media. We present conclusions for each of the three areas in discussion in this thesis (see chapters 2.5 Branding Conclusions, chapter 3.3 Design Conclusions and 4.8 Social Media Conclusions).

This research reviews branding, design and social media by focusing on brand strategy. We aim to increase design awareness in business, which can generate overall business revenue. We will base our research collection and analysis on previously designed models presented in each chapter conclusion for each area. A unified model that contains these three areas does not exist yet. We plan to further explore the issue with data we collect following the methodology chapter.

From the literature review we have known that branding models are essential to obtain consistency across all products and markets that brands are involved. Therefore brand building strategy must be allied with design in order to provide a strategic competitive advantage. Not only in the creation of powerful graphics but to increase return on investment. In this sense a model, which combines brand strategy, design and social media is needed.

Marketing is evolving over the last years into a global technological, social and environmental place. We see social networks connect economies, cultures and desires and that is a step forward to globalization. These transformations regarding social network's technologies are social and environmental and are changing the way individuals behave and relate to with companies and other businesses.

The managing of digital is becoming very important for most organizations. Companies need to adjust themselves to these new communication medias and embrace these new ways of making business and administrate relationships. Therefore social media needs to embrace design to better craft experiences with customers. In this new global scene the keywords are: interactivity, personalization, globalization, integration, approximation, convergence and democratization of information.

Schmitz says that a lot of companies are using social media in their ideation process. Social media is at the front end of the innovation process and is replacing more costly methods such as focus groups and market research. Social media is relatively new and there is a lack of strategies and best practices to follow. Companies are more likely to benefit from social media when their strategy is aligned with established products and innovation strategies (Schmitz 2013).

In this new era, the consumer has the final word and is the main actor. The consumer now has to be part of the product being sold, and it is more and more becoming the product itself that companies aim to please or have some sort of contact with (for e.g.: Facebook holds our information and uses it commercially to better aim products and services to us as potential consumers – e.g.: advertisements on the right side of our public wall).

So, from that perspective we are Facebook's products in the sense that: our data, personal info, where we click and which websites we post about and comment on is being used as the 'new biggest potential social media market data collection ever', for which the aim is to connect, attract and engage with different potential users and try to attract them, make them share information about your brand, make the brand resonant in their lives and the lives of their families, friends, co-workers etc., make them participate in the brand social media world activities (contests, prize wins, promotions, sales information) in order to increase brand value and generate sales.

Consumers want to get something in return and there must be an appeal to them in order to do that. Advertisement can no longer be understood as a monologue, there has to be a dialogue with the consumer, and for that to happen communication has to go online and it has to make sense in that medium. Designers have the tools, expertise and skills to make social media branding success a reality. They can improve consumer's engagement with the brand; they can attract more customers and therefore generate more income. They also can make the brand more aware in people's minds and in their everyday lives, thus improving brand equity in general.

The previous Design chapter also shows us that designers are also experts at innovation and in delivering new technological or/and methodological approaches whether it is a new service design or a new product design. We believe that designers should be engaging in social media branding opportunities because they possess management, strategy and creativity skills that combine together with market knowledge and consumer reach make up for the perfect social media entrepreneur. Design management is the discipline that tries to bridge the gap between business (management) and design. Therefore investments in design will improve business performance and the overall role design plays in business.

Combining design and social media allows the design leader to better understand the consumer. Media might have been the marketing department's territory but today it fits into the design leader skills as well. As the role of design in business gains importance, the role of the design manager in adapting design to this new media as well.

This study will focus on the literature review findings followed by an empirical study, which evolved from the research design done in the methodology chapter that follows.

Section 2: Methodology

5. Overview

In the previous chapters we present the scope of this research. We determine that there is a need for studies that focus on the importance of design when branding in social media. There is a lack of research on that field and there is the need to investigate how design is involved in the process of branding in social media. This research aims to determine design's importance but also to understand how design is aiding branding in social media, process and strategy wise.

The first steps to a research are to develop an in-depth approach and generate further research questions that relate to the chosen topic. Exploring research methodology helps researchers refine and specify research methods.

It is important to identify the proper methods for conducting research. A scientific approach is required in order to arrange a set of specific tasks and procedures that can help achieve the research aim, this is known as methodology. This chapter will provide a methodological basis for this thesis research. It will give an overall view of the research methodology and available research methods that were chosen to develop the research questions (Easterby-Smith et al. 2002).

We will introduce the research philosophy and design of this study. Discuss survey questionnaire development, exploratory study, interview development and their results. We will include data sampling, collection and coding methods for the study and later the discussion of data analysis.

5.1 Introduction

Since the late fifties and early sixties a design methodology has evolved from the known 'Ulm Model' that graduates from the Ulm School of Design in Germany (Hochschule für Gestaltung - HfG Ulm 1953-1968) spread around Europe and the United States through their work and teaching methods.

After the 1962 Conference in London the participants began to publish and define research areas that seemed connected with their initial design work. They were: Behaviourism, Reductivism and Phenomenology approaches on design methods.

- Behaviourism relies on human behaviour processes such as taxonomy activities and tries to describe human behaviour in relation to the built environment.
- Reductivism approach comes from rationalism and objectified processes like the ones we see in epistemological activities.
- Phenomenology relies on human experience and perception and has a more experiential approach.

Later in 1967 a Design Research Society was founded with some participants of the 1962 Conference on Design Methods. They aimed to promote "the study of and research into the process of designing in all its many fields". The Design Research Society is an interdisciplinary group, not only designers but other professions as well, who believe in design research benefits.

Jones, John says there is no particular way to practice design methods:

"Methodology should not be a fixed track to a fixed destination, but a conversation about everything that could be made to happen. The language of the conversation must bridge the logical gap between past and future, but in doing so it should not limit the variety of possible futures that are discussed nor should it force the choice of a future that is unfree" (Jones, 1992).

Since the sixties design methods have been developing relevant, sound and humanistic problem-solving procedures and techniques in order to reduce avoidable errors that can affect design solutions. The main aim is to find a method that suits a specific design situation.

In today's design reality many of their ideas have been made into design methods:

- Emphasis on the user
- Use of basic research methods to validate convictions with fact
- Use of brainstorming and other related means to break mental patterns and precedent
- Increased collaborative nature of design with other disciplines

Design is extremely adaptable in nature, taking ideas and concepts from the most diverse professions in order to suit individual practitioners. The original founders of design method wanted to break away with an unimaginative and static society and unify exploration, collaboration and intuition.

Design methods are a term that is being widely used. It is a shared belief in an exploratory and rigorous method to solve problems through design (Jones, 1992).

Research Paradigms

Research paradigms have been widely used to determine appropriate methodology and recommended methods to treat different types of data. We will elaborate on the research paradigms found in the table below.

Paradigm	Characteristics	Status of Data	Methodology
Naturalistic – Positivism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> the social reality is real important that the researcher does not affect/ influence the data quotes are marked “...” Focus on “What”-questions 	Facts about behaviour and attitudes	Random samples Standard questions Tabulations
Etnometodology – Constructionism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> search for production of meaning reality is produced through interaction focus on “how”-questions 	Mutually constructed	Unstructured Open-ended interviews
Emotionalism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> purpose: to get on the inside focus on the subject's own feelings both the researcher's and the subject's feeling is empirical material 	Authentic experience	Any interview treated as topic.
Post-modernism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> worried about self-consciousness research constructs the reality by producing description on it. 	-	De-constructing texts

Table 18. Paradigms

Naturalism

This view considers its aim to capture the natural occurring behaviour, which can only be observed by first-hand contact. Because this type of research is carried out in a natural way there is not room for interference from artificial settings, such as experiments. The research doing this approach should seek to minimize their effects on the behaviour that is being studied. The aim is to generalize from the research gathered in these natural environments to other similar scenarios. This notion implies that every social event and process is explained in a matter of their relationship with the context, which they occur. The realities are multiple, constructed and holistic and their main purpose is to understand the meaning from the participants perspectives. Participants are seen as part of the research and are often asked to make their own interpretation of the results. Data is usually non-numeric and the focus is mainly on the event's description. Inquiry is value bound and reliability and generalization are not concepts of value with this thinking (Creswell, 2003).

Positivism

This research approach is about theory and hypothesis testing and mainly quantitative in nature (Patton, 2001). This type of research is used in the natural sciences such as biology, botany and physics. Positivism was founded by studies of human behaviour (Collis & Hussey, 2003). Using a deductive technique, which starts with the literature, it tries to develop theories and construct hypotheses in order to collect data. Numerical data collection is considered for investigating and relating to human behaviours in an objective way (Creswell, 2003), (Saunders & , M.N.K, Lewis, P., & Thornhill, 2009).

This view asks the research to be objective and completely detached from objects in his research. It is believed it is impossible to capture the real reality through research instruments.

This type of research is critiqued because studying social life is very different from studying in a laboratory. The social researcher has values, experiences and politics that cannot be separated from the research data procedures. Guba and Lincoln ask if there is even a 'real reality' to be observed (Guba & Lincoln, 1994). 'Positivism asserts that objective accounts of the world can be given' (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994). However there are as many as twelve different positivism varieties as Crotty states (Crotty, 1998).

Ethnomethodology

Is a qualitative theoretical approach in sociology that studies people's own methods on constructing their reality, it is believed that you can discover the normal social order of a society by disrupting said society. Ethnomethodologists often try and disrupt social norms and observe how people respond to them and try and restore social order. This approach uses categories in order to understand how people go about doing their activities (Andersen et al. 2009). This teaches us that society behaves as if there were no other way for them to do so. People usually go along with the flow and do what is expected of them and the existence of norms is only apparent when they are violated.

Constructivism

'It is the view that all knowledge, and therefore all meaningful reality as such, is contingent upon human practices, being constructed in and out of interaction between human beings and their world, and developed and transmitted within an essentially social context... In the constructionist view, as the word suggests, meaning is not discovered by constructed' (Crotty, 1998).

In constructivism the researcher and the object of his research are assumed to be interactively linked, this means that the findings are created as the investigation proceeds. Realities are apprehendable in forms of intangible mental constructions and social and experimental based. Depending for their form and content on the individual persons or groups who hold the constructions (Guba & Lincoln, 1994).

Emotionalism

This term derives from the attempt to distinguish between different kinds of qualitative research and derives from the work of Gubrium and Holstein, Emotionalism is used to construct and criticize analytical preferences, kinds of discourse, investigatory approaches, and ways of writing. Researchers prioritize the authenticity and locate the real in the emotional life of the researcher and participants (Gubrium, Jaber F. and Holstein, 1997).

Post-Modernism

Postmodernism argue that this is the era of locally, temporally and situational narratives are now required. This contemporary sensibility has been developing since World War II and it privileges no single authority, method or paradigm. The loss of boundaries and the overpowering of totalizing distinctions is no more. For example, they believe that the difference between elite and pop culture or between life and art does not exist anymore. Whilst Modernists believe, and are inspired, by a messianic sense of mission.

Post Modern research approach offers an overview of a work narrative and directs the readers to key issues by creating coherence that progresses through the argument. They can offer several arguments to a story, though some of them can be unruly or contradictory (Scheurich, 1997). The type of research style depends on the overarching aim of the research and available resources but also the time frame.

We can conclude from this analysis that this thesis uses a mixed method approach. This study combines elements of qualitative and quantitative approaches for the purpose of breadth and depth of understanding and corroboration. In the mixed method approach we represent the data collected in both a numerical, textual and pictorially. We used parallel mixed designs with the survey and interviews, using triangulation methods. This approach allows tackling the problem from more than a point of view. This study uses triangulating data sources by seeking convergence across qualitative and quantitative methods. In this mixed method approach the researcher tends to base knowledge on pragmatic grounds. The study employs strategies of inquiry that involve collecting data sequentially (survey and interviews) to best understand the research problems. The study begins with a broad survey and in a second phase semi-structured interviews to collect detailed views from the participants. (Creswell, 2003).

5.2 Methodology

A research methodology is a way of creating the strategy and to choose the most appropriate methods to conduct a specific piece of research. We will review the different methodology theories and select the most suited for our research (Burns, 2000). Research methods can be differentiated as qualitative, quantitative and mixed methods approaches.

	Solicited	Spontaneous
Quantitative	Experiment Interview Survey Mail Survey Structured diary Web survey	(Passive) observation Monitoring Administrative records (e.g. statistical records, databases, internet archives)
Qualitative	Open Interview Focus Group Unstructured Diary	(Participant) observation Existing records (e.g. ego-documents, images, sounds, news archives).

Table 19. Examples of Primary Data in social Research by Hox, Boeije (2005)

A qualitative approach is when the inquirer makes claims based primarily on constructivist perspectives. It uses strategies of inquiry such as narratives, phenomenologies, ethnographies, grounded theory studies or case studies. The researcher then collects the data with the primary intent of developing themes from it (Creswell, 2003). A quantitative approach is based primarily on post positivist claims for developing knowledge. The researcher employs strategies of inquiry such as experiments and surveys in order to collect data on predetermined instruments that generate statistical data. Some examples of qualitative and quantitative methods are exemplified on table 20. The mixed methods approach comes from pragmatic grounds. It is problem-centred and employs strategies that involve collecting data either simultaneously or sequentially in order to understand the research problem. The data collection could involve both numerical information or/and text information.

Quantitative Research Methods	Qualitative Research Methods	Mixed Methods Research Methods
Predetermined Instrument based questions; Performance data, attitude data, observational data, and census data; Statistical analysis	Emerging methods; Open-ended questions; Interview data, observation data, document data, and audio-visual data; Text and image analysis	Both predetermined and emerging methods; Both open-and closed-ended questions; Multiple forms of data drawing on all possibilities; Statistical and text analysis.

Table 20. Quantitative, Qualitative and Mixed methods procedures

The final database for this approach represents both quantitative and qualitative information. More details of these different types of research approaches are introduced in the following sections of this chapter.

5.2.1 Qualitative methodology

There has been a discussion about the use of qualitative and ethnographic methods in the design process. Wixon believes that some factors behind the rise of qualitative methods use is the need to understand users and customers in the early phases of product and service development. We can understand users by involving them in the design process, by collecting information through qualitative methods (Wixon, 1995).

Qualitative research is able to provide a rich and vivid information that can be used to uncover hidden unconscious social processes and areas of social life that are impossible to collect by means of other methods. This type of research concerns the meanings people attach to their social world experiences. It explores the people's subjective understandings of their day-to-day lives (Lammi et al., 2010).

Qualitative research includes for example Community Studies, Ethnography, Feminist Research, Grounded Theory and Participant Observation. It covers different types of research that share common features such as:

- They seek for and interpret meanings in actions, rather than describing any uniformities or statistical connotations between 'variables'.
- They look at actions as part of a holistic social process and context, instead of something that can be extracted for further study in isolation.

- They do not force things to happen, instead they try to observe social phenomenon's as they occur naturally.
- They operate in a not so abstract but generalized level of reasoning.
- They use non-representative, small percentages of people instead of using large representative samples in order to identify the broad sweep of patterns.

They focus on the *detail* of human life instead of starting from a theoretical hypothesis and test it, they aim to explore data as they encounter it and allow ideas to emerge from it. (i.e. using *inductive*, not deductive, logic) (Hox, J.J. & Boeije, 2005).

This type of research is grounded in a philosophical position, because it concerns how the social world is interpreted and understood. The methods of data generation are flexible and sensitive to the social context in which the data is produced, instead of being 'real' to its natural context, planned in a laboratory or made with rigid parameters or standardized formats. Assuming methods of analysis and explanation to relate to understanding the complexity, the detail and the context. It aims to produce rounded understandings with a base of rich, contextual data. There is, however, more emphasis on the holistic forms of analysis than on trying to find patterns, trends or correlations. Although qualitative research uses some form of data quantification, statistical forms of analysis are not their bases of knowledge (Mason, 1996).

How is it used for:

- Events can be seen in context, a qualitative researcher immerses him/herself in the setting;
- Inquiry contexts are natural, not contrived. Nothing is taken for granted or predefined;
- This type of research is an interactive process in the subjects of the study speak for themselves, providing their own words and actions;
- The experience is a whole, not separate parameters. The aim is to understand experience as an unified matter;
- There is not a general method and qualitative research is appropriate for all of the above;
- The process itself contains appraisal of what was studied;

Ely et al add the following from Sherman and Webb (1988) to their definition: '*Qualitative implies a direct concern with experience as it is 'lived' or 'felt' or 'undergone' ... Qualitative research, then, has the aim of understanding experience as nearly as possible as its participants feel it or live it*' (Robert R. Sherman, 2001).

Limitations

A problem with validity and reliability has been its major point of criticism. It is considered to be subjective because of the qualitative nature of the data. However there are methods to apply conventional standards for reliability and validity. The conditions, situations, events or interactions cannot be replicated and cannot be generalized in a wider context. The time that is required for data collection, analysis and its interpretation can be long. The researcher being present has some effect on the subjects of study.

Issues like anonymity and confidentiality can present some problems when selecting the findings. Because of bias, both the points of view of the research and the participants have to be well cleared and easily identifiable (Mason, 1996).

Strengths

The researcher is closely involved and gains an inside view of the field. This gives him/her the ability to find issues that are often not regarded, for example by the scientific or a more positivistic type of research.

Descriptions play an important role in suggesting possible connections, causes, effects and dynamic processes. Using a more descriptive narrative style, not conveying to statistics, this type of research is particular beneficial to the practitioner because they can turn to qualitative reports to exam forms of knowledge that might not be available otherwise, gaining new knowledge of the subject. Qualitative research adds knowledge and validity to the social sciences (Mason, 1996).

5.2.2 Quantitative methodology

This type of research technique is most referred to when its associated with a survey or a type of experimental research design. Quantitative research concerns the collection and analysis of data in numerical form. It has its emphasis on large-scale and representative sets of data and is often perceived as being the collection of 'facts'.

Quantitative strategies are often viewed as more valid because of the strong associations with statistics as social facts. They became the dominant ideas of science as objective and somewhat detached.

Most of the small-scale research studies that use questionnaires as a form of data gathering will not need to use more then descriptive statistics and exploration of the interrelationships between a number of variables. Its suitable to say that many participants, the number or the proportion of the total, answered a determined question in a possible way, and that some answers given may have a relationship with each other. This type of analysis makes wide use of proportions and percentages and measures the tendencies and averages of certain ranges.

Strengths

There might be a need to go further with the analysis and proceed to a use of inferential statistic or multivariate methods of analysis. This type of inferential statistics have several types, the most commonly used are Chi-square, Kolmogrov and the Student's t-test. These functions vary but they are used to compare the measurements of the samples collected for a particular variable with another sample in order to make an assumption on how similar or unlikely they are.

These inferential statistics make certain assumptions about your data and how it was collected. You have to make it clear however, whether your data is nominal, ordinal, interval or ration. These assumptions need to be taken into consideration in accordance with the measures.

Limitations

There are several ways to analyse and explore the interrelationships among three or more variables simultaneously. These examples include multiple regression, cluster analysis and factor analysis. It is not so important if you do not have a mathematical knowledge to be able to apply these different techniques, they are available as part of computer software packages such as: ADaMsoft, SPSS, PSPP, R-Statistics, however you should have an understanding of their principles and know how to apply them.

A key issue with quantitative analysis is regarding causality. One of the main purposes of this type of analysis is to understand and seek for an explanation in the data. To be able to infer that something is like this because of another thing. However it is important to understand that just because two variables have measurements that appear to be related can we call them so. Statistical relationships between two variables can be a matter of chance or due to the effect or some other variable. If there is a need to show causality, there is a need to find a mechanism that links all the variables together (Blaxter et al., 2001).

Quantitative strategies involve complex experiments and include many variables and treatments (e.g., factorial designs and repeated measure designs). Two strategies of enquiry used in quantitative research include: experiments and surveys.

How is it used for:

- Experiments are done with a random assignment of subjects to treatment conditions.
- Surveys include cross-sectional and longitudinal studies using questionnaires, or structured interviews in order to collect data with the intent of generalizing a sample (Creswell 2003).

5.2.3 Mixed methodology

This involves collecting and analysing both forms of data in a study. It is less known than quantitative or qualitative research. This concept of combining different methods has its origins in 1959 when Campbell and Fiske utilized multiple methods to study the validity of their study. They proposed other to use their 'multimethod matrix' in order to examine multiple approaches to collect data in a study. This originated other researchers to use mix methods as well and soon approached associated with field methods and interviews (qualitative) were combined with traditional data (quantitative) (Campbell & D W Fiske, 1959), (Creswell, 2003).

Three strategies and several variations can be found:

- Sequential strategies: where the researcher seeks to elaborate or expand the research findings of one method with the use of another method. This could involve a qualitative method followed up with a quantitative method and vice-versa.
- Concurrent strategies: where the researcher converges quantitative and qualitative data to provide a comprehensive analysis of the research matters. The researcher collects both forms of data at the same time and integrates the information in the interpretation of the results.
- Transformative strategies: where the researcher uses a theoretical lens as a comprehensive perspective that contains quantitative and qualitative. This provides a framework for all topics of interest and methods for collecting the data (Creswell, 2003).

5.3 Research design

The previous sections describe how qualitative, quantitative and mixed methodology approaches could be applied to collect various data in the research. It also describes the design methods and research paradigms available to us. The section below will justify the selection of the most suitable research methodology and methods for this study.

Research design is about turning research questions into projects. Hakim says that “research design is about aiming in the right direction, getting your bearings right, and making sure you are adequately equipped to get there and back” (Hakim, 2000). Research design should come from the research questions and use strategies and methods most suited to answer them (Creswell 2003).

In this section we discussed research design and how it links to the research questions, theory and research methods. Next section will take into consideration qualitative, quantitative and mixed methodology methods and how they are appropriate to this study

We need to consider the different range of methods available to us in order to propose the appropriate research methods for this study. The next chapter will elaborate on the available methods, and their potential and appropriateness for this study.

5.3.1 Qualitative research methods

Interviews

Interviews are a common practice in qualitative research and a good source of data. (Bryman & Bell, 2007). Kvale believes that it is an attempt to understand the world from the subject's point of view. Interviews are a flexible instrument to collect data from the participants at their own pace and in a language natural to them (Kvale, 1996).

There are of course disadvantages in using interviews as a data collection method namely that the researcher needs to have good listening skills and non-directive questioning techniques (Burns, 2000), (Creswell, 2003). Also the interviewee may not feel comfortable and change his behaviour and there might be some problems identifying the appropriate subjects (Bryman & Bell, 2007).

There are two types of in depth interview: semi-structured or focused and unstructured or non-directive. We opted for the semi-structured interview because it is based on a small number of open-ended questions. Also the answers are freely probed and there are questions or topics that can go from general to more specific ones. The unstructured or non-directive interview model does not have any pre-defined question and at this point we were able to formulate some questions and then further in some of them as the interviewee made some specific points. The interview can enable participants to give their statement about their experiences, opinions at their own pace and in their own way. The task as an interviewer is to try and probe for the details and to try and clarify ideas and topics that were not clear or could not be clear to further analysis.

So, the questions the interviewer asks have a predominant role in the direction each interview takes. For this method to be work at its best it is recommended that the interviewer has a detailed knowledge of the issues being discussed, therefore probing and conducting the interview in a matter that's both interesting for the interviewee to answer but also answers the questions being asked in a clear way.

In order for the interview to go smoothly and to make it pleasant for both the interviewee and the interviewer it is preferable not to take notes as it might inhibit the flow. So for the interviews I've conducted only the audio was recorded and some small notes were taken in case there was a software failure in the recording. A clear and good data collection is crucial to select quotations for later inclusion in publications (Thomson, R., Bell, R. Holland, J. Henderson, S. McGrellis, S. and Sharpe, 2002).

After the recordings were done, transcription was essential in order to translate it into readable text for analysis. The transcriptions were input manually because of a lack of text-coding program that worked as fast as a human and was able to recognize different accents and expressions.

We can conclude that interviews have the disadvantage of being time consuming, cost was not an issue because most of the interviews were recorder online with the help of a recording device, either a blackberry or an iPod, or both in most cases. Interviews seem less anonymous and can be inferior to self-written accounts, regarding sensitive cases for example. There is also the potential for interviewer bias, despite the idea that the interviewer is in control there might be some fieldwork that is confuse and hard to organize. It can be beneficial because of the high response rate that comes from our subset sampling. Interviewees do not need to possess any special skill in order to respond to an interview, just their experience, thoughts and opinions on a matter.

This produces a lot of data consistency, while qualitative interviewing provides flexibility and elaboration of answers.

Semi-Structured Interviews

These types of interviews allow for a more focused and conversational communication with the interviewee. These questions are formulated before hand and can start with a set of topics that are relevant to the study in question.

Some of the questions might have not been planned but make sense during the interview. These interviews are built upon a quite and are described in the interview matrix below.

Purpose	Major Benefits	Possible Problems
Obtain quantitative and qualitative data from a population sample	Less intrusive encouraging a two way communication	Similar responses, more information then needed
Obtain general information that is relevant to a specific topic	Confirms hypothesis and theories as it gives out answers to questions	Participants may get off topic and not answer the questions clearly
Gather a range of insight about a particular subject	Interviewee are more at ease to talk specific topics of interest	Failure to probe when necessary and listen to closely

Table 21. Purposes, Major benefits and possible problems

This type of research is focused on finding a solution for a local problem in a local setting (Leedy, P. D., & Ormrod, 2005).

We have an identifiable problem and we act accordingly by investigating it. According to authors DeLuca, Gallivan, and Kock these are the steps to conduct action research (DeLuca et al., 2008):

- a) Diagnose the problem;
- b) Plan the action;
- c) Take the action;
- d) Evaluate the results;
- e) Specify lessons learners for next cycle.

It is preferential to use a qualitative format and use a varied approach to coding. Iain Hay talks about a two-step process that begins with basic coding in order to find the themes and then interpretive code in which trends and patterns are interpreted. This can all be done manually or using a software package such as Atlas.ti, QDA Miner or NVivo. We opted to do the coding manually (Hay, 2010).

The process of coding and analysing the data is critical because it enables the researcher to make an original contribution to the subject area.

5.3.2 Quantitative research methods

Survey

Social survey questionnaires are widely used as a social science tool; surveys can, through market research and opinion polling come up with answers about contemporary life. When properly conducted they are effective means of data collection (Hoinville, G., Jowell, 1982).

Hoinville et al., say that when selecting a survey as a method we must assume that, the interviewer will be asking specific pre-determined questions during a short period of time, so that, it can collect answers that will be valuable for the researcher. Although misuse of social surveys has occurred and that led to discredit, some social researchers turned to other qualitative methods. Confidence in the results must come from the integration of good practices within all the constituents of the survey, but also in the accurate application of this method to the proper purposes (Hoinville, G., Jowell, 1982).

The stages in this survey are:

1. Choosing the topic
2. Reviewing the literature
3. Forming the hypothesis
4. Identifying the potential participants

5. Preparatory research and interviews
6. Preparing the interview schedule
7. Conduct the pilot survey
8. Finishing the questionnaire
9. Sample the participants
10. Collecting the data
11. Processing the data and analysing the results
12. Writing the research report
13. Publishing the report

Overview of the methods used

We had the opportunity to conduct an exploratory study during the summer and fall of 2011 with Portuguese branding, marketing and design experts. The methods used in the exploratory study were an online survey questionnaire for general categorization of themes and keywords about the general thoughts on the three different areas that comprise this study: marketing, design and social media. Doing an initial exploratory study helped to understand the issues that rose from the research questions and further deepen the research area as much as we could before elaborating the online survey and semi-structured interviews. The exploratory study served also to test the different methods available and decide which best suited the study at hands. In matters of rigor and form the exploratory study also helped to better shape questions, survey structure and deepen the understanding of the area.

The exploratory study consisted of in depth face-to-face interviews, two online surveys tested in two different online survey platforms (Survey Monkey and Google forms), mail survey questionnaires and informal talks with people who worked in the areas of interest.

The initial exploratory study allowed for a more in depth approach for the questionnaire that followed. A face-to-face in depth interview and two other email interviews done in the exploratory study phase also allowed for expert feedback on the where areas these people work with, such as branding, marketing and design and how they implement their strategies and content creation.

The method of online survey was chosen because it allows data to be collected in a standard way through a specific sample of participants. We did an Internet survey through a self-completion questionnaire that enabled us to collect a hundred and three valid responses. This method allowed the participant to take his time to answer the survey, making it more

convenient than a face-to-face interview or a phone-interview. Direct questions and Linkert scale questions are more suited for an online survey because they can contain a lot of data and the participant does not have to write anything, he just needs to analyse his answer and rate appropriately. These types of questions are quick to answer and do not make the questionnaire long. A question in the online survey allowed for participants to leave their contact if they were available for a follow up interview.

Participants who left their details on the online survey questionnaire where contacted for a semi-structured follow up interview. These were conducted with twenty-one expert participants (branding, marketing, design and social media) from both the United Kingdom and Portugal. We chose semi-structured interviews because we wanted to have some leverage on the participant and be able to change the conversation categories by adding more in depth or related to a specific topic that was mentioned by the interviewee questions.

An exploratory study, semi-structured interviews and an online survey questionnaire were the methods used for the primary data collection based on the Questioning Approach. Data can be collected in two forms: primary and secondary (Bryman & Bell, 2007), (Creswell, 2003). For the secondary data a literature review was done on the three different areas in question: branding, design and social media. We then elaborated two models based on the data collected and analysis done. The models were then shown to thirty experts that expressed their feedback and allowed for the proposed changes to be made to the models. This resulted in the final models shown in this thesis that comprehend the results from the findings and literature review.

6. Data Collection

This chapter discusses the data collection methods available for this study and the fundamental bases of each approach. We consider data collection in a wider context and explain the differences between primary and secondary data and the importance literature review had in this study.

There were a number of challenges in this study; since the area is fairly new to designers, marketers and even users, there is not a specific discipline or role for design yet. The role itself needs clarification as it is often considered differently depending on the size, type and even general goal of the company. We have designers working directly with the brands in social media but we also have designers only implementing something that a team of managers or marketers lead. So we aim to understand just where design had its influence and what type of design was being done.

The primary data collection methods we chose for this study are: the online survey questionnaire and the semi-structured interviews that resulted from that. Secondary data was collected through a reviewed and comprehensive literature review that consisted of three different research areas: branding, design and social media.

Research questions are the essence of the research being conducted and they act as a plan for the whole investigation (Mertler, C.A. & Vannatta, 2001).

They have to be clear and specific enough in order to be answered (Creswell, 2003). This type of research may have more than one research question and they have to be according to authors Ellis and Levy “in order for the research to be at all meaningful, there has to be an identifiable connection between the answers to the research questions and the research problem inspiring the study” (p. 20), (Ellis & Levy, 2008).

There are five main questions and seven sub questions in this thesis (see figure 1), these questions try to understand the importance and value design can bring when branding in social media. From the literature review we find that design has a lot of potential that can be relevant to a highly communication area such as social media. We aim to understand if that potential is being explored at its fullest and what can be done to facilitate its adoption into social media models. If we understand the current roles designers are playing in social media we can determine its importance in the social media area. The skills that are needed to work in social media might relate to existing design skills. When we understand the difference between design strategies and social media strategies we can achieve a common ground in which design can play an active role in social media strategy and elaborate models that can help with the better understanding of designer’s role in social media. Social media is evolving and design can play a larger role in that, understanding what value design can bring to social media today can help plan for what the future might bring to social media platforms as well as designers.

The following section will discuss secondary data through a comprehensive understanding of a literature review.

6.1 Literature Review

According to Hakim doing a literature review is a common part of the ground clearing and preparatory work that it is done in the early stages of any empirical work. This 'provides a synthesis of existing knowledge on a specific question, based upon as assessment of all relevant empirical research' (Hakim, 2000).

Literature reviews can generate new ideas and are able to identify current issues from previous work done by others. It emphasis is on the knowledge gained from the research that was done in this field to date. Literature reviews often consider secondary data instead of primary data. Neuman identifies its goals as:

- a. Demonstrate a familiarity with a body of knowledge and establish credibility;
- b. Show the path of prior research and how projects link to each other;
- c. Integrate and summarize what is known in the area;

However there are different types of literature review, Hakim says that there are two different types: Methodological Research reviews and Policy Oriented research reviews. The first concerns assessing the contributions and weaknesses of different research. The second is about summarizing the current knowledge and draw out the policy implications (Hakim, 2000). Neuman on the other hand provides a wider identification of different literature review types (Neuman, 2007):

1. Self-study increases the reader's confidence;
2. Context reviews place a specific project in the big picture;
3. Historical reviews trace the development of an issue over time;
4. Theoretical reviews compare how different theories address an issue;
5. Integrative reviews summarize what is known at a point in time;
6. Methodological reviews point out methodology varies by study

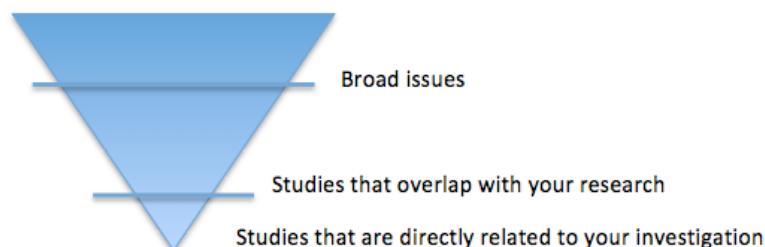


Figure 43. Literature Review scheme

Literature reviews can be done in a Chronological, Trend, Thematic or methodological. The first one refers to a research organized in a chronological progression. You can also treat your research as trends, which you identify within the research. This approach can encompass cultural, geographical and cultural trends. The thematic approach focuses on the central issues or topics while the Methodological framework organizes itself around the methodologies used on the research. This can be presenting an analysis of research techniques and understanding if they are viable and reliable in order to address issues like qualitative, quantitative, in depth case studies and so on. This type of literature review was used because there is a common wish to justify the methods choices to our peers.

The thesis has three fields of study:

1. Literature from the marketing field of studies, that compromises branding and branding methodologies;
2. Literature from the field of design (theory and practice perspectives).
3. Literature from the social media field.

The literature review was collected from different sources, such as books, journals, white papers and other online resources such as online-seminars, YouTube lectures etc. This was done because the subject of this study is fairly new and very little scholarly literature was available.

For the literature review we will be using a theoretical research regarding three different topics: branding, design and social media, this concerns their different areas, theories, approaches and epistemologies that currently exist in books, journals and articles.

After a comprehensive literature review analysis we prepared to collect the primary data of this study. We have identified the major gaps in knowledge and developed a better understand of the three areas at hand.

Primary Data

Primary data can be collected through a number of different methods sometimes more than one method can apply to a single problem. There are two broad approached to it: The Questioning approach and the Observation approach (table 22).

Questioning Approach	Observation Approach
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Participants play an active role - Interview or a formal questionnaire - Question design <p>Can use either for exploratory, descriptive, or experimental</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Not all questioning or interviewing situations use formal questionnaires <p>Questionnaire is a tool that is used in many, but not all, research projects</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Passive - In-person or mechanical devices - Time consuming <p>-Can use either for exploratory, descriptive, or experimental</p>

Table 22. Questioning and Observation Approach

Data Analysis

There are three different strategies for data analysis according to Yin:

- Theoretical proposition (establishing a conceptual framework and concepts);
- Rival explanations (testing different perspectives);
- Case explanations (Developing a framework with case study data) (Yin, 2003).

There are also several analytic techniques such as: pattern matching, explanation building, time-series, logic models and cross-case synthesis.

Qualitative data can be analysed in four stages:

- 1) Data reduction;
- 2) Data display;
- 3) Conclusion drawing;
- 4) Verification.

However, data analysis can only be complete when the volume of data collected is organized in a manageable way. These methods help define and prioritize concepts and find associations and explanations.

Analysing the Semi-Structured Interviews Data

This is the process of combining the data for themes, ideas and categories. This is possible by marking similar passages of text with a code label so it can later be compared and analysed. By coding the data it is easier to search for it to later identify the patterns that require further investigation.

Codes can be based on:

- Themes, Topics,
- Ideas, Concepts,
- Terms, Phrases,
- Keywords

Similar content passages of text are coded into the same colour label in this case. Divided by coloured post it notes. The process of coding with associating labels with text requires close reading of the transcripts. If a theme comes up that is not related with the current themes, a new code and theme must be added. The list of topics and themes will grow as the researcher reads through the data and this list of codes will help identify the issues in the data.

Approaches

We can begin the coding with some themes already identified from a priori ideas. The themes came from the research questions topics and were later developed through exploratory study answers given by marketing experts. These might be pre-existing theories or just new codes that emerged from the data set as in grounded theory.

These can be identified from a range of sources:

- Previous research or theory
- Research or evaluation questions you are addressing
- Questions and topics from your interview schedule
- Your gut feeling about the data or the setting

Codes can also emerge from the data itself if the researcher puts aside his presuppositions and previous knowledge of the subject area and simply tries to find new themes in the data. There are many different types of codes that are used in qualitative data analysis, such as: A priori codes and inductive codes. A priori codes are developed before examining the data. The researcher, while examining the data directly, develops inductive codes.

According to Charmaz researchers often have codes before they start the analysis. The author suggests the researcher asks itself the following questions about the data that is being coded:

- "What is going on?
- What are people doing?
- What is the person saying?
- What do these actions and statements take for granted?
- How do structure and context serve to support, maintain, impede or change these actions and statements?" (Charmaz ,2006).

Constant comparison

Grounded theorist recommend constant comparison, which means that every time you select a passage and could it you should compare it to previous ones. This will ensure that the coding is consistent. You can also compare passages with similar codes and compare them with examples from outside your data set.

Other techniques

Ryan and Bernard have suggested different ways in which coding transcripts can lead to new themes in data (G.W. & Russel, 2003). They suggest:

- Word repetitions – looking for commonly used words;
- Indigenous categories (terms used by participants with a particular meaning and significance in their setting).
- Key-words-in-context – look for the range of uses of key terms in the phrases and sentences in which they occur.
- Compare and contrast – essentially the grounded theory idea of constant comparison.
- Social science queries – introduce social science explanations and theories.
- Searching for missing information – essentially try to get an idea of what is not being done or talked out, but which you would have expected to find.
- Metaphors and analogies – people often use metaphor to indicate something about their beliefs.
- Transitions – one of the discursive elements in speech.

- Connectors – connections between terms such as causal ('since', 'because', 'as' etc.) or logical ('implies', 'means', 'is one of' etc.)
- Unmarked text – examine the text that has not been coded at a theme or even not at all.
- Pawing (i.e. handling) – marking the text and eyeballing or scanning the text. Circle words, underline, use coloured highlighters, run coloured lines down the margins to indicate different meanings and coding. Then look for patterns and significances.
- Cutting and sorting – the traditional technique of cutting up transcripts and collecting all those coded the same way into piles, envelopes or folders or pasting them onto cards. Laying out all these scraps and re-reading them, together, is an essential part of the process of analysis.

Analysing themes

The transcripts of twenty-one interviews were analysed to identify and develop codes and arrive to themes, concepts and categories. This process of meta-analysis helped to draw interrelated themes. Only some of the interviews were used for detailed analysis. Post it notes were used to capture themes and codes which allowed the data to be manipulated more easily. The use of visual maps helped explores the patterns and correlations between the data. This study used open, axial and selective coding during the data analysis activities. The taking of photographs was done as a data recording mechanism that allowed more exploration into a variety of possible correlations. Banks (2007: p.118) says that ' it is difficult to imagine a social research investigation that does not – or that could not – employ images at some stage of the analysis'.

Glaser & Strauss believe that basing data analysis on participant-centric visual representations of experience maps offers means to ground theory within data and it could be helpful in assisting a middle ground in the discussion about how systematic analysis within qualitative research can be (Glaser & Strauss ,1967).

Concept maps have been used in quantitative research based on strict definitions, however their use in the social sciences might require a less rigid definition. These concept maps provide visual representation of dynamic schemes of understanding and these might include visual or graphic representation of concepts, propositions, word links, arrows or simple lines connecting (Ahlberg, M., & Ahoranta, 2004).

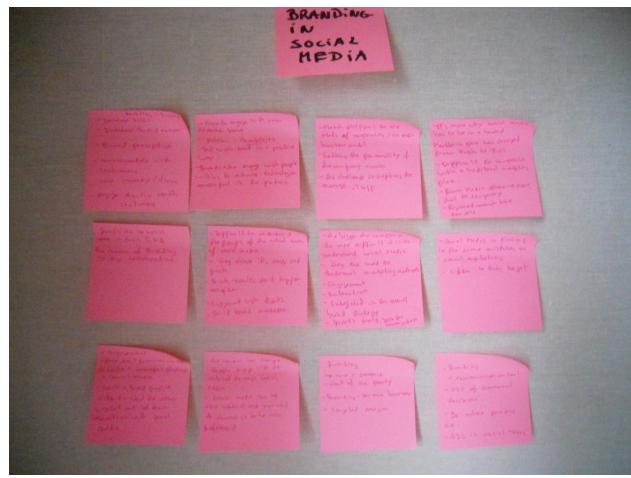


Figure 44. Concept Maps 1

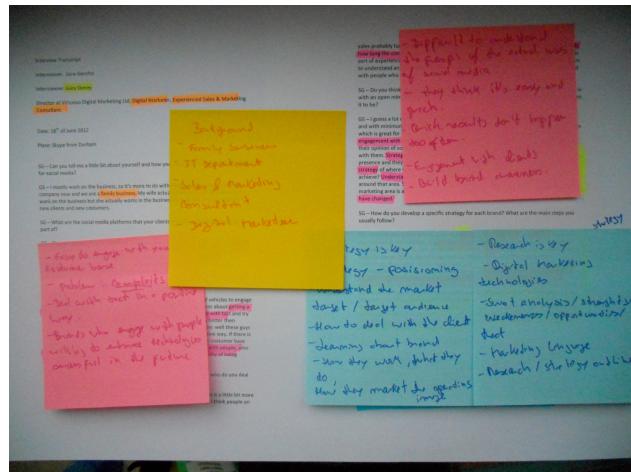


Figure 45. Concept Maps 2

We attributed six colours to six different themes that were mentioned in the interviews. These themes were also linked with the preliminary study findings.

Colour Pink	Branding in social media
Colour Blue	Design in social media
Colour Orange	Skills in social media
Colour Green	Social media strategy
Colour Yellow	Future of social media
Colour Purple	UK and PT social media differences

Table 23. Colours and Themes

6.2 Triangulation of methods

This study uses a triangulation of methods in order to generate rich data and a wider range of outcomes. This is possible by the use of quantitative (online questionnaire) and qualitative methods (literature review and interviews).

Each method used will give different insights about the same social and symbolic reality. The use of this triangulation method offers multiple lines of sight in order to obtain a more sustained view of the reality at hand because it incorporates a more complete array of theoretical concepts. The triangulation approach enables a mutual confirmation of results and the validation of findings (Leedy, P. D., & Ormrod, 2005).

Denzin, NK & Lincoln believe that triangulation means refining, broadening conceptual links. This allows the research to explore other perspectives than their own (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994). It refers to using more than one particular approach when doing research. This allows for the research to get richer and fuller data in order to confirm the results. Denzin talks about four different types of triangulation (Denzin, 1970):

- Data triangulation: which is gathering data from several sampling strategies, having slices of data at different times, on different people.
- Investigator triangulation: which is to use more than one researcher in the field to gather and interpret data.
- Theoretical triangulation: which is to use more than one theoretical position while interpreting the data.
- Methodological triangulation: which is to use more than one method for gathering data.

This research falls in the last category, the one of methodological triangulation. We gather data through an exploratory study using: an online survey, and semi-structured interviews and then after the data was collected and analysed two models were elaborated and validated against a population of experts.

6.3 Exploratory Study

In order to understand the broad determinants of the issues being investigated an exploratory study was undertaken. Conducting an exploratory can reveal in advance project faults, inadequate research protocols and whether the methods are appropriate or too complicated. Pilot studies can also improve the validity of the proposed questionnaire (Baker, 1994).

An exploratory study was undertaken in order to gather information prior to a larger study. This was because we wanted to improve the study's quality and efficiency. An exploratory study can point out possible deficiencies in the proposed procedure and these can be addressed in the appropriate time. This study is small in comparison to the main experiment but it still can provide some information on the sources and magnitude of the responses gotten (Lancaster et al., 2004).

An exploratory study involved an online survey, a questionnaire and interviews were conducted between the months of August and September of 2011 in Lisbon, Portugal. Participants were contacted through email and informed of the overall aims of the study. The questionnaire was also forwarded by them to some of their colleagues. Questionnaire interviews were undertaken with three participants and one face-to-face interview was conducted.

In the exploratory study we tested a questionnaire. The questionnaire theme was "the use of social media by companies". This was a very general questionnaire in its approach. It was developed and emailed to participants. The questions were as follow:

1. What are your clients looking for when they come to you for social media network solutions?
2. Do you consider social media more effective or as effective as other media solutions?
3. What do you consider to be the role of marketing in social media networks?
4. What do you consider to be the role of design in social media networks?
5. What do you think the future of social media will be in relationship with marketing and design?

Below on tables 24 and 25 is a list of the participants for the questionnaire and survey.

Name /Nationality	Date Where/How	Position Company	Expertise
João Diogo Lemos Portuguese	8 th of August 2011 RTP, Lisbon	Marketing Manager RTP	Marketing, Social Media and Teaching
Ricardo Pereira Portuguese	2 nd of August 2011 Email	Partner ADON	Online Marketing and Web Advertising
Pedro Morais Barbosa Portuguese	4 th of November 2011 Email	Communication Manager Millenium Bcp Bank -Activo Bank	Management, Marketing, Online Banking

Table 24. Exploratory study questionnaire interviewees

We aimed to find general answers regarding social media that could provide us with insight on the area. We also wanted to know the role of design and marketing in social media and the future of social media in those aspects.

We reconsidered the method of emailing participants, as the number of responses gotten was very limited. The interview provided us with the general knowledge of the social media process within a company and how they carry out their strategy. We then considered other methods such as an online survey that people could fill out on their own time and could submit anonymously.

The sample was small but all of the participants willingly responded to the online survey questionnaire that presented the same questions as the questionnaires. The web address is available here: <http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/3FFMPR9>.

Name /Nationality	Date Where/How	Position Company	Expertise
Américo Mateus <i>Portuguese</i>	14 th of February 2012 Online survey	Professor/Researcher IADE/UNIDCOM	Marketing, Design Branding
Luiz Salomão Ribas Gomez <i>Brazilian</i>	14 th of February 2012 Online Survey	Branding and Design Researcher LOGO/UFSC	Marketing, Management, Design, Branding
Georg Dutschke <i>Portuguese</i>	15 th of February 2012 Online Survey	Professor at Universidade Atlântica and Manager at Angelini	Marketing, Management, E-Commerce

Table 25. Exploratory study - Online survey interviewees

We started by contacting through telephone and email a list of local experts in marketing and approached them about the possibility of aiding in this study. Participants then referred to other colleagues that they thought were also available. Email addresses were exchanged and the questionnaire was sent, participants were asked if they were available for a face-to-face interview. Most of the participant said they were but logistics and unfortunately lack of time and the participants busy schedule did not allow for anything more than some notes from the telephone first contact interview.

However the marketing Manager at RTP was available for a face-to-face interview and we discussed the questions and the themes at hand and talked about social media strategy and RTP's practices, processes and outcomes. With the initial feedback from the questionnaires and survey, it allowed for a refinement of the later semi-structured interview scripts and following online survey questionnaire.

To conclude, we choose the social survey method for the exploratory study because it collects data in a standardized way from a specific sample of participants. This enables the data to be later codified into a quantitative form. We conducted face-to-face interviews and Internet surveys. The Internet survey was a self-completion online questionnaire that enables us to collect a large amount of data in a statistical form from a number of people in a relatively short time. Although response rates on electronic surveys are a bit problematic, people find it easy to respond, as it is confidential. In face-to-face interviews it can be hard to manage the field force of interviewers. These methods were organized in a logical and systematic fashion through the questionnaire design up to the face-to-face interviews. When the research is carried out properly the researcher's influence is null, the researcher is able to be objective.

6.4 Semi-Structured Interviews

Once the exploratory study has been undertaken the main study was planned. Qualitative research can rely quite extensively on interviewing. Saldaña says that interviewing is an effective data collection method that solicits and documents individual or group perspectives, feelings, values, attitude and beliefs about their personal experiences and social worlds. A research topic, purpose and questions are used as the basis to produce insight for future investigation (Saldaña 2011).

An interview can be highly structured, consisting of a set of prepared and specific questions to be asked in a particular order. Unstructured interviews only consist of a set of topics for possible exploration and do not rely on a particular order. Interviews can be pre-arranged or happen in a spontaneous way, they can be either conducted with just one person or with groups of people, which can be organized in focus groups. Depending on some factors, participants can be interviewed once or several times across a period of the fieldwork (Saldaña, 2011).

We performed twenty-one semi-structured interviews for this study. The interview was prearranged and conducted with a group of twenty-one marketing, design and social media experts. The questions were pre-prepared and during the interview some of the questions were not asked in order as planned. From time to time the order of the questions was changed based on the expert's answers and the way the conversation was being developed. The interview script in this study is further described in Appendix B.

In the specific case of this study there were not many professionals to consider a large statistical population. Since the area of research is fairly recent both professionals from design, marketing Management and social media were involved in our sampling. We sampled both UK and Portuguese professionals that were either: freelance workers dealing with branding in social media and had their own portfolio of clients, professionals who work for companies that do branding in social media and are part of the social media department and professionals who have their own company and/or are part of a department who deals with social media.

Sampling regards a selection of a subset of individuals taken from a considerable large statistical populations in order to estimate characteristics of the whole populations. By choosing sampling the cost is lower, the data collection is done faster and the data is small and more adequate to ensure homogeneity and to improve the accuracy of the quality of data. It would be impossible to access all professionals in the field therefore sampling is the only feasible method to undertake in this study.

The population was defined by including all the people who deal with social media, work with social media on a regular basis. We tried to search for companies through some keywords and once we found a professional they often recommended another person they knew did a similar job. From that we were able to develop a representative sample based on a subset of that population. It was interesting to find that using social media to reach social media professionals was very profitable in terms of interviewee response and the people who were contacted by that method usually replied positively to do a further in depth interview.

- Convenience sample

- Judgment sample

- Theoretical sample

In a convenience sample subjects are selected because of issues of accessibility and proximity with the researcher, it is considered a non-probability sampling. In a judgment sample an authority selects the best representative sample in order to arrive to a more accurate result. This involves handpicking individuals from the population based on the researcher's judgment. Theoretical sample is described by Glaser and Strauss by being an iterative sampling process based on emerging theoretical concepts. It has the goal of developing an understanding concept across a range of settings (Glaser & Strauss 1967). We started by going through a judgment sample, trying to select the best expert for the study, the ones that represented the field best. The decline in response rate made us change to a more convenience sample because of accessibility and proximity to do the face-to-face interviews.

Tables (26 and 27) on the semi-structured interviewees that were conducted in both Portugal and the United Kingdom are shown below:

Organisation	Sector	City	Interviewee	Role	Date	Data used in meta analysis	Used in detailed analysis
Social Media Cafe	Marketing & Product Creation	London	AH	Founder	11-May-12	✓	✓
Venture Three	Communications	London	IQ	Digital Director	10-May-12	✓	✓
Telefónica Digital	Digital Agency	London	HP	Head of Social Media and Intranet and Mobile Development	12-Sep-12	✓	✓
Fat Media	Communications	Lancaster	MG	Digital Marketing Consultant	20-May-12	✓	✓
Snook	Service Design	Glasgow	LC	Co-Founder	17-May-12	✓	
Virtuoso	Product & Industrial		GS	Director	18-Jun-12	✓	
Love Monday Media Marketing	Communications, Social Media	Dorset	MH	Social Media Identity Designer	20-Jun-12	✓	✓
Scholz & Friends	Marketing & Advertising Agency	London	GA	Strategy Director/Consultor	5-Jul-12	✓	
Brandboost	Online Marketing Agency	Bucks	AW	SM Account Manager	6-Jul-12	✓	✓
MHTlife	Social Media & Strategy	Coventry	MT	Business & Social Media Strategist	11-Oct-12	✓	
Lancaster University	Marketing	Lancaster	JP	UK Recruitment Officer	8-Oct-12	✓	

Table 26. Interview Participants in United Kingdom

Eleven semi-structured interviews were conducted in the United Kingdom. Marketing, design, Digital marketing, Communication, Advertising Agencies, Online marketing Agencies and social media companies were contacted through the online survey. The online survey asked to leave their contact information if participants were available for an interview.

Organisation	Sector	City	Interviewee	Role	Date	Data used in meta analysis	Used in detailed analysis
Step Value - Web Intelligence	Management Consulting	Lisboa	VC	Social Media Manager	21-Jun-12	✓	
Grand Union	Digital Agency	Lisboa	DC	Digital Strategist & Social Media Coordinator	27-Jun-12	✓	✓
WSI Digital Marketing	Internet Consultants Marketing Experts Agency	Lisboa	PL	Marketing Consultor	25-Jun-12	✓	
Comunicarte	Communication Agency	Porto	AG	CEO	11-Sep-12	✓	✓
Social Media Ltd	Internet Marketing Agency	Lisboa	PS	Social Media Manager	17-Jul-12	✓	
Fullsix Portugal	Independent Marketing Communication Group	Lisboa	AA	Head of Social Media	11-Sep-12	✓	✓
MindSEO	Consulting and Coaching for SEO and SEM Agency	S. Maria da Feira	DP	SEO	17-Sep-12	✓	
ComON Group	Marketing & Advertising	Lisboa	LS	Head of Strategy	23-Jul-12	✓	✓
MuchBeta/LinkedIn	Online Marketing	Porto	RC	Community Manager	17-Sep-12	✓	✓
Oh Donna Mobilé/ Decor 7 Last Layer	Industrial Design	Valença	PA	Industrial Design/Product Development/ Consultancy	10-Oct-12	✓	✓

Table 27. Interview Participants In Portugal

Ten semi-structured interviews were conducted in Portugal. In Portugal it was harder to find design companies that specialized in social media. Only half of the companies had a design department that worked with social media aspects. We also interviewed a freelance industrial designer that worked in social media for some of his clients. The rest of the companies were mainly Consulting, marketing, Internet marketing or social media companies.

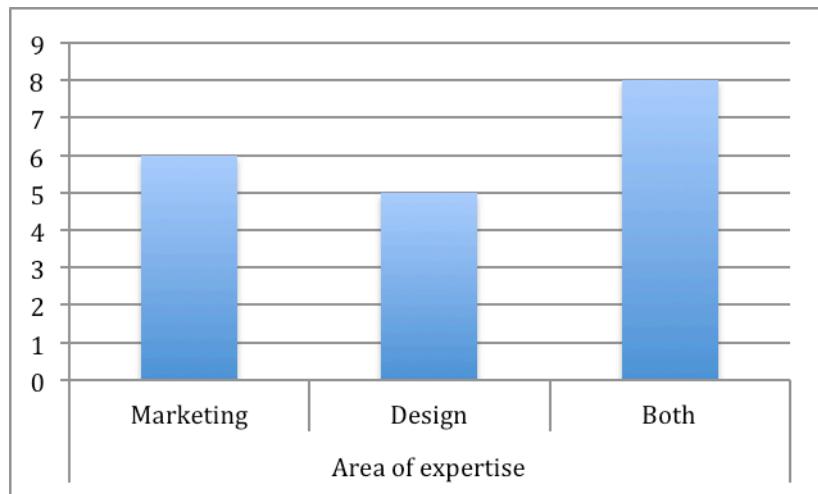


Figure 46. Interview Participants area of expertise

The above figure divides the interview participants in their area of expertise. As we can see most of the participants have a design and marketing knowledge.

Below is a table of the initial interview questions. Depending on the interviewee the interview questions script varied. Questions were depending on new issues as they arose through the interview.

Interview Questions

Tell me a little bit about yourself and how you came about working in social media?

What does your company /you do/does specifically?

What are the social media platforms your clients are more excited to be on?

Are there any new platforms that are becoming big?

Why do you think brands need to be in social media?

Who do you deal with (from the brand) to decide on the strategy for social media?

What do you think about brands in social media?

What do you think about design in social media?

Do you think design is important for branding in social media?

What do you think are the skills for social media?

How do you come about planning a strategy for social media?

What are your client's goals when they want to be in social media?

Walk me through a social media project of yours - steps and strategies

What do you think will be the future of social media?

Table 28. Semi-structured interview questions

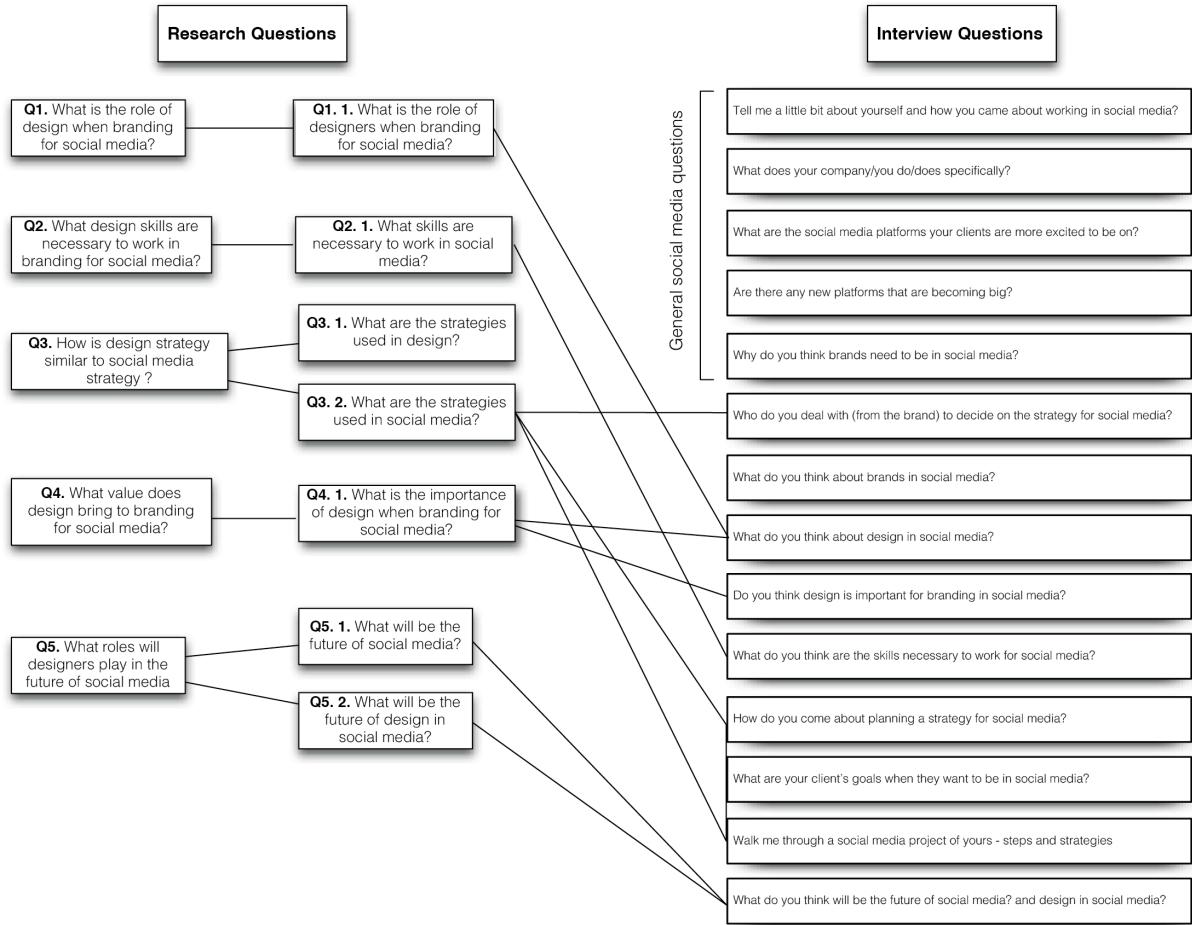


Figure 47. Relationship between research questions and interview questions

As we can see from the above figure, the interview questions originated from the research questions as we can see from figure 47.

The research questions allowed for a better understand the interviewee's background and motivation for working in social media. We then started to ask about their work and their company's work in social media, what was being done in terms of specific social media tasks, strategy and types of campaigns (Q3). We discussed client's motivations and their interest in being present or not in social media, we also discussed why is it important for brands to be in social media and design's role and value in that matter (Q1, Q4). We tried to determine what skills are necessary to work in social media and how they are related to design skills (Q2). We then finished the interview with the open question about the future of social media and the future roles designers will play in it (Q5). The findings and analysis of the semi-structure interviews is presented on chapter 7.4 Full Study: Semi-Structured Interview analysis.

6.5 Online Survey Questionnaire

The study conducted semi-structured interviews, which is utilized when a specific target population is involved. The purpose of conducting a semi-structured interview is to explore the responses of the people to gather more and deeper information. We also needed a high level of general capability in representing a large population, as surveys are able to extract data that are near to the exact attributes of the larger population

Questionnaires are a common way to collect data from a sample of individuals. A questionnaire is a list of questions with a range of answers. This format enables standardized, relatively structured data to be collected. Questionnaires are highly used in social research and allow the researcher to answer his research questions or test his hypothesis. Some questionnaires have structured answers, but some of them are composed of open questions with collect semi-structured data (Matthews, B., & Ross, 2010).

According to Matthews & Ross (2010) the most important stage in this type of research is to design the questionnaire. Once the questionnaire is designed the researcher needs to be certain that they ask the “right” answers in order to gather the needed data.

According to Phillips a questionnaire contains any or all of these types of questions:

- 1) Open-ended questions allow unlimited answers. Questions are followed by ample blank space for the responses.
- 2) Checklists provide a list of items, and the participant is asked to check those that apply in the situation.
- 3) Two-way questions limit answers to a pair of alternative responses (yes and no).
- 4) Multiple-choice questions provide several possible answers, and the participant is asked to select the one that is most applicable.
- 5) Ranking scales require the participant to rank a list of items

For this online questionnaire we included: open-ended questions, multiple-choice and ranking scales.

This survey is descriptive and exploratory. It asks questions in a written online questionnaire and records answers. It works on the basis of statistical sampling and it is ideal to collect data in a standardized way (Neuman, 2007).

The survey questionnaire is composed by: three open-ended response items, fill-in questions, short-end questions and longer answer ones. Open ended-questions will be given to receive the expert's opinion about the topic at hand. Two other questions were multiple choice ones and the other five consist of a five point Likert scales. When introduced to this type of scale,

participants have to rate their level of agreement or disagreement on a symmetric scale. This range offers to capture the intensity of their feelings towards each question. By using the Likert scaling, each item's distances are equals. Ranking scales question will require the survey participants to rank properties of authentication solutions from most significant to more trivial. These questionnaires were mailed to the respective participants and messaged through social media networks such as Twitter and LinkedIn. By using these kinds of questions I was able to collect data for later analysis. The online survey is further described in Appendix A. This survey collected a total of 104 answers and was available from *April 19 2012*, to *April 9 2013*. There are 103 valid responses.

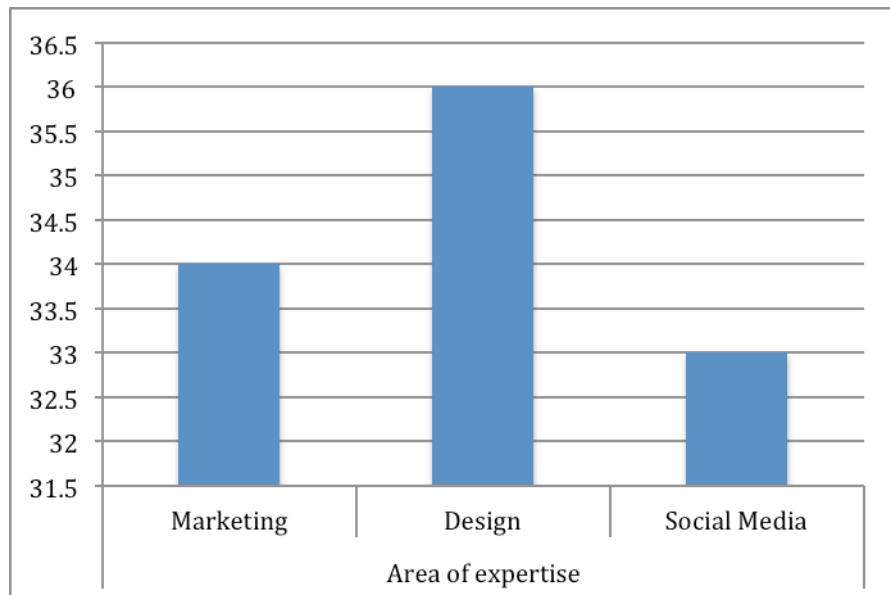


Figure 48. Online Survey Participants Areas of Expertise

As we can see from the above figure the online survey questionnaire had thirty-four marketing experts, thirty-six design experts and thirty-three social media experts. All of these online survey questions contribute to a better understanding of design in social media and try to determine its importance. All of them relate to the research questions in some way and we have included which of the questions tries to answer which of the research questions.

In summary the research methods in this study included an exploratory study composed of a questionnaire and face-to-face interviews, which provided for gathering information about the three different areas of the study. This exploratory study also was determinant to test the methods and procedures later developed. The online survey questionnaire included one hundred and three participants and allowed for a more direct method to be used, a more convenient way of collecting data that allowed the participant to take his time. This allowed for a wider sample to be used in order to test the research questions hypothesis. Semi-structured interviews provided a data collection that allows gathering of participant's personal experiences and feedback on the areas of this study. The interviews were structured and the sampling regarded a selected group of individuals that are marketing, design and social media professionals.

Section 3: Research Findings

7. Discussion of Research Findings

7.1 Overview

This chapter contains the research findings of the data collected through an exploratory study plus twenty-one semi-structured interviews and an online survey with a hundred and three participants. This data was collected with design, marketing and social media professionals both in Portugal and in the United Kingdom. We were able to cluster the descriptive research data into concepts, and we elaborated a set of theoretical categories based on the analysis.

Due to the visual exploration of the research data through themes and tags we were able to reach hidden relationships between them. We grouped these factors into iterative and generative manner in order to form logical patterns. These categories are more abstract and theoretical and can be considered macro-analysis, while the substantive factors are microanalysis of the research data. This data resulted in a set of coding summaries that categorize and relate each theme with the topics discussed within it.

Research approaches are presented in this table and to each research question corresponds a chapter or multiple chapters.

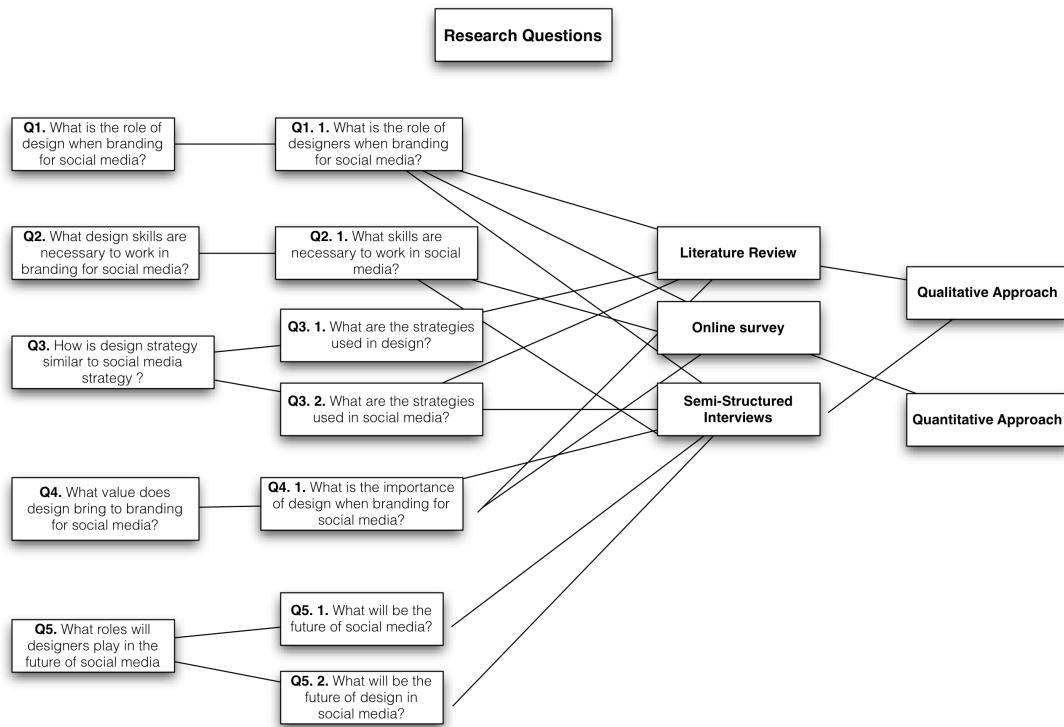


Figure 49. Research Approaches

7.2 Exploratory study analysis

The author of this study had the need to gather expert's opinion on the general matters of social media. Being trained as a graphic designer with marketing and branding knowledge, the web 3.0 was relatively new exploratory ground. There was a need to establish expert connections and discuss the topics at hand (*marketing, design, branding and social media*), in order to find relevant information to further deepen the author's understanding of the topics and to build upon limited scholarly references that were available at the time of the exploratory study (Spring/Summer 2011).

This exploratory study provided an insight into the perceptions of a group of experts regarding the use of marketing and design in social media. Three exploratory interviews were done with participants in Lisbon and an online-survey questionnaire was elaborated with also three responses

Questions	Themes	Keywords
1-What are your clients looking for when they come to you for social media network solutions?	Why use social media	Dialogue, Relationship, Not fall Behind, Engagement, More Clients, Accessibility, Younger Clients. Content Sharing, More Information for Clients
2- Do you consider social media more effective or as effective as other media solutions?	Social media efficiency	Only effective when used with other mediums. More effective to generate relationship, affinity and consideration
3-What do you consider to be the role of marketing in social media networks?	Marketing in social media	Relationship Facilitator, Content Creator, Listener to Consumers and Market needs, Community Responder, Brand/Product/Personality and Assets Communicator, Problem solver, Authenticity and Transparency.
4-What do you consider to be the role of design in social media networks?	design in social media	Enabler of interpretation/usage, Seductor, Call2Action, Value Builder, Effective sales tool, Simplify and Optimize messages to better engage with clients. Better Perception of brands
5-What do you think the future of social media will be in relationship with marketing and design?	Social media's future regarding marketing and design	More Professional, Critical, More empathy, Optimism, Experimentation and Collaboration, Dialogue Supportive, Networking, Backstage

Table 29. Key Theme Findings

This data then resulted into empirical findings. A study with research questions is better suited to exploratory research because we can get guidance as to what's important to find at a starting point for questioning (Bryman, 2008).

Findings highlight relevant topics in relation with the research questions and the relevant literature review. They will have further implications on the following qualitative data, such as the semi-structured interviews.

7.2.1 Exploratory study findings

Through the use of an exploratory study we were able to narrow the study themes to: why use social media, social media efficiency, marketing in social media, design in social media and social media's future in regards to marketing and design. We determined that there were five relevant questions that explored these themes.

1. Why use social media as a branding strategy?
2. Is social media more or less efficient for brands than other media solutions?
3. What is the role of marketing and marketers in social media networks?
4. What is the role of design and designers in social media networks?
5. What do you think will be the future of social media regarding marketing and design?

In question 1 the participants believe that their clients want to be in social media to create engagement and a relationship with their own clients and customers. Companies want to create an open dialogue, share content and information with their clients. They also mentioned that the need to be in social media is to not fall behind their competitors who are already present in those networks. Companies that have their target groups in young clients are more open to social media because it is a space their audience is at. They also mentioned that social media is accessible to everyone and easy to work with.

On question 2, all of the participants say that social media is only effective if used in conjunction with other communication strategies. They also said that it is more efficient to create a closer relationship and better affinity with the customer.

Question 3 concerned the role of marketing in social media. The participants believe that marketing can be a relationship facilitator. Marketing is a brand, product, personality and assets communicator of the company and is an able problem solver. Marketing contributes to authenticity and transparency in customer relationships. Marketing is able to listen to consumers and meet their market needs while responding to the community.

Question 4 asks about the role of design in social media. Design is believed to be an enabler of interpretation and a seductor of customers. Design is able to build value and is an effective sales tool. It serves to simplify and optimize brand messages in order to better engage with clients. Design helps achieve a better brand perception for the customers.

Question 5 regards the future of social media. Participants believe that social media has space to become more professional and even more accessible to companies and brands. It will become a space for experimentation and collaboration. In the future, social media will become a tool to improve dialogue between companies and customers in a supportive way.

Coding Process

The coding process is one of the significant steps taken during analysis to organize and make sense of textual data. This exploratory study is the first step into understanding the study themes and keywords. The data was qualitative and textual, non-numerical and unstructured. The idea was to understand “what” they feel and “why” they feel that way. In this sense coding can add to data reduction, grouping and classification. The questions developed into themes and the themes into keywords.

A content-driven exploratory context was adopted, to explore the initially subjective realities of the participants. Inductive thematic analysis was applied to draw out themes and topics from the data. Questions were generic and specific codes and analytic categories were not pre-determined. We reduced the results into key themes as explained below on table 29. The themes were then summarized to the interviewee’s most important keywords. The data was separated into smaller topics or codes in order to be systematically reviewed in a thematic analysis.

Thematic analysis focused on identifying and describing both implicit and explicit ideas within the data, sorted as themes (second column on table 29). Codes are then developed to represent the identified themes and applied to raw data as a summary for later analysis. This analysis used coding frequencies (analysing code frequency) and code co-occurrence (when more than one participant mentioned a keyword). In order to maintain the rigor we opted for an analytic process to make it more reliable. Therefore we believe that thematic analysis was useful in capturing the complexities of meaning within the textual data set we had. It is a very common analysis method used in qualitative research.

The exploratory study allowed us to determine keywords of interest behind the field of social media and it broaden our understanding of the field itself. It also provided good training for the interviews to follow. Once we determined the topics of interest it was a matter of developing questions that could inform us better about those issues.

7.3 Full Study: Online Survey Analysis

Through the online survey we obtained one hundred and three valid responses from which thirty-six are design experts, thirty-four marketing experts and thirty-three social media experts (see Figure 48. Online Survey Participants Areas of Expertise). All the questions were compulsory except the last one concerning a follow up interview. In the online survey each question has several options, and each option can be answered with a specific rank (apart from Question 1, the ranks have 5 ordered values). For each question we use the median as the measure of central tendency. The data is interpreted as ordinal. The median Absolute Deviation (MAD) informs about the absolute deviation of each score. It is determined by $MAD = \text{median}(|X_i - \text{median}_j(X_j)|)$, with X_i a score, and $\text{median}_j(X_j)$ the median of scores. To describe the probable variation of each answer in the population, the confidence interval used is 95%. The tables show both lower (2.5%) and upper (97.5%) limits, i.e., we can be 95% sure that a random answer from the population will not fall outside the limits. To simplify the confidence interval columns, the ranks are encoded as numbers, according with each question.

Each plot shows the number of answers for a question. The number of answers with a particular rank for a particular option are represented by a single bar. At the top of the bar is the corresponding absolute number of answers.

Q1: "Do clients come to you or your company to support their social media needs?"

No: 9 (8.7%)

Yes: 94 (91.3%)

Figure 50. Question 1

Q2: "How often would you say the following business functions have asked you for Social Media Solutions?"

Option	Median	MAD	CI 95% - 2.5%	CI 95% - 97.5%
Human Resources	Occasionally	±1	2	3
Sales	Frequently	±1	3	4
Customer Service and Support	Sometimes	±1	3	4
Product Development	Occasionally	±1	2	3
Marketing	Very Frequently	0	4	5
Strategy	Frequently	±1	3	4
Internal Collaboration and Learning	Occasionally	±1	2	3

For the Confidence Interval (CI) columns, the ranks are encoded as:

Never	Occasionally	Sometimes	Frequently	Very Frequently
1	2	3	4	5

Table 30. Question 2 - Table

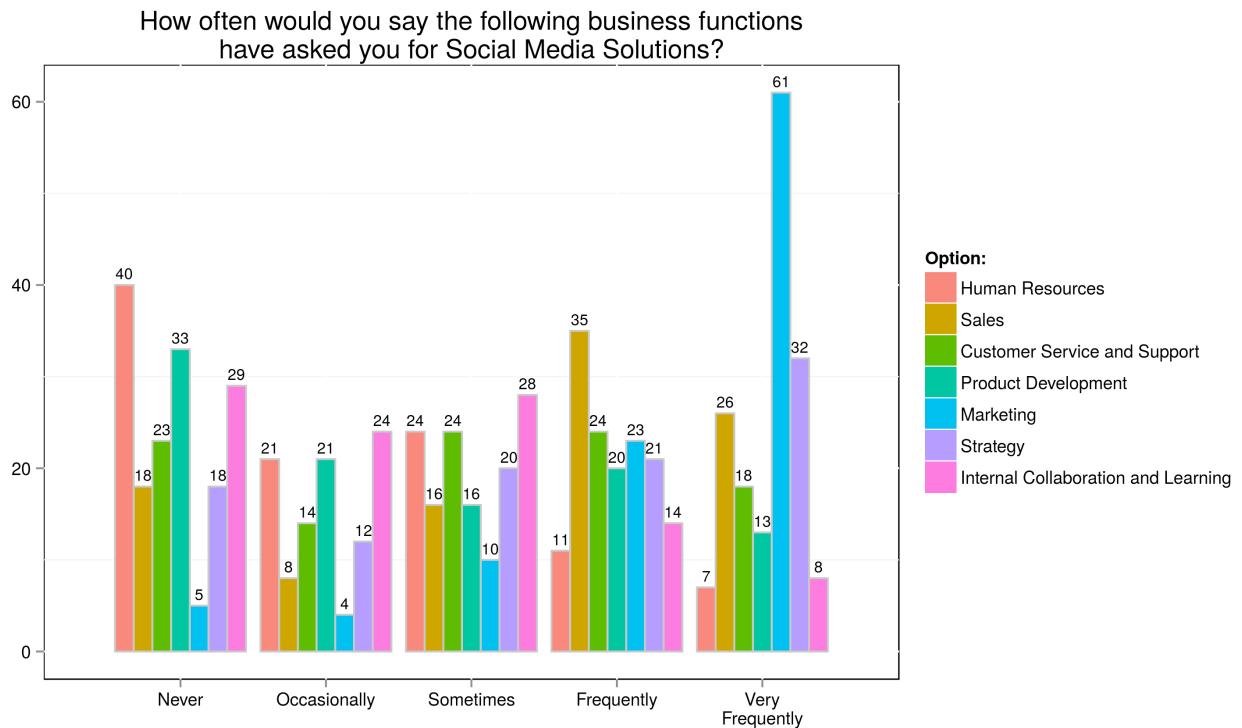


Figure 51. Question 2 Plot

The previous question was about understanding if the participant was involved in social media and why clients came to them to solve their concerns. There was also the question about how frequently their clients come to them to work in social media projects. The majority of participants were involved in social media (91,3%). The areas that require more social media solutions are as follows: Marketing (61%), Strategy (32%) and Sales (26%). These areas are the ones, within the company, that resort more to social media solutions. This means that marketing is considerably the area that resorts more to social media, perhaps because it is using it more to its advantage as we could see from the chapter in Marketing (2.) and Social media models (4.4 Social media Models).

We inquired the participants regarding which skills they believed were important for a social media professional to have. This was to find out if the skills had more in common with design or marketing professionals. We have included a whole range of skills and even included an open option for the participant to include his own suggestion.

Q3: "What skills would you say are more important for a Social Media professional to have?"

Option	Median	MAD	CI 95% - 2.5%	CI 95% - 97.5%
Strategy development	Very Important	0	5	5
Communication	Very Important	0	5	5
Creativity	Very Important	0	5	5
Public Relations	Quite Important	±1	4	4
Research development	Quite Important	±1	3	4
Networking	Very Important	0	4	5
Management	Quite Important	±1	3	4
Advertising	Fairly Important	±1	3	4

For the Confidence Interval (CI) columns, the ranks are encoded as:

Not important	Slightly important	Fairly important	Quite important	Very important
1	2	3	4	5

Table 30. Question 3 - Table

What skills would you say are more important for a Social Media professional to have?

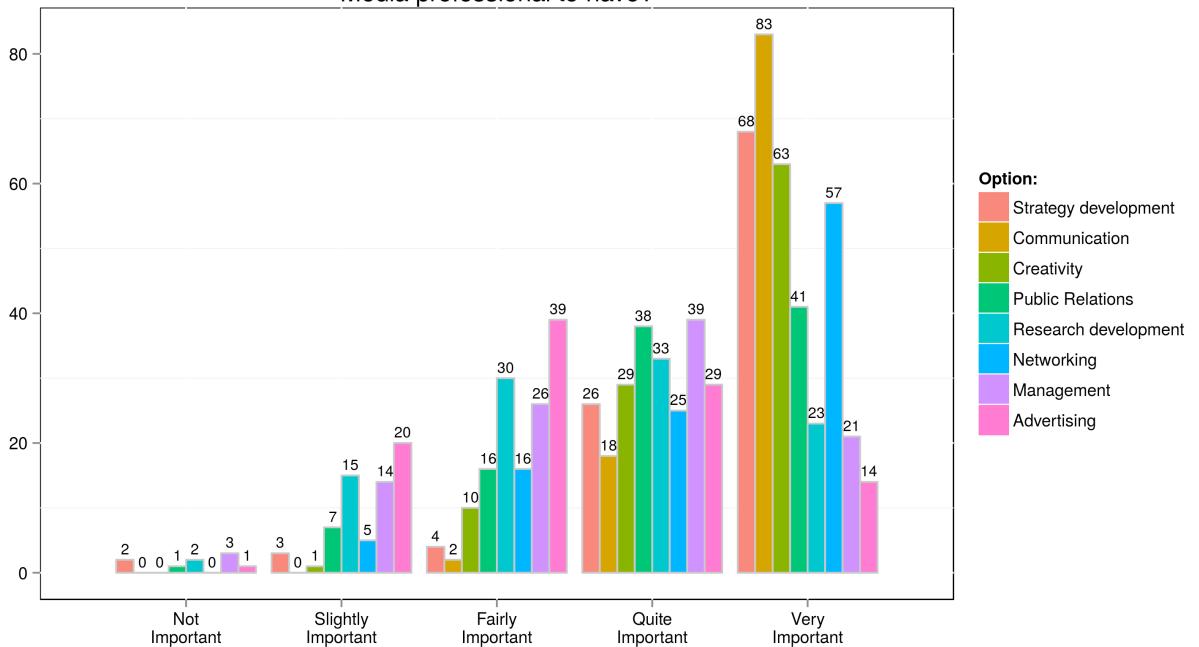


Figure 52. Question 3 Plot

Question three identified the top three most important skills for a social media professional to have: Communication (83%), Strategy development (68%), and Creativity (63%). We can see from the results that these are also top design skills.

Q4: "Please rate the contribution of design to add value in social media."

Option	Median	MAD	CI 95% - 2.5%	CI 95% - 97.5%
Perception Value	Very Important	±1	5	5
Performance Value	Quite Important	0	4	4
Strategic Value	Quite Important	±1	4	5
Financial and Accounting Value	Fairly Important	±1	3	4

For the Confidence Interval (CI) columns, the ranks are encoded as:

Not Important	Slightly Important	Fairly Important	Quite Important	Very Important
1	2	3	4	5

Table 31. Question 4 - Table

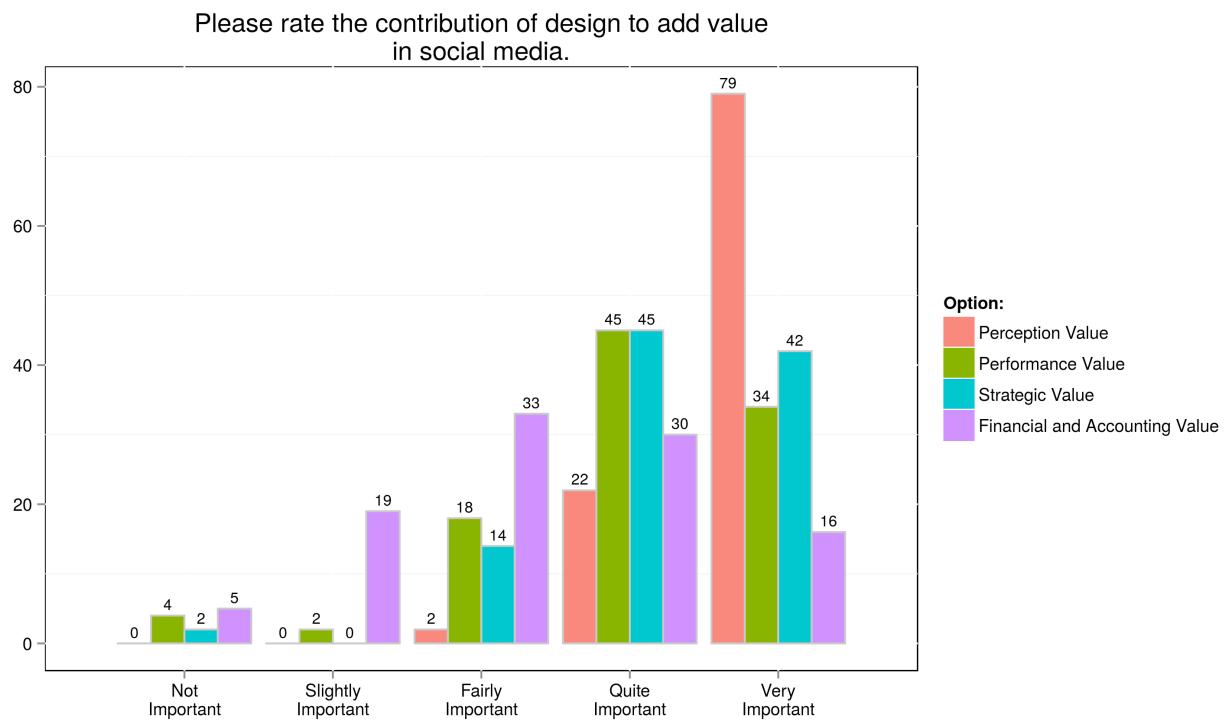


Figure 53. Question 4 Plot

With regard to the value that design adds to social media most participants agreed it was the perception value (79%), followed by performance value (45%), then strategic value (42%) and lastly financial and accounting value (16%). This means that participants think the most important benefit design can bring to social media lies in perception at almost 80%.

Q5: "In which stage(s) of the 'social marketing total process planning' do you think is more important for design to be involved?"

Option	Median	MAD	CI 95% - 2.5%	CI 95% - 97.5%
Scope	Quite Important ± 1	4	4	
Primary Develop	Very Important 0	4	5	
Secondary Develop	Quite Important ± 1	4	4	
Implement	Quite Important ± 1	4	5	
Evaluate	Quite Important ± 1	3	4	
Follow Up	Quite Important ± 1	4	4	

For the Confidence Interval (CI) columns, the ranks are encoded as:

Not Important	Slightly Important	Fairly Important	Quite Important	Very Important
1	2	3	4	5

Table 32. Question 5 - Table

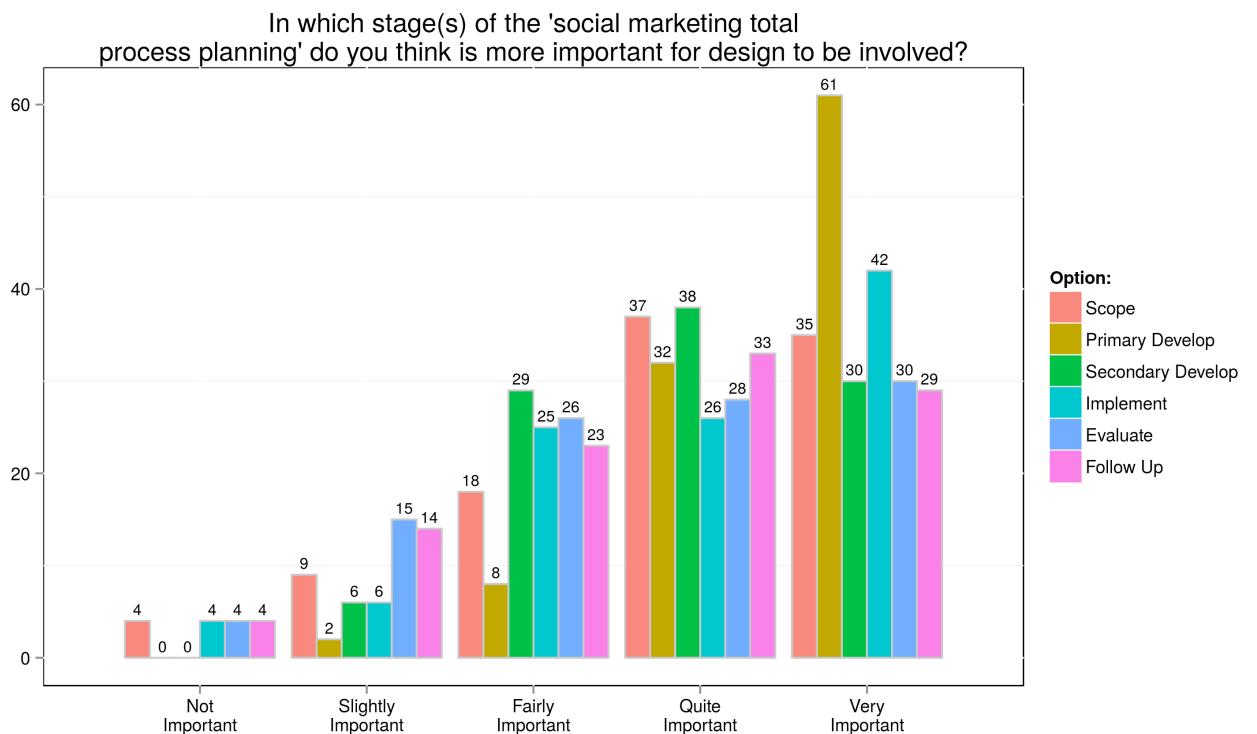


Figure 54. Question 5 Plot

In response to question 5 it can be seen that all of the referred phases of the social media total marketing process were considered to be quite important except for the primary development, which was considered to be very important. This means that design in the primary development stage has more relevance for the whole social process having a percentage of 61%. The implement stage is next with 42% of participants saying it is very important, followed by the Scope stage (35%), and Secondary Development and Evaluate stages at 30%.

Q6: "Please rate the following social media websites in terms of the level of interest that your clients are engaging you to work on."

Option	Median	MAD	CI 95% - 2.5%	CI 95% - 97.5%
Twitter	Very Interested	±1	4	5
Facebook	Extremely Interested	0	5	5
YouTube	Very Interested	±1	4	4
Company Social Media website	Very Interested	±1	3	4
LinkedIn	Moderately Interested	±1	3	4
Foursquare	Slightly Interested	±1	1	2
Google+	Slightly Interested	±1	2	2
Flickr	Slightly Interested	±1	1	2
Blog	Moderately Interested	±1	3	4

For the Confidence Interval (CI) columns, the ranks are encoded as:

Not Interested	Slightly Interested	Fairly Interested	Quite Interested	Very Interested
1	2	3	4	5

Table 33. Question 6 - Table

Please rate the following social media websites
in terms of the level of interest that your clients are engaging you to work on.

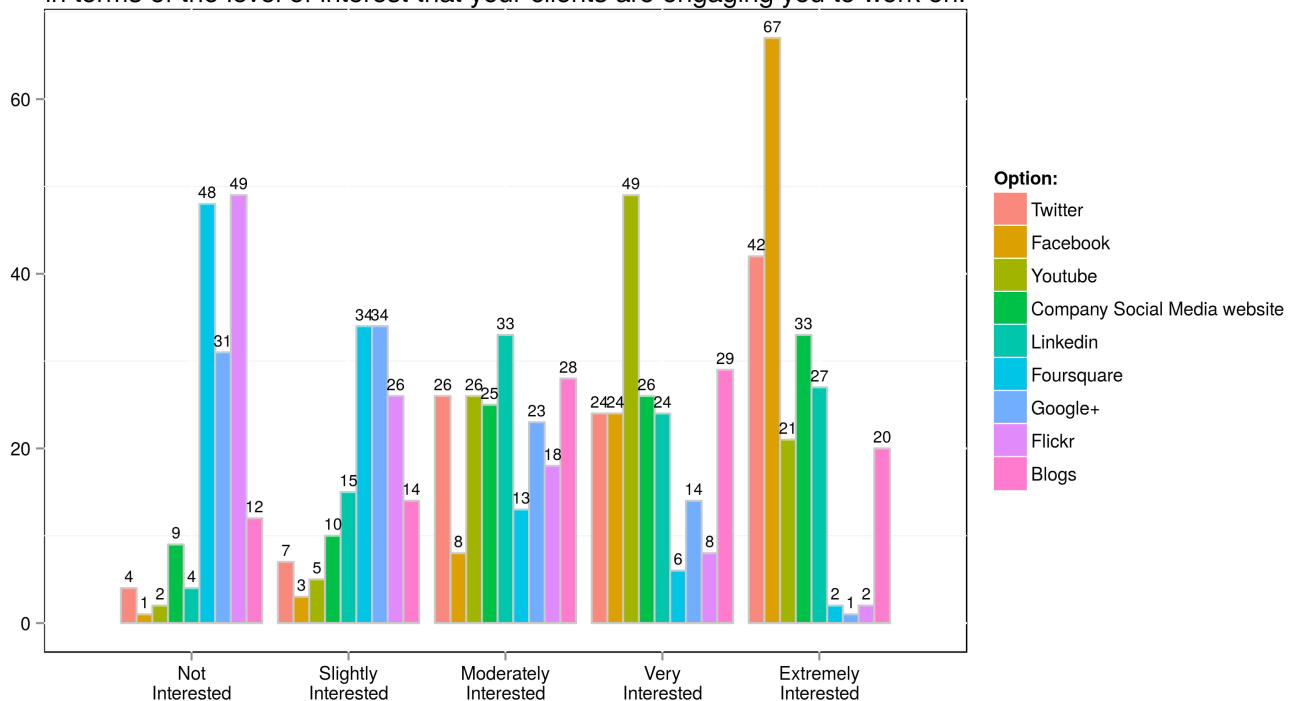


Figure 55. Question 6 Plot

From question 6 we can conclude that Facebook was the social media network that clients were more eager to be working with (67% of the participants are extremely interested) followed by Twitter (42%), YouTube (21%) and the company's own social media website (33%). Lastly we have Flickr and Foursquare. Also mentioned but not accounted for were social media networks such as Pinterest and Instagram who at the start of this survey were only in their early stages of implementation, Pinterest being just at a beta stage and not yet available to everyone. Although Google+ is referred as having a well made and functional design by some of the interviewees it only has a slight interest in the eyes of clients, this could be due to the lack of people interacting in that space as compared to Facebook or Twitter for example.

Q7 - General thoughts on the use of design in social media:

The vast majority of survey participants when asked to give their general thoughts on the use of design believe that it is important. There was not a noticeable difference in responses from the design, marketing and social media experts. Although some of the participants talk about the limited influence design has on most social media sites. They talk about how there is not much to be done besides graphics for cover and timeline images. They say that the potential impact design can have, based on these restrictions is still to be uncovered. A participant mentioned that networking sites are badly designed and do not appeal visually to users. These websites do not allow them to actively process information or engage with others at the level social media allows them. The participants suggest that there is a need to redesign these interfaces and think of design as a priority for these networks. Some participants refer to successful examples like the Renault campaign (3, 2013) on Facebook about the four years warranty that took excellent advantage of these features. Other examples include the successful Halls Brazil campaign (70, 2013) which has reached 4.1 million likes.

Branding

With regard to the topic of branding, results show that customers do consider brands on their social sites so brand consistency in all medias is important (36, 56, 78, 2013). Design needs to tell a brand story that helps connecting people to the brand and not any other presence with a logo (89, 2013). It is possible to custom design social media profiles such as Facebook, Twitter, YouTube and LinkedIn and by doing so become more engaging to the user and portray the company in a professional way. The company's corporate identity should go beyond the website, business cards and point of sale material and encompass all marketing activity. Social media is not a toy and it is here to stay so attention must be paid. Social media is used in an important branding step, to establish a brand's statement and to interact (first person always) with the clients/fans (40, 2013). Design can amplify the company's footprint on social media and it needs to stand out from all the noise already there (31, 2013).

Value

Regarding value, participants say that design is also referred to in terms of value, good design equals trust in the source and the user is more likely to share and 'like' (38, 43, 73, 94, 2013). It is also referred to as a major competitive advantage due to its strength of both communicating and giving a major visual appeal to the users. Design in social media is extremely important for 'shareability' reasons (53, 79, 2013). The popularity of infographics and visualizations proves this further. Sharing something that is well designed reflects positively on the user, in their sense of taste, in how interesting they are and how valuable their contributions are deemed by their peers.

The design process is valuable and relevant to the use of social media, whether designing the look and feel of background pages or undertaking a strategic approach (101, 10, 2013). Design value is often neglected and can be seen as something to do in-house to minimize the cost. The potential for good design to enhance the overall social media brand experience is not generally

understood by those creating the social media content. Although “design is the first valuable impression a consumer has, more times than not, it is the last thought by marketers” (51, 2013).

Communication

The results show that there seems to be a focus on the communication side of design, such has the social media iconography, like the thumbs up for ‘like’ and the speech bubble as ‘inbox message’. Clients often chose a social medium based on its aesthetic potential as well as for its user experience (80, 16, 21, 50, 2013). Design will eventually become strictly necessary for two main reasons: the aesthetics and the ‘friendliness’ of this kind of resources. Design influences the perception of a product/service but also helps users to understand how to interact with the others and feel as part of an online community. Two participants mentioned Design thinking being a critical element for all effective communications, giving shape to ideas. Design that encompasses the overall human drivers is key, the content of the communication must reflect the social DNA of the client and the consumer (58, 79, 89, 2013).

Graphics

Findings show that the graphic appearance/appeal is also something that participants mention. They say that design is used in every piece of information that is created in social media, because it is a layered discipline. Design is used in images, in messages with images, etc. A post on Facebook is very important for a brand and its design is a major factor. Social media apps have to be beautiful, look professional and adequate to the viewers/fans and for it to happen design has to be seriously considered. The nature of social media is very visual so design of content and materials and the visual brand of the company is very important. It has to be simple, vivid, eye-catching and authentic to the audience. In an online world you have about 4 to 8 seconds to impress a visitor and design is critical in that matter (73, 76, 24, 2013). Graphic designers had always been concerned about conveying 2D messages effectively. Taking into account the shorter attention spans and the rise of the digital natives, grabbing the attention of potential clients demands eye-catching graphics. Consistency is paramount. Some say the Logo is dying, it’s not, it’s shrivelling so it can fit a small square and it’s easily read on a smartphone (9, 36, 2013). When the marketing team has set off to send a new message that highlights the advantage in a product the thumbnails should work like ‘fast info graphics’.

Strategy

Some of the participants mentioned design being important for social media in terms of developing strategy. They said that effective design is essential for content strategies because it maximizes the impact of messaging and driving overall effectiveness of social engagement. It is therefore not only important from a branding perspective but also in the process around developing a social media strategy (84, 102, 2013). The outcomes allow for more impact and the continual reassessment of the strategy and goals, which is the key element in any social media campaign. Design also helps with the definition of a business opportunity that can be addressed with social media techniques. While design’s “main contribution is the construction of an overall strategy involving social media it also enables the evaluation of a particular solution”, 102,

2013. The creation of an initial marketing strategy in order to be able to connect with a brand's target market is vitally important. Design plays an important part during the implementation of social media within a brand's marketing efforts because it keeps the brand message consistent and clear in a form that potential customers can understand.

Design "is about the functioning of an element within a corporate strategy and incorporating the look and feel of the organization" (24, 2013). Social media should be consistent with the approach of institution but even more important, "social media should be deployed in a way that is consistent with the company's approach with regard to meeting the functional and emotional need of the lead or customer" (79, 2013). Pinterest uses strategy really well, that is the easiest and most valuable product communication platform by using design. By delivering a two-way strategy of input and output behaviour. In a output strategy by delivering information about a product and services, and in input mode by asserting the number and quality of feedback information. It is even possible to evaluate through the input on a certain product a foresight in how a certain trend will function in a near future. The branding strategy needs to be apt and align with the company's previous work or adverts though (31, 55, 84, 2013). Social media strategies that do not follow this would not generate much engagement from consumers.

User Experience

With regard to user experience, participants say that design can help with the user experience and interaction, which is vital in social media. Design deals with the projects usability and product desirability. It has made it easy to connect and build a network where you can learn with others. "Good design is critical to the user experience and a good user experience is how users keep coming back. Good design does not always lead to success, for example Google+ looks great but hasn't caught on with a mass audience, but it is a key part of the mix for any success story" (80, 85, 2013). Content is king when it comes to social media and there is the need to craft experiences on a daily basis, so design is a fundamental tool for this. Design, or the lack of it can impact on the user experience and the brand recognition and value. Users in the digital world are highly desensitized and visually overwhelmed so design is another part of the relationship building that occurs with every interaction between two people, in real or digital life. A brand needs an identity to facilitate the relationship and give the right impression, which will allow for interaction (72, 2013).

7.3.1 Conclusions

The online survey identified participant's views with regards to the important of design in social media. All of them confirm design's importance and some of them mentioned that design has a limited influence due to how the platforms are designed nowadays. This is because as some say, platforms are rather static and users and companies have little control on how to personalize them in order to make them more engaging. Some participants believe that the current network websites do not allow for real engagement with the audience and there is a need to redesign

those interfaces. Design is also crucial to create consistency through out all media. Storytelling helps to bring people closer to the brand and that makes it more engaging to the user. We could access that design can also work as a differentiator and amplify interaction between brands and clients/fans in social media, as it does in other fields.

Although design has been proven to add financial value to a brand it is sometimes neglected to minimize costs. Most participants believe good design equals trust and there is a higher chance for it to be shared or liked. Due to its strength in both communication and visual appeal design is a major competitive advantage. Design thinking is a critical element because it gives shape to ideas and is critical to all effective communications. The aesthetics and friendliness of social media networks are highly dependable on design, and they need to attract as many people as possible. Perceptions of a product or service are influence by their design and need to reflect the DNA of the brand.

More specifically there are three topics of importance:

- 1) Graphic appearance was mentioned a lot by the participants; because design is a layered discipline it is used in every piece of information in social media. Social media is very visual and that is why content design is so important. In the online world it only takes from four to eight seconds to impress the audience. Eye-catching graphics are crucial for this process and they need to look consistent and professional.
- 2) Design is also seen essential to social media strategy because it maximizes the impact of messaging and drives the overall effectiveness of social engagement. Design allows for continual reassessment of strategy and goals and that can give a higher impact on the outcomes of social media campaigns. It allows for evaluation and problem solving in the overall social media strategy, playing an important role during the social media implementation.
- 3) User experience and interaction are vital to social media and these are important design areas that can determine the success of a social media platform. There is the need to craft experiences with the users who are visually overwhelmed by all sorts of images around them.

We also learned how design could be of importance in the different stages of the social media marketing total process model. Participants agree that design is relevant in all stages but its even more important on the primary development phase, which consists of Marketing Mix, Messages, Creative Segmentation, Pre-Testing and Adjustment. This survey also allowed us to understand which skills are necessary to be working in social media and we see that the top three: Strategy development, Communication and Creativity are all highly important skills that designers already have and are very familiar with. We could even say those are the top three skills necessary to be a designer.

7.4 Full Study: Semi-Structured Interview analysis

The analysis of the interviews transcripts allowed a better understanding and development of the initial themes found through the exploratory study. We set out a thematic analysis systematically with a set of procedures previously tested in the exploratory study. The approach is a rigorous, yet inductive procedure. This allowed to identify and examine themes from the data collected during the expert interviews. These topics came from the previous found categories on table 29 and explore the issues that participants found to be more pertinent. Coding diagrams for each category were made to better understand the relationships between each topic.

Once we have confirmed the audience's expertise on the topics at hand it was just a matter of identifying key themes in the text and transforming them into aggregated codes as can be seen in the coding summaries. This analysis tries to comprehend the interviewee's opinions and concerns about social media in order to better understand the study area and its key issues. This thematic analysis uses theme identification, including word searches and data reduction techniques and is later used to build theoretical models in order to find real-world solutions to the issues that emerged from the literature.

Emergence of branding in social media

All interview participants consider that it is highly important for brands to be present in social media. They mention that it is not just important but absolutely necessary, since ultimately brands are going to be talked about online, whether they have a social media presence or not.

Most of the participants agree that a paradigm shift occurred, with the appearance of mass social media networks. They said that these platforms gave brands the possibility of creating content and talking outside the brand's habitat. However, according to interviewee's brand managers did not know how to follow this trend, but knew that it was important for their brands to be in social media. It was also important to understand this paradigm shift and work to integrate their strategy incorporating social media (VC, DC and JP, 2012). They believed the marketing space has changed from Push to Pull. Reacting to that change is difficult as most companies have a reasonably traditional marketing plan and were not used to taking into account a different medium such as social media (AW, 2012).

Participants say that "content in social media must be planned and carried out correctly, otherwise people will lose interest". They believe that brands need to understand how to talk and communicate in this new communication medium (DC, MH, 2012). They say, brands should be social in their DNA, "*Instead of having a separate communication channel, I believe that a brand can be made more of a social brand and it should be a social brand in its DNA*" (IQ, 2012).

A participant gave some examples of the use of design for branding in social media. They had been working with Knorr and wanted to make a totally different social media strategy (IQ, 2012). They thought about a campaign that could reach everybody and introduced the concept of taste. They did research on taste and how it is different in every country and how Knorr history is connect with all that. Instead of just proposing a basic recipe website, they were able to embed the brand into conversation and real experiences about the brand and about taste. People could share their ideas and experiences and were very much engaged.

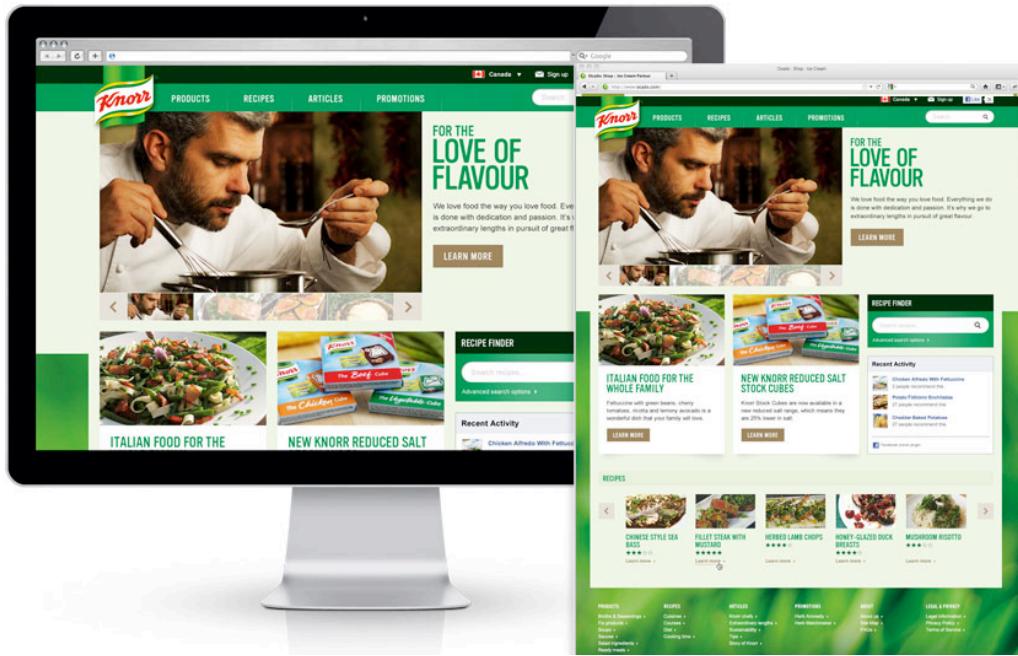


Figure 56. Knorr social media campaign

Another example is the launch of the Japanese beauty brand Shu Uemura in North America. “The social media strategy was to think about different types of woman and their different types of beauty and how beauty has evolved into what it is today”. They took the concept of what beauty means in Japan and took it to a different level (IQ, 2012).

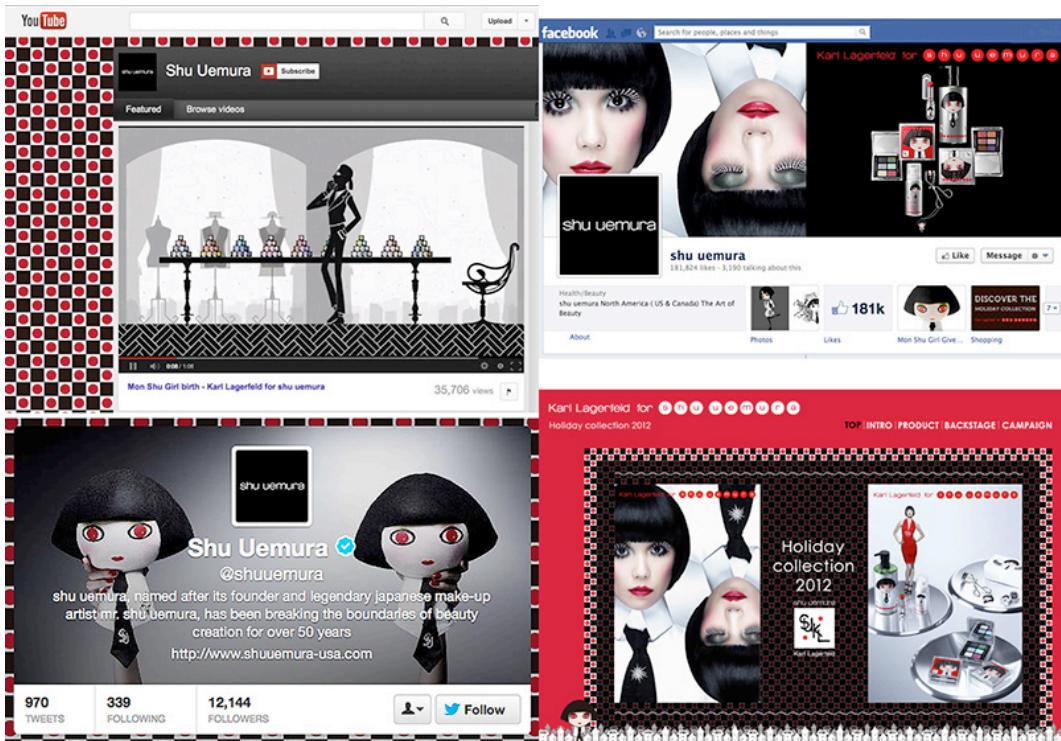


Figure 57. Shu Uemura social media campaign

We found that companies want to increase sales, increase brand perception and save money and time (MG, 2012). One participant believed 78% of people trust social media and the recommendations that come from their friends. It is a big communication tool because it involved around 23% of commercial decisions (MH, 2012). Some participants suggested that it was difficult for some clients to understand the grasps of the actual uses of social media. Most of the clients think it is easy and that results will appear immediately, but its nothing like that (GS, 2012).

Drivers and opportunities

A participant said that: "one of the reasons companies are joining in social media is cost" (MH, 2012). Most companies are going through cost reductions because of the economical crisis and that is taking its toll on them. Online advertising, marketing and image production in social media can be a lot cheaper. Some companies have client services in a virtual way, without having a physical space outside the web. Companies can answer client's questions online and use social media to recruit human resources (ASG, 2012). Of course, if clients want to be very serious about social media the costs can increase exponentially. Monitoring software for analytics, statistical data collection and analysis can be costly for small, even medium companies, but it allows for an important set of data for evaluation and adjustment and its important to build upon that for upcoming campaigns that can potentially drive sales. "Companies need to understand that the investment they make in social media has to be serious if they want to drive sales", (ASG, 2012).

Brand Awareness

Regarding brand awareness participants said that the rise in popularity of social networking and social media creates the ideal climate for businesses to raise their brand awareness online. They believe there are several ways that social media platforms can be leveraged to help find new customers and to firmly cement your brand in the minds of consumers (RPC, 2012). They say that another reason for companies to be in social media is that they need to send a “mature image” to their consumers and potential buyers. “Nowadays a company that does not have an online presence and is not present in social networks is considered an “old hag” and not keeping up with the times at hand” RPC (2012). Making sure that the market and their competitors know that they are “keeping up with the show” (RPC, 2012). There is a better chance, with social media, of being present in the consumer’s life. It is important to send out a message without over doing it. Getting the personality of the company across the different social media platforms is a challenge. It needs to be matched with their message and their business model (IQ and AH, 2012).

Engagement

The interviewees pointed out that Facebook has navigation times of around twenty minutes per user. Before social media, companies’ websites did not have the engagement component. Brands who engage with people, who are willing to embrace the new technologies, have a much better opportunity of being successful in the future (RPC, 2012).

People are engaging with the Internet predominately through social media. Social media can be a very informal process, using the channels for best usability but also being professional is key. In Social media brands can engage directly with the consumer. Social media makes it easy to engage with your costumer base (JP, 2012).

Interaction

Participants said that social media has the potential for interaction and directional communication. In social media there is the “face-to-face” to show upfront to the consumer instead of having the institutional communication. There is a direct response from the consumer and the feedback from the campaigns comes in faster and directly, “*Brands can talk to consumers and consumers can talk back*” (DP,2012).

They believe that in social media there is proximity with the client and this creates an empathy that is different from just having an online presence. There exists an underlying conversation. Consumers and brands can ‘talk’ to each other. Social media is not the same thing as traditional advertising methods; these did not give us a direct response on a campaign or specific brand action. It is important to listen to what the consumers want out of their interaction with social media (DP, 2012).

Investment

Results show that Facebook has provided brands with new business perspectives in terms of investment. Investment in digital has increased. Still there is a gap between time spent creating content for social media versus the money invested.

With social media it is hard to establish Return on Investment (ROI) because there is no way of knowing which fans were influenced to buy a determined product/service or participate in a specific promotion. This was easier to determine e-commerce websites for example (ASG, 2012).

Consumer

Data shows that brands ultimately have the need to be where the potential consumer is and social media is where “everybody” is. There is an audience of 900 million people over the world. Everything is digital now and the world started to function online. People started to take their big purchase decisions through the online as well (PC, 2012). In the beginning social media platforms such as Facebook were not designed for brands, they were ultimately for people (PC, 2012). The digital world becomes a mandatory presence for brands. In the early ages it was about building an online reputation but now it is more about creating a strong bond with the consumers. Consumers, who share, recommend and reference their product, service or brand.

Problems and barriers

Participants have stated that the consumer has all the power. Brands are aware of this and need to be open and honest. Of course if the company does not deal with “bad press” in a good way there might be problems. Bad publicity needs to be addressed quickly and be well managed or this might be a weapon that can blow in the brand’s face (AH and GS, 2012). This is also mentioned in the Social media chapter 4.7 Users in social media. Some companies just want to make money and gain fans quickly. They resort to falsified data as fans are a natural resource and the future goes through social media. It is an important platform to understand the real quality of the brand. Some companies buy likes and fans for their clients. Brands do not understand that if you do this you are just lying to yourself. These people would not become customers and would not influence others to become as well PPS (2012).

The following page shows a summary diagram of all the topics discussed in the category above.

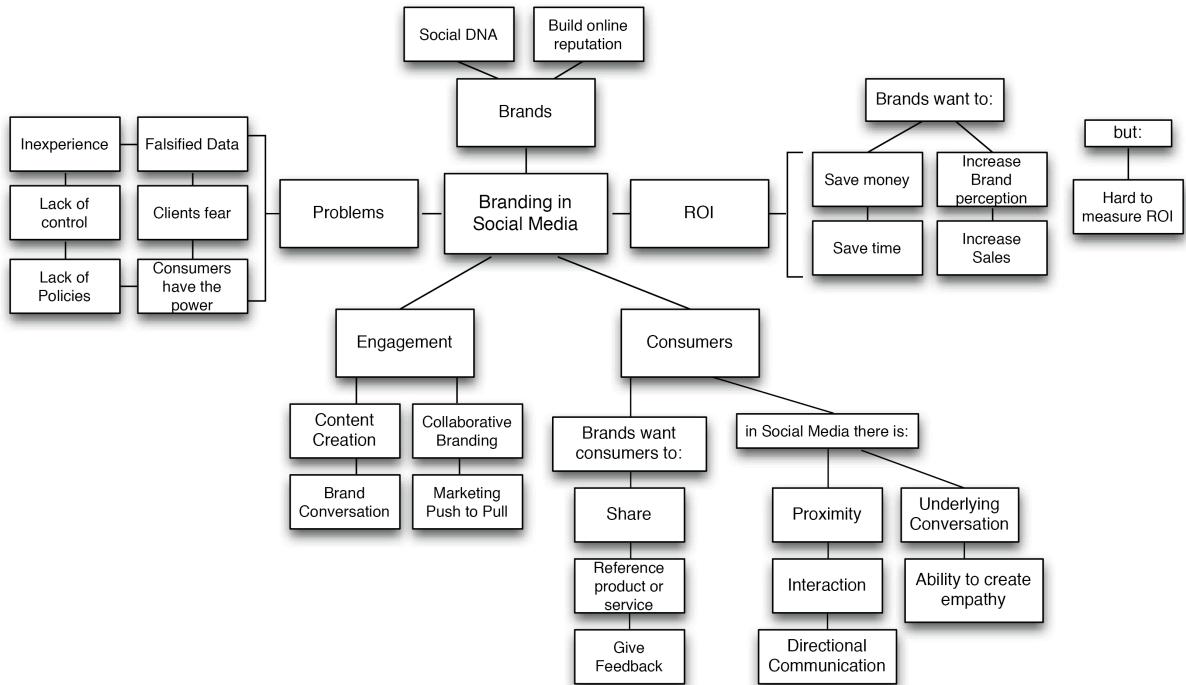


Figure 58. Coding Summary - branding in social media

Figure 58 gathers all the topics that were discussed in the interviews and explained in the above sections. We talked about the problems of being in social media, how the power has now changed and is not being held by the consumers. It was the general opinion that most of their clients have a fear of social media and have not got an idea of how their overall strategy can fit with that. Adding to the fact that social media is quite new, some strategies are based on trial and error approaches (DC and LS, 2012). Clients also fear the lack of policies that could protect their brand and of course, the lack of control, once the conversation gets started. Associated with that is bad press that can come out of any online presence.

All of the participants agree that social media increases brand perception and can increase sales but there is no way to measure how that can happen and no real correlation between the actual social media strategy and the sales, making it really difficult to measure the ROI (return-on-investment) (ASG, 2012).

Another positive aspect of brands being in social media is the ability to create a closer relationship with the consumer. This space allows for directional communication, it has the ability to create empathy and interaction by emerging the consumer in underlying conversations.

Almost all of the participants mention the topic of engagement and how it is crucial in social media. Engagement is an important aspect for branding in social media because it allows for a conversation with the brand. Storytelling is an important aspect of engagement as it crafts stories that allow people to immerse themselves into the brand and become loyal fans.

Design in social media

Most of the participants agreed that design was very important in social media. Although some of them questioned its limitations in terms of creating an underlying framework, since Facebook and Twitter have their own layout, and design can only do so much (JP, 2012). It is very important for designers to understand their audience and to work accordingly. Mobile devices will be another challenge for designers, social media is increasingly being used in mobile devices and the screen size is smaller and that requires a greater design effort. "It is ridiculous to have other people create content for social media because designers have been amazing professionals at it" (PA, 2012).

Participants said that designers are the only ones who can really, in the confined communication space we have to spare in social media, still deliver consistent messages through out the whole branding strategy (PA, 2012). They said that it should be all about brand communication and designers are the ones who better understands the brand and who deal with image creation and image solutions all through their lives. They mentioned that sometimes even the business side of a brand does not understand it is full potential. Social media being about communication a communication designer should be doing it (PA, 2012).

It was said that in social media, image is everything so design has an extreme important. More then ever brands need storytellers; statistics have proved that storytelling has a bigger impact on people. Nowadays publications that obtain the highest engagement rates in content creating are the ones that are graphically more stimulating. It is very difficult to build something in social media without using design because design is not just about imagery, it regards the whole process and it starts right with the logo creation in the branding process (RPC, ASG, PA, 2012).

Design ensures communication coherence. People create expectations about a brand and are used to a certain communication tone, written and visual. Design gives that consistency of continuity. It is not specific of social media and should be a part of all brand communications in all channels (IQ, AH, AA, 2012).

Participants agree that design is important to keep brand communication relevant and interesting. Design is not just what you see visually, design is also about solving problems and that's what communication does to bring things closer and solve problems (DC, 2012).

Design is digital, "design is the materialization of all thinking" (LS, 2012), and was already important before social media came along, in traditional mediums such as advertising. Ultimately it is through image that we capture an audience and on Facebook it is all very visual. Design is all about creating that first impact. We need to fit the right images with the particulars of the different platforms. Design can create different synergies between platforms (MHN, 2012).

They mentioned that unfortunately some brands are cutting back on design due to the crisis and that's affecting branding a lot. They are more focused on selling and communication is not a

priority anymore (ASG, 2012). The design component is important not only from the aesthetic point of view but also in terms of efficiency, when you want to convert an idea into the objectives we have set for a brand.

Results show that design can reflect visually the hierarchy of information. Takes people through a path. Design in social media is no longer passive; it becomes active mainly because of all the information about the user that is available in social media. Companies nowadays are looking for user experience designers (HP, 2012).

Participants say that brands need to make sure your brand is being portrayed correctly and that the branding is being done correctly. A lot of it is what actually lies behind the brand, a lot of people just look at brands and think of logos but it is more than that; it is tone of voice, message and strategy. The core within the area of social media that replicates what you consider to be the brand identity and designers do that. Design in social media needs to be really targeted (MH, 2012).

Below is a coding summary diagram of the topics discussed in this category:

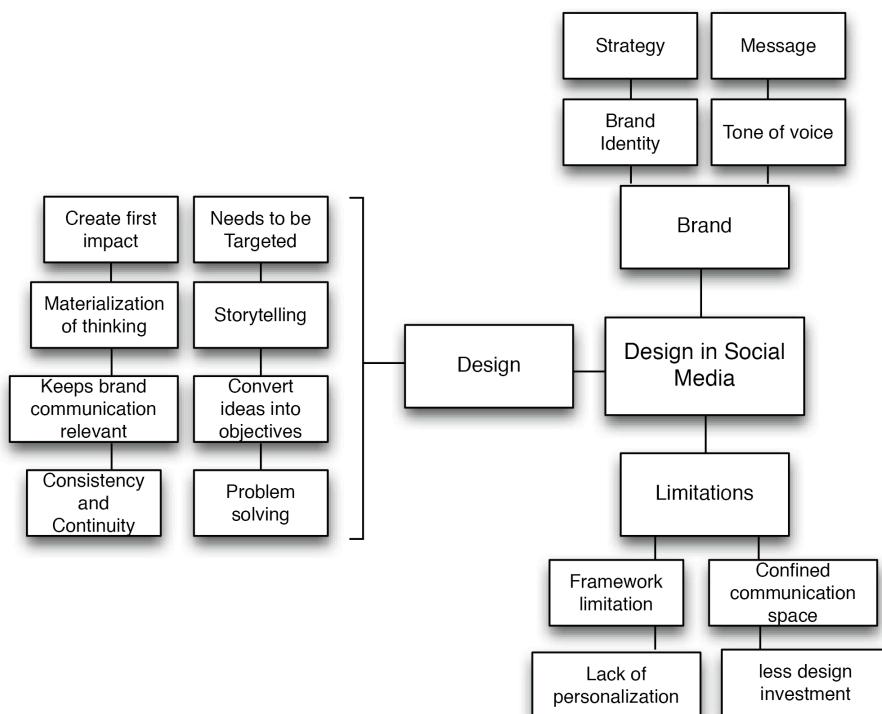


Figure 59. Coding Summary - design in social media

Skills

Participants say that in social media there are a lot of different specialism areas. No one can be an expert on every aspect of digital marketing. In the area of digital marketing or social media management there are a lot of tasks that can be outsourced and those people can be specialized

in a very specific area (VC, 2012). “We need design experts to deal with the aspects of imagery and branding. Other skills are more technical, like SEO (search engine optimization) and keyword search” (VC, 2012).

“marketing people should be concerned about the brand’s strategy plan and I believe that the people who should be working in social media are the communication people or public relations. This is because a marketing person is passive and does not have the capacity to manage the brand archives for example related with the brand communication” (DP, 2012).

It is all part of the communication strategy, we need to look at what was done offline first. That communication needs design. It is important to engage with people throughout keeping the brand’s identity in mind and we need designers for that. “A person who is aware of what is cool and what is not. What is trending, some sort of cool hunting for the brand interested and look for something that is of interest to the users as well” (ASG, PC, 2012).

Participants believe that social media has to have versatility and be able to represent the brand and not let their opinion become involved in the process. Be able to work with the brand from the brand values and perspectives.

Analysis concludes that it is essential to know strategy. There needs to be a balance between the written word and the imagery presented in social media. A community can respond well to a certain type of writing whether the other one does not. “The community manager has a huge role in this, because he needs to know his community and learn to write for it. There are even different ways to approach the communities even when we want to approach a specific subject” (LS, 2012).

It is easy to confuse social media and working with social media. A social media person is mainly there to analyse behaviours from a strategy point of view. “It has to be aware of other people. It has to be able to communicate the humane side of the brand. It is not all about marketing and big statement campaigns” (DC, 2012).

“The person or designer (if you will) needs to write well and be aware of this paradigm shift and understand that transparency is important”. The profile required is able to understand the client and communicate with consumers; they need to have a bigger scope on the digital world and as a digital campaign in its whole (VC, 2012).

The team involved has to be aware of the brand’s reality; it is not a one person job. *“In order to communicate the brand there needs to be a knowledge of the language involved and communicated for a specific market target is required”* (PPS, 2012). “There is an advantage if you are trained in marketing but all that matters is that you come from a communication background and have that dynamism and team spirit” (AA, 2012).

“Someone who is relentless in measuring and evaluating of all that’s created and developed. A strategically oriented person that can manage conflict situations and is able to adopt the discourse to these new environments” (RPC, 2012).

“The skills required for a Communication designer are the same for social media. If you add research and market knowledge you have yourself a social media designer” (PA, 2012).

A person who is able to support the level of straightforwardness that social media networks open for brands. They need to reflect brands strategy. *“It is a long term project, the person needs to be customer focused and engage in brand conversations” (MHN, 2012).*

“Social media is interesting because it has all sorts of people working in it. People from different backgrounds, like design, marketing, PR and others that do not have anything to do with Communication. Its important to have an interest in people” (AH, 2012). Below are two coding diagrams of the sub-categories that were previously discussed in this category:

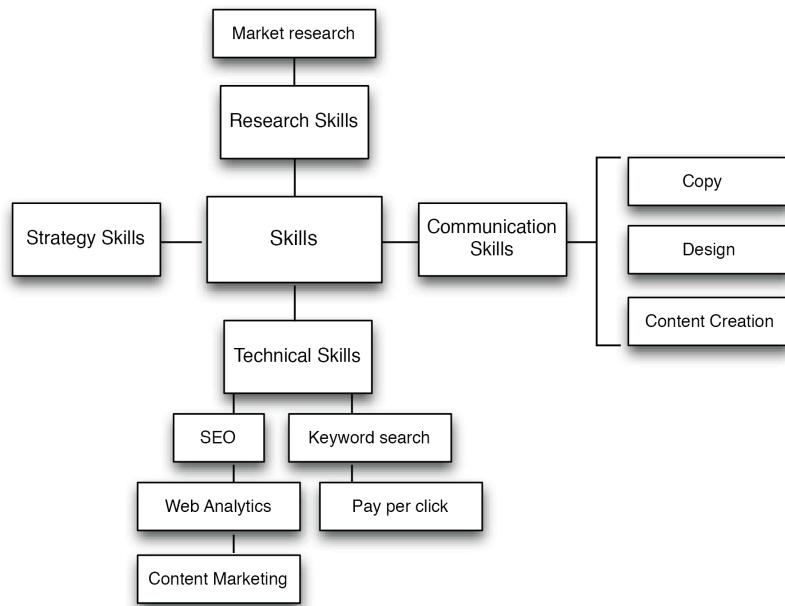


Figure 60. Coding Summary - Skills to work in social media

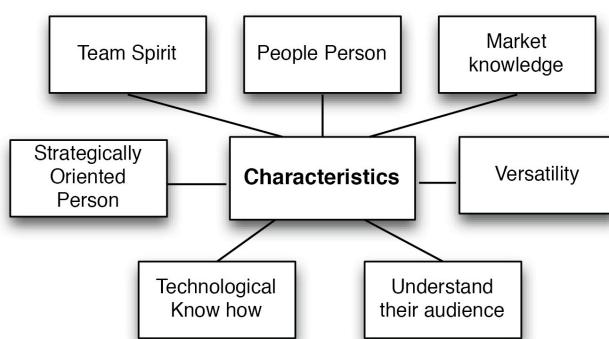


Figure 61. Coding Summary - Characteristics to work in social media

Strategy

All of the participants say that there is no "*magic formula*" to create a brand strategy for social media. Some brands do not necessarily need to be in social media and some do not need to be present in all the platforms. It is all about their target (AH, VC, 2012). Brands need to be where their audience is. There needs to be regular tracking and management of the online presence and that does not always happen:

"It shocks me to know about it, when brands come to you and they do not have anything to monitor their online presence, I mean they do not know about things like Google alerts". AH (2012).

Design strategy – Case study example

One of the participants talked about a very successful social media strategy used by Diesel. This strategy worked well and was done four or three years ago. "They had on the point of purchase stands, kiosks with a photographic camera and people would leave the dressing room took a photo and logged in with their Facebook account. Their photo would then be published on their Facebook profile and on the screen they had five minutes to get comments from their friends, saying if they liked it or not. So Diesel predicted that the user's friends saw that this person was at the store to buy a product, from then on they had a high grow on fans, what they did not predict was the outcome of this campaign that was the creation of a different social media concept on store. They had a massive outcome in PR and they turned out to be an amazing advertising tool because 40% of the fans heard about the campaign from other places then the store, other websites that had nothing to do with the communication strategy. Nowadays we cannot look at a social media strategy or digital strategy in an isolated way. We have to see how we can conjugate not only with our business but with our global communication strategy."

This is an example of how a social media strategy can work combining both social media and the flag store for the brand. In this case the engagement with the client was very interesting and the fact that it generated a personal post on the person's Facebook page that included the brand and the product allowed for real time feedback. More clients wanted to try this experience which made it a huge success story.

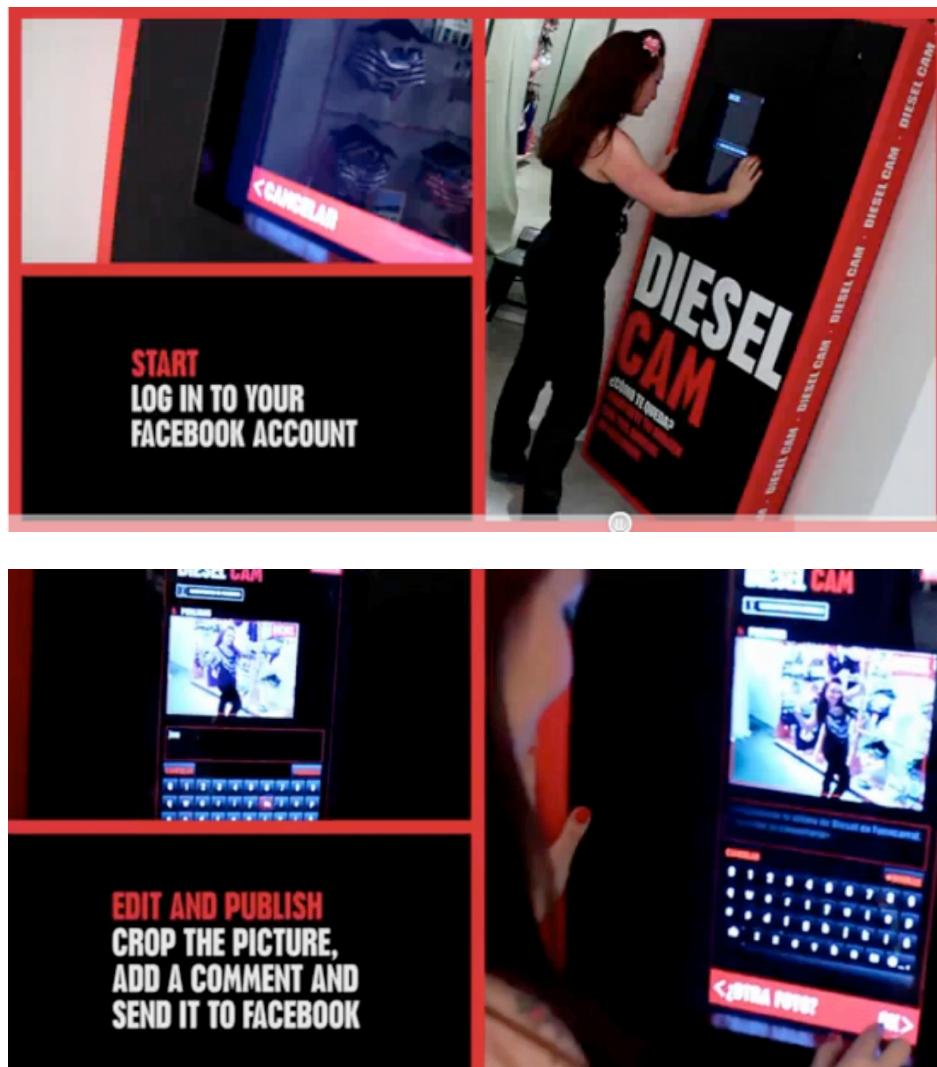


Figure 62. Social media strategy by Diesel

One of the most important things is to pick a platform that suits your brand, not all platforms are adequate for your brand to be present, and the brand does not need to be a part of every one. It all depends on the type of brand and the audience. It is also very important to track back what is being done and have regular content interaction engagement. You should also plan ahead and understand what your brand should be doing and what sort of content should it put out there (AH, 2012). All of the participants referred a similar way of structuring the how they go about developing a strategy, some with more technical detail, other just briefly describing the process.

Combining all the different inputs we have got from the literature review, online survey analysis and the semi-structured expert interviews we have compiled a map that summarizes all the aspects that were talked about in relation with strategy and processes in social media. This coding summary is an attempt to create a logical process to follow in order to create a social media strategy in an efficient matter.

The following coding summary represents all combined results when participants were inquired about social media strategy and overall processes. It is the result of all the input we have gathered from both the online survey and the expert interviewees (see next page for figure 63).

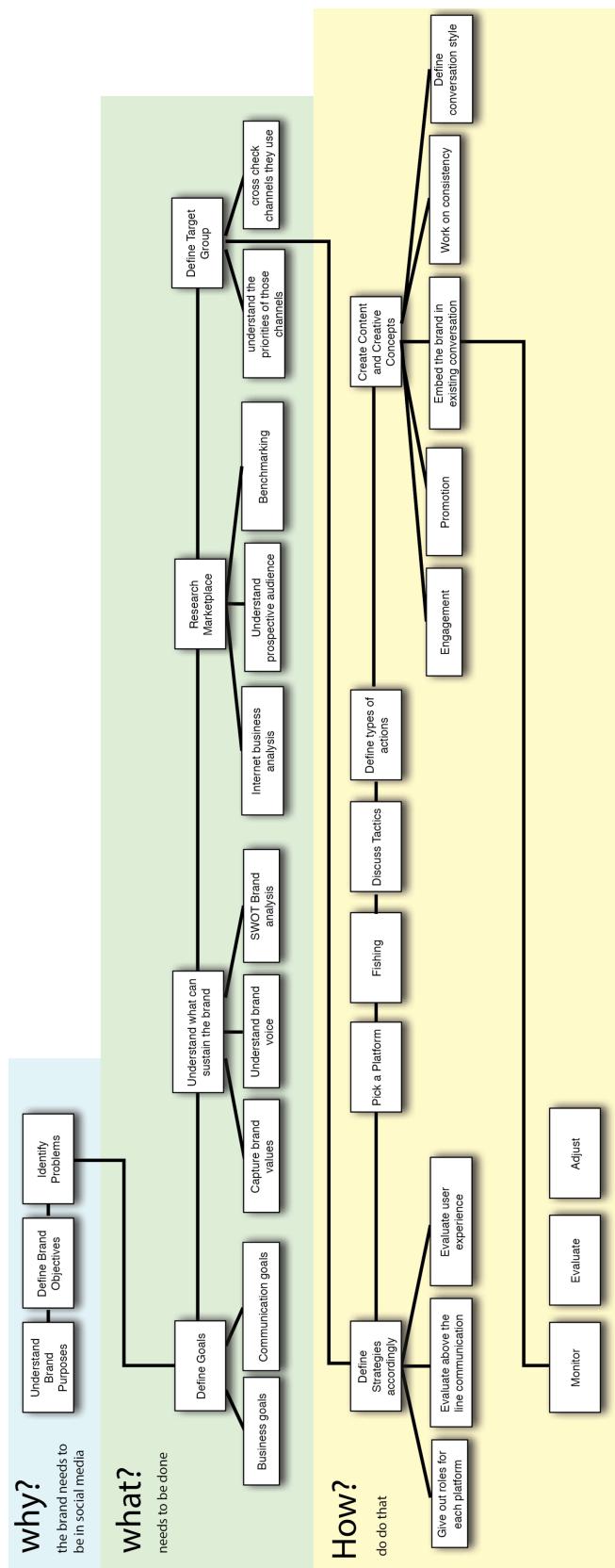


Figure 63. Coding Summary of strategy in social media (all combined answers)

This coding summary provided a comprehensive view into the combined responses of participants regarding the topic of social media strategy and how they processed the whole social media process. It is divided into three parts: the why, the what, and the how. On the first part we tried to access "why" the brand needs to be in social media and asked questions regarding that issue. This provided us with purposes, objectives and problems. We then proceeded to "the what" stage, that determined what needed to be done to address the previous question. We describe it as follows: Define Goals, Understand what sustains the brand, Research Marketplace and Define target group. The third and final part of the strategy plan was composed of "how" questions. How will this eventually lead to a strategy, which was determinant to embed the brand in existing conversation and allowed content to be created. Which lead to the last steps of the strategy: monitor, evaluate and adjust.

Future

All of the participants said that it was hard to predict what would happen in the future of social media. It could be possible that Facebook and Twitter are not around anymore and in their place another social network might appear, or they might adapt and become even more powerful. This if they open themselves to change and make their space more available for brands to be apart in the consumer conversation. Ideally, when it comes to branding, social media should become a business platform.

Even though it is hard to predict what will happen in the future of social media, most of the participants made some guesses of what might happen, and what would the future hold for brands and consumers.

- 1) Participants said that in a fast moving world, technology is moving forward, and that the evolution of social networks will be growing fast as well. Internet consumption will become more in tune with what happened with TV. Social media today is getting closer to where traditional TV advertising was in the past when it came to communicating in a more personal, focused way with the target audience (PL, 2012).
- 2) Some participants believe that the future lies in design. They think that design will need to be in charge of the total integration of social media (DP, AA, ASG, LS, 2012).
- 3) Some of the participants talked about smartphones and its increase in importance within the digital future, almost all of the participants had something to say about it. They believed that applications that interact with the consumer will be crucial to raise brand awareness and real time geo-located platforms 24/7 will be a reality (HP, AA, RPC, 2012).
- 4) A participant mentioned that it would be interesting to have a real live connection between the point-of-purchase, store and social media through smartphone apps or some sort of digital device that allowed the consumer to have tailored choices according to his/hers preferences towards the brand (DP, 2012).
- 5) With the growth of interpersonal relationships with the brand there is the need to become even more interactive with consumers. Social media will eventually become a business channel.

There needs to be a curating process of strategy in all this because this is a relatively new medium for both brands and people. Some people are still acting like teenagers in social media, ranting about brands and that scares the clients (companies). There needs to be a learning curve because this is a new way of doing business (LS, 2012).

6) Brand relevance will increase in the future and advertising through social media as well. Brands need to adapt to this new reality and make their strategic plans accordingly.

7) A participant said that brands will have to “entertain their clients through social media, like in a TV show”. He mentioned that the physical store will have the same importance as social media and that brands that adapt to this quicker will have a better chance to survive (PPS, 2012).

8) A participant referred to the *predatory* models used to “track” users in social media. He said social media allowed companies to analyse people’s behaviour and be able to understand future ones. Participants said that brands have to be able to preview and suggest products or services in a tailored manner. Results show that there is a need to understand and analyse data and be able to adjust the communication accordingly (AA, 2012). Branding value will be transferred to clients. The audience has the power and social media works as mass media. There will need to be an increase in transparent trading (AA, 2012).

9) Some participants pointed out to the need for a new social media revolutionary concept to appear. They talked about this new concept as something to do with interactivity that will allow the interconnection of all this information. The participants believe that the future of social media will be about collaboration, qualifying people and associate information with people in order to deliver more suited solutions but also connect the people with the information (HP, IQ, 2012). They said that social media is not an isolated thing; there is no such thing as a social media expert (GH, IQ, 2012).

10) According to participants social media should be about creating an offer that speaks to the individual rather than speaking to a massive group of people (AW, 2012). They said that some brands do not monitor their online digital presence, which is crucial these days. They referred that some clients are scared of the lack of control the digital provides them and believe there is a lack of policies to protect them (AH, 2012). Participants said that consumers, above all, want participation and engagement. The participants mentioned that local will have more importance in the future and that social media websites need to change their design in order to compete with other revenue models (MG, 2012).

Below follows a coding summary of the main categories and related subcategories discussed.

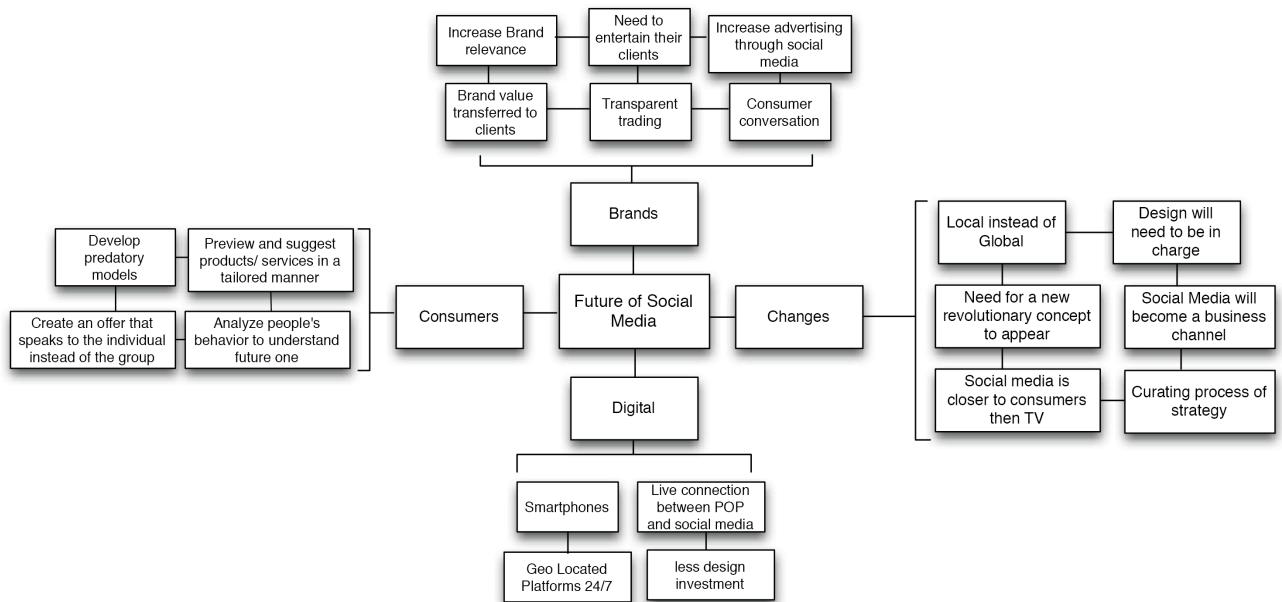


Figure 64. Coding Summary - Future of social media category

Portugal versus United Kingdom

"In Portugal design does not have the importance it might have in other countries" (PA, 2012). Internet is the new mass media. In Portugal clients are highly influenced by their marketing goals. They are concerned in increasing their fan base and reach a big amount of followers. Clients are not particularly worried about concepts such as interaction or engagement, which have been a concern in the United Kingdom for a long time now (DC, 2012).

According to (LS, 2012) *"In Portugal we have an absence of traditional data, in the United Kingdom that does not happen, this makes us have to resource to our experience and gut feeling". "There is not an open talk and cooperation between agencies and companies who do social media, its everyone for themselves"* (LS, 2012).

There was a chance to start to install the IAB (Interactive Advertising Bureau) but there were a lot of lobbies and people were concerned about confidentiality, that is not an issue anymore in most countries, and that is why they are ahead of social media implementation (LS, 2012). *"There is little to no strategic thinking and the trial/error approach prevails. There is no knowledge exchange and people only learn about things when they are out or by water cooler conversations"* (LS, 2012).

Portugal is highly focused on ROI (return on investment) instead of ROE (return on engagement). There is the need to convert numbers to sales and there is no interesting communication coming out to back them out. It is all about the caption of likes (DP, 2012). Portugal is a small market and there is not a lot of space for specialization. Our companies are small to micro and often there is a multitasking staff behind the social media strategy, *"In*

Portugal we have to do a little bit of everything because companies are not so big and they just cannot afford more staff” (PA, 2012).

“Twitter is big but in Portugal it is only started to give its first steps, Facebook is where brands channel their investments”, (AA, 2012). Twitter does not have the impact it does in other countries and the main platform is Facebook (PA, AA, 2012). “Online advertising in Portugal is still at its infancy. Platforms like Instagram and Pinterest who are big in other countries still haven’t made its way into branding or even people’s lives in general” (RC, 2012).

This table represents a summary of the major differences between the two countries. The expert interviewees highlighted these issues during the course of the interviews.

Portugal	United Kingdom
Confidentiality issues / Afraid to share knowledge	Knowledge exchange
Design is of little important	Design is important
Little to no strategic thinking	Strategic Thinking
Small Market, no room for specialization	Bigger Market, Room for specialization
Focused on ROI	Focused on ROE
Only Facebook is important	Not only Facebook is relevant
Online advertising at its infancy	Online advertising at a good stage
Increase the amount of followers	Increase the amount of actual buyers

Table 34. Coding Summary - Portugal and United Kingdom social media differences

Judging from this coding diagram there are a lot of issues that Portugal needs to focus on. *“The United Kingdom is at a completely different position with more years of experience and more expertise”*. *“Customers are comfortable about asking service questions on social networks such as twitter and brands are answering quickly”* (HP, IQ, AH, MH, 2013). This is not yet a reality in Portugal. *“In Portugal, there is basically just one social network and that is Facebook”* (AA, DC, LS). Participants say that Portugal is still at the early stages of social media strategy and finds the need to be protective about its findings rather than to share, discuss strategies and approaches with other agencies and consultants. At this stage design is of little relevance in Portugal, although some agencies take it seriously. Portugal seems to rely mainly on gut feeling and experience rather than strategic planning and strategic thinking. The market is small and there is little to no room for specialization, quite the contrary in the United Kingdom. *“The major concern in Portugal is return on investment while in the United Kingdom they seem to have passed that phase and are now focusing on Return on engagement”* (DC, 2013). Social media networks other then Facebook do not have much relevance in Portugal, Twitter for example is hardly used

while in the United Kingdom it is all the range. Clients seem to believe that the number of followers is the most important thing and instead of working on an engagement strategy to bring them to buy something they rather offer them quick promotions and that makes their interest in the brand short-term.

7.4.3 Conclusions

The findings suggest that social media is falling into the same mistakes as email marketing. Social media should be integrated in the overall brand strategy. Participants say that brands should join in the conversation consumers are having about them and listen to their target.

The results show that the “bigger the company, the more difficult it is to actually get social media on the right track” (AP, 2013). This is because companies are used to traditional marketing methods, where they have their product they want to sell. It is important to match the message with their business model. Getting the personality of the company across is the challenge, crafting the message itself is very important. “A lot of people think it is easy and quick. That they’ll get results right away with a minimum of effort” (DC, 2013).

Participants have said that branding in social media is becoming more and more important as consumers take the lead in brand evaluation. It is important to determine the message and communicate it in the right channels for your brand. It should be about the return on engagement and to be able to get a story to the people through interaction (storytelling). There appear to be five predominant issues:

1) Branding in social media is not without its problems, mainly the lack of policies and control over what is being said about brands and what is being “collected” through consumer data. Consumers now have the power and brands are lacking control and that makes them scared. However in social media there is the possibility of interaction and directional communication with the target audience, the ability to create empathy through proximity in underlying conversations. Brands want consumers to give them feedback about a product or a service and make them share that information. The engagement in social media has transformed marketing from push to pull, now it is about collaboration and content creation, a conversation rather than something that is set in stone and can the red out of a billboard. Investments in social media are hard to measure financially, as the link between social media content and purchases is not direct. Some studies do try to measure the link between the ROE (return-on-engagement) and ROI (return-on-investment). Brands want mainly to save money and increase sales through their participation in social media but that does not always happen. There are several steps that need to be taken before hand, like building and maintaining an online reputation.

2) Participants said that **design in social media** seems to have some limitation according to some of the participants, especially when it comes to the actual social media network space. There seems to be little room for real innovation due to the confined communication space. All of the participants however were keen on understanding the importance of design for social media, calling it the '*materialization of all thinking*'. Design's importance goes beyond just

creating the first impact with consumers, it targets its market and keeps brand communication relevant through the use of storytelling techniques in order to allow ideas to be converted into objectives. Design should be about being consistent and giving continuity to all brand content.

3) We found out that the **skills necessary** to be working in social media appear to be the same, as one would expect from a designer or marketer. Market research, strategy, communication and design skills are the most mentioned by the interviewee's. The profile necessary is someone with a design, marketing or Public relationship's background. Regarding strategy, all of the participants seem to have a way of doing things that in a way was quite similar to the design problem solving and any business model approach. All of them seem to focus on the same steps, with more or less particulars. A coding summary of strategy in social media can be seen on table 66.

4) Regarding the topic of **strategy** there was the underlying notion that reaching the target audience is crucial. In order to have a successful social media strategy brands need to be relevant where their target audience is, by understanding that, they can prefer and focus their social media efforts in platforms where their users are present. Another issue that rose from the findings is that some companies are not aware or know how to use monitoring tools when it comes to track their online presence. This means that they have no idea of what their costumers are saying about their company, brand, services and/or products but also, that they are not listening to their concerns, not answering their questions and not communicating at all in the online channels. Online communication is not suited for all brands but once they have recognized its importance they need to have a strategy to approach their audience in the appropriate channels. Engaging with users through content creation is the next step in order to increase brand awareness. Once the brand has achieved high brand awareness through its strategy it becomes present in people's lives in a way that they immediately associate certain images, words and expressions to the respective brand.

5) In light of the analysis we believe the **future of social media** seems to lie in a more transparent way of trading, in making the conversation with the clients more clear and in total disclosure. When learning more and more about their clients through social media monitoring now brands can offer tailored services and customize their offer to their clients and prospective clients. Now brands can appeal to the individual rather than a group of people. It is believed that social media will become an even bigger communication channel, bigger than TV. There is a need to become more local and relevant, rather then global and generic. Design needs to be more in charge and be able to curate the whole social media strategy since it is beginning. A new reality of engagement and interaction is coming, connecting smartphones, geolocation apps and the point of purchase. Brands will be able to personalize their offers to regular costumers and benefit those who are loyal to their brand.

The findings suggest that Portugal and the United Kingdom are very different in their social media approaches. Concepts like engagement and interaction are not the focus of social media campaigns in the majority of social media agencies in Portugal (with some exceptions), while in the United Kingdom they are viewed as one of the most important parts of the social media strategy.

8. Design management models in social media

In this chapter we further develop the findings through the models studied in the literature review that were modified to comprehend the results from this study. As far as the author could understand from the primary and secondary data collected through the course of her study there are no existing models that are specifically aimed at explaining the importance of design in social media or the importance of social media design strategy in branding.

There are no existing models explaining the importance of design in social media, or the importance of social media design strategy in branding.

Mendel (2012) states that models are increasingly important in design, as designers are often collaborating with other disciplines; therefore design is also increasingly dealing with new systems and services.

They are valuable sources of information when it comes to visualizing data and are able to become tools to explore relationships that are not otherwise possible. Models have the power to synthesize different types of data, whether qualitative or quantitative, but also inputs from various perspectives which provides for a better understanding the boundaries of disciplines and the issues occurring within (Mendel, 2012).

We are able to present the thesis findings through the models created based on the primary and secondary data. We devised two models based on the data collected. These two models are the result of the analysis done in this thesis, which concerns the literature review, exploratory study, online survey questionnaire, semi-structured expert interviews and design management models in social media validation survey.

Model 1 – Design in social media ladder

Through the analysis of the online survey and the semi-structured interviews we can conclude and transfer knowledge about design in social media by comparing it with the “design ladder model” by the Danish Design Centre (DDC) done in 2003 (Figure 21. Danish Design Ladder). We opted to build upon this model because it related the four different areas that came out as codes and were mentioned as themes throughout the thematic analysis and previously on the literature review. We considered it to be a comprehensive way to represent the different design stages and relate them to the stages in social media strategy. Also because the design ladder model is a framework that facilitates the evolution of the use of design by a company.

It is a four-step model, beginning by no use of design, to considering design as a key strategic element. This model is helpful because it assess the different ways companies are integrating design. Ideally we would like companies to consider design in the forth step (Kootstra, 2009).

Therefore we built upon the “Design Ladder model (2003) and it now includes a description of the design roles at each stage of the ladder. Each step is related to the role design has in social media strategy.

In each stage of the “Design ladder model” we were able to include relevant topics and steps for each as you can see from figure 65. Coming from stage 1 with No design Interest until design as Strategy we have collected bullet points for each stage that characterize it in regards to social media.

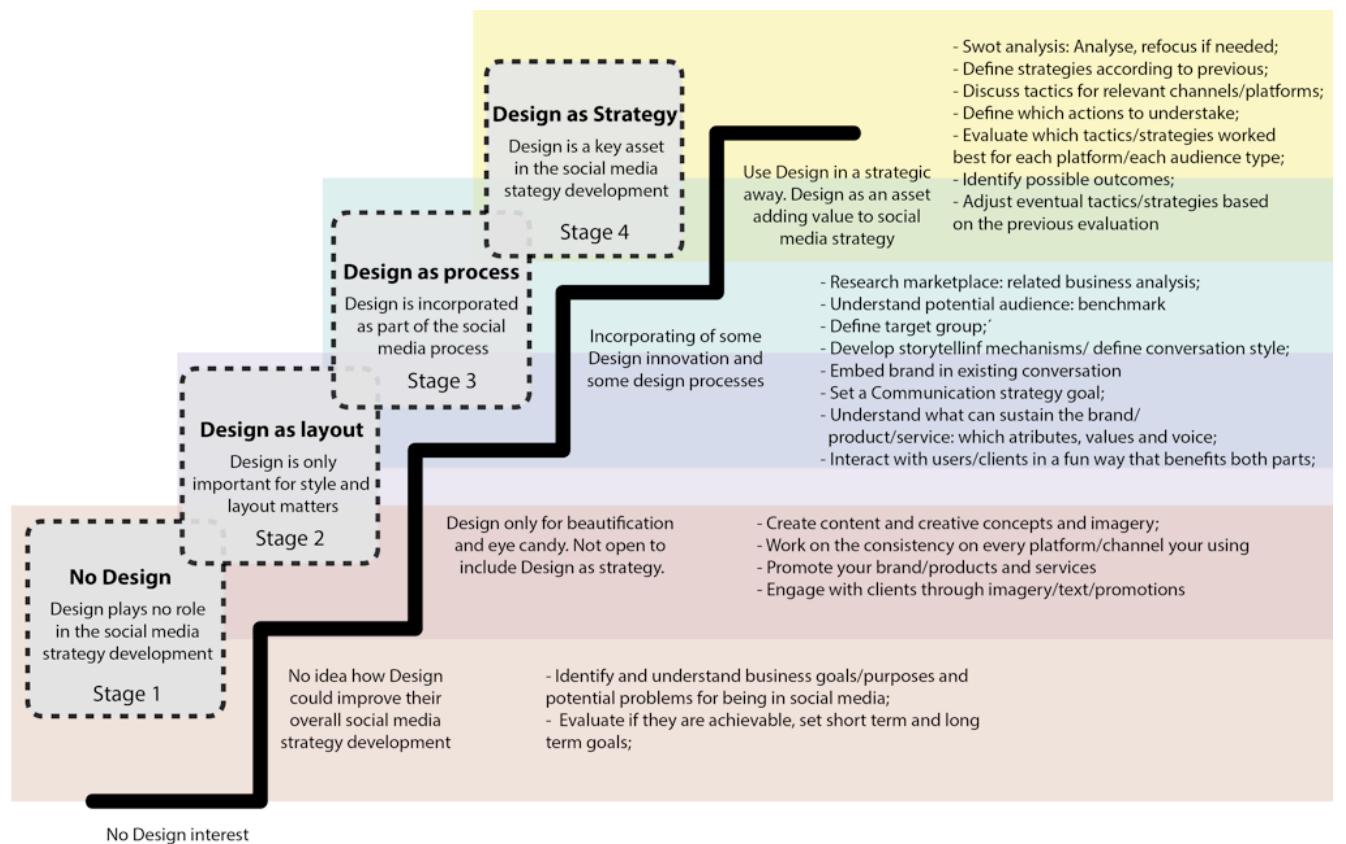


Figure 65. Model 1 Design in social media ladder

Describing the figure from bottom left coming from the No Design stage, where design plays no role in the development of social media strategy and therefore its only business goals and purposes for being in social media, potential problems and short and term goals for the social platforms. On stage two, Design as Layout, design is viewed as the content creator of beautiful imagery and concepts and keeps consistency in all platforms as well as does brand promotion, awareness and is able to have some engagement with clients through that. Moving to the third stage, Design as Process. Design at this stage is able to incorporate innovation and design processes in social media. The designer is able to set communication strategy goals, develop storytelling, and interact directly with the client in an engaging way as well as embedding the brand in existing conversations and having a research market, benchmarking and group targeting definition. In the Design as strategy stage, designers are able to define, coordinate and decide on strategy tactics to be developed. They are able to take actions based on the analysis

done in the previous stages and can evaluate which strategy and tactics are appropriate for each social media channel or situation at hand. They are also able to refocus and re-evaluate the whole process based on the previous social media campaigns outcomes.

Model 2 – Social media design strategy

In order to explain and give form to a model of social media design strategy we further develop the figure created with the semi-structured interview findings (figure 63) by adding the different layers of the design ladder model. We created a connection between the different stages of the Design Ladder and the different stages of social media strategy. For model 2 see next page (figure 66).

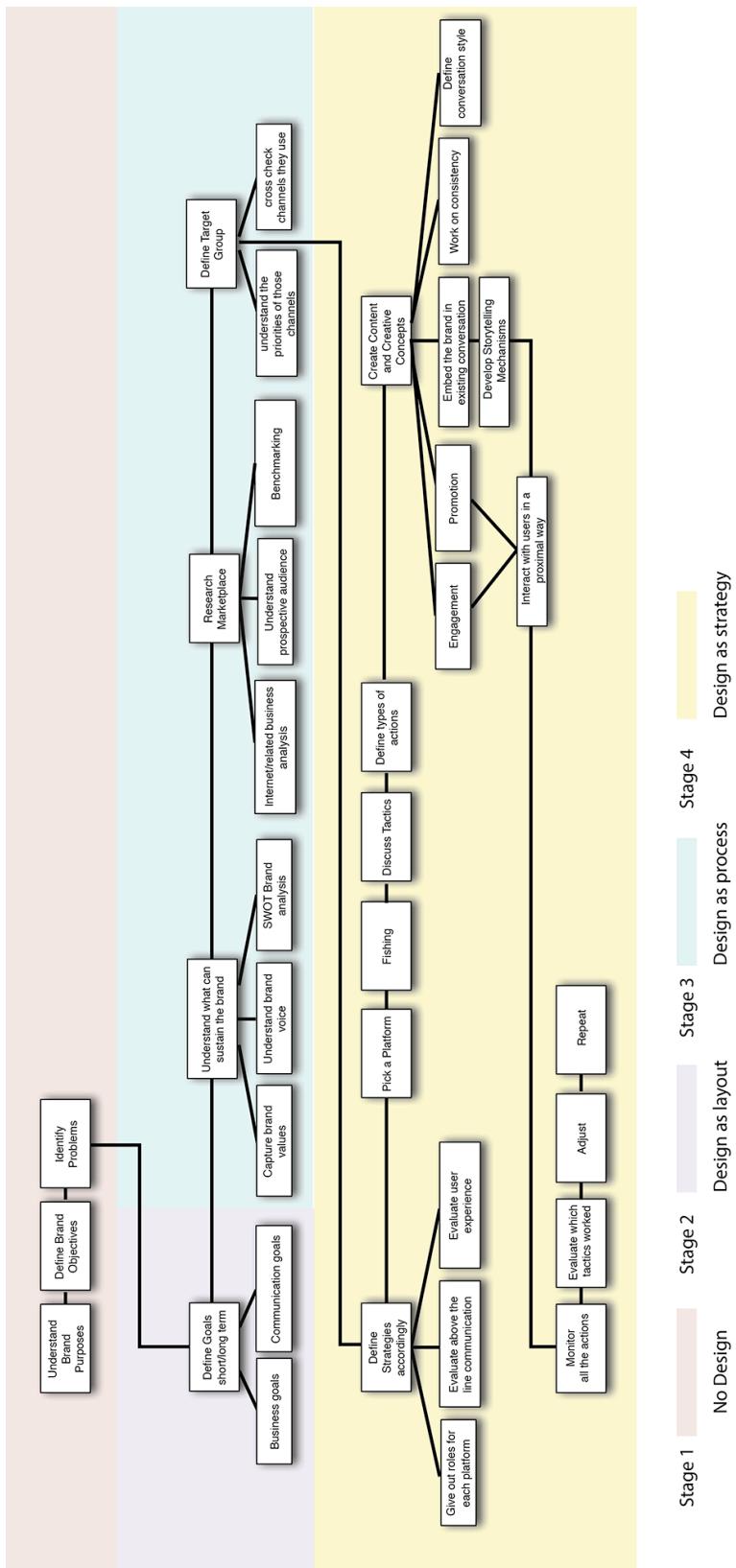


Figure 66. Model 2 Social media design strategy

Figure 66 shows us the relationship between the different Design Ladder stages and the figure done on the social media strategy steps collected from both quantitative and qualitative data (figure 63).

This model combines the design in social media ladder previously presented with the social media design strategy. It considers four stages of the social media design strategy: No Design, Design as Layout, Design as Process and Design as Strategy and divides the strategy steps into these categories

Stage one, No design starts at the top of the table, followed by Design as Layout below and on the right hand Design as Process, the remaining space at the bottom is all related with the Design as Strategy stage.

The first stage of the model is concerned with identifying the brand purposes, define the brand objectives and identify the major problems. These are all initial steps the participants mentioned where crucial before even starting to think about strategy or design. That is why we considered it to be the basic steps, before strategy or design even occurs. The second stage is where design is considered but only as means of aesthetic performance. This stage is where the communication goals for appearance and layouts are determined, alongside with the business goals. The third stage determines the important steps in Design as process as it captures the process of understanding what can sustain a brand, where we research the marketplace and define the target group. The sub-categories are all related with process, trying to capture the values, voice and analysing analytics, audiences and channels. The last and fourth stage is Design as Strategy where we define the strategy plan according to the previously known steps. This stage is where we discuss the tactics and create the creative concepts and content that will define the tone of the strategy and the type of tactics needed. The last steps in this model are: Monitoring, evaluation, adjustments and finally: repeat (as the strategy is on-going).

In order to test the validity of those models to an online survey was emailed to the study participants. We also shared the link to the online survey in appropriate social media groups through social media platforms such as LinkedIn, Twitter and Facebook. This resulted in thirty responses that we further analyse and develop in the following chapters.

8.1 Models Validation

In order to validate the models that resulted from the previous findings (literature review, online survey and semi-structured interviews) we conducted an online survey with the previous participants, we also included new participants in the study, with the total of thirty valid responses. The sample was collected from the previous participants and we added new ones by sharing it through social media. As a result all thirty participants are involved in doing branding in social media whether coming from a marketing, design or social media area.

We opted to collect the data for the validation through the previously chosen method of self-administered online survey questionnaire. This allowed us to collect more data in a short period of time. Interviews have time-constraints and most of the participants are more comfortable responding to an online survey than to take time from their schedules to meet with the researcher, even if offered to do it through Skype chat.

To validate the model and strategy proposed in the previous section (8. Design management models in social media) we conducted an online survey, which included some of the previous survey participants, and new ones, with a total of thirty valid responses. All participants are practitioners of branding in social media, with marketing, design, or social media backgrounds.

Results show that the models are useful to represent design in social media and social media strategy. There was a strong response in favour of design being present in all stages of social media and the most voted stages were design as layout, process and strategy.

Participants agree that design is able to drive the overall effectiveness of social media through different levels of engagement. The model and strategy helps define business opportunities and goals, define long and short-term priorities, and able to create consistent content and imagery through out all the platforms in order to promote the brand/service or product at hand, which leads to engagement and brand awareness.

The validation results show that the social media strategy is best represented in a circular layout, capturing the iterative nature of the process. There are also other aspects that were subject to comments and suggestions, which help to revise the model, as presented in the next section.

8.2 Data Collection

The online survey questionnaire is composed of eleven questions. Four ranking scale questions, two checklist questions and five open-ended questions. Each question has several options, and each option can be answered with a specific rank (apart from Question 1, the ranks have 5 ordered values). For each question we use the median as the measure of central tendency. The data is interpreted as ordinal. The median Absolute Deviation (MAD) informs about the absolute deviation of each score. It is determined by $MAD=median_i(|X_i - median_j(X_j)|)$, with X_i a score, and $median_j(X_j)$ the median of se4cores.

To describe the probable variation of each answer in the population, the confidence interval used is 95%. The tables show both lower (2.5%) and upper (97.5%) limits, i.e., we can be 95% sure that a random answer from the population will not fall outside the limits. To simplify the confidence interval columns, the ranks are encoded as numbers, according with each question. Each plot shows the number of answers for a question. The number of answers with a particular rank for a particular option is represented by a single bar. At the top of the bar is the corresponding absolute number of answers.

8.3 Data Analysis

This analysis is aimed at determining the validity of the two models and to provide a better understanding of the notions of design in social media and the different applications of design in all the social media stages. We also aimed to clarify the notions involved in the representation of social media strategy and its relationship with design in its different stages.

Question one asked the participants if they believed the model (figure 65) accurately represents design in social media.

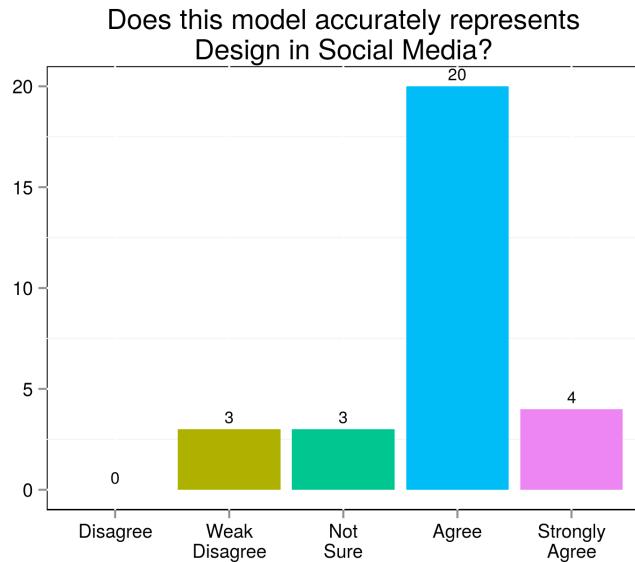


Figure 67. Question 1 - Models Validation Survey

Figure 67 shows the answers to question 1. Twenty participants agree that the model in figure 65 is a valid representation of design in social media.

The study inquired on why participants believed this model accurately represented or not design in social media. Participants stated that: "design should always be part of a successful social strategy. They cited that "the web is going visual and social media content should offer state of the art visual support to convey messages". The results show that the ladder clearly differentiates between the ways in which businesses view social media in terms of benefit to their company. Ultimately, social media needs to be part of a strategy that is clearly scheduled thought through and designed to be truly successful. A participant said that he felt most of their clients are interested in the design element at the initial stages of the social media campaign. One participant stated that there might be subtle in between steps, as "I've seen clients with minimal design interest utilize apps and widgets that help with process, but almost accidentally". Participants stated that content design was needed to maximize amplification, engagement, participation, and even that downstream analysis is greatly under appreciated. Participants indicated that written content is the main focus for clients in social media. They have suggested that the use imagery photos and adapted images is highly popular in social media. According to participants few clients consider design other then for basic page skins and the use of their branding. As images are often the most compelling part of the social media post and key to the ROI strategy to reach as many individuals as possible, it is absolutely a strategic element and subject to a great deal of performance testing. Some participants asserted that the ladder might work better as a circle as the social media strategy is not a linear process.

The second question wanted to identify at which stage of the Design Ladder the majority of participants clients were at.

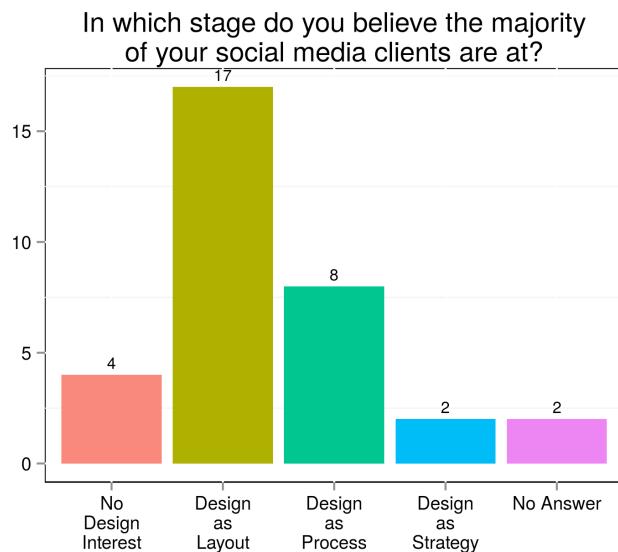


Figure 68. Question 2 - Models Validation Survey

Figure 68 informs us that the majority of client's are at a design as layout stage (with seventeen answers), followed by a design as process stage (with eight answers). This means that clients and brands are not considering design to be of strategic value or are unaware of what design can offer them in terms of strategy.

The third question focused on design awareness in clients on social media. We asked the participants if they believe their clients are aware of what design could offer to social media.

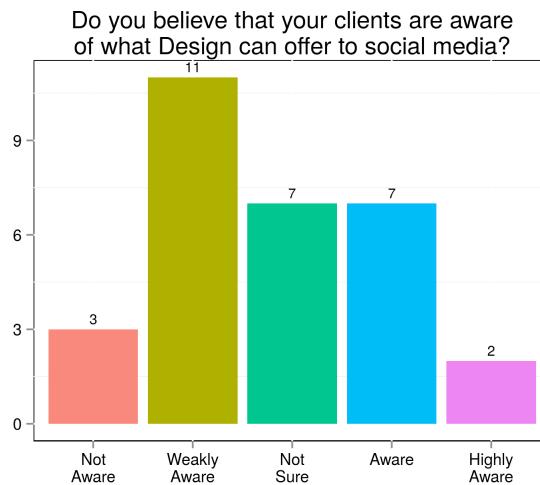


Figure 69. Question 3 - Models Validation Survey

The results show that most participants (eleven) say that clients were weakly aware of the potential design can bring to social media. This also shows that some of the participants were

not quite sure about their client's design awareness and seven of them said that their clients were in fact cognizant of what design could bring to social media.

We also questioned them about why they believed their clients are aware of what design can offer to social media. Participants replied that their clients are often "stuck into web 1.0 and TV years and that they still see social as an extension of what they do above the line". Clients want social media because it is mentioned everywhere and they believe they need to have it, like a website, they do not perceive it as a design process associated with it. Results show that some clients still associate design with beautification but fortunately not all of them.

Question four addressed the participant's opinion about the importance of design in the different stages of the presented model.

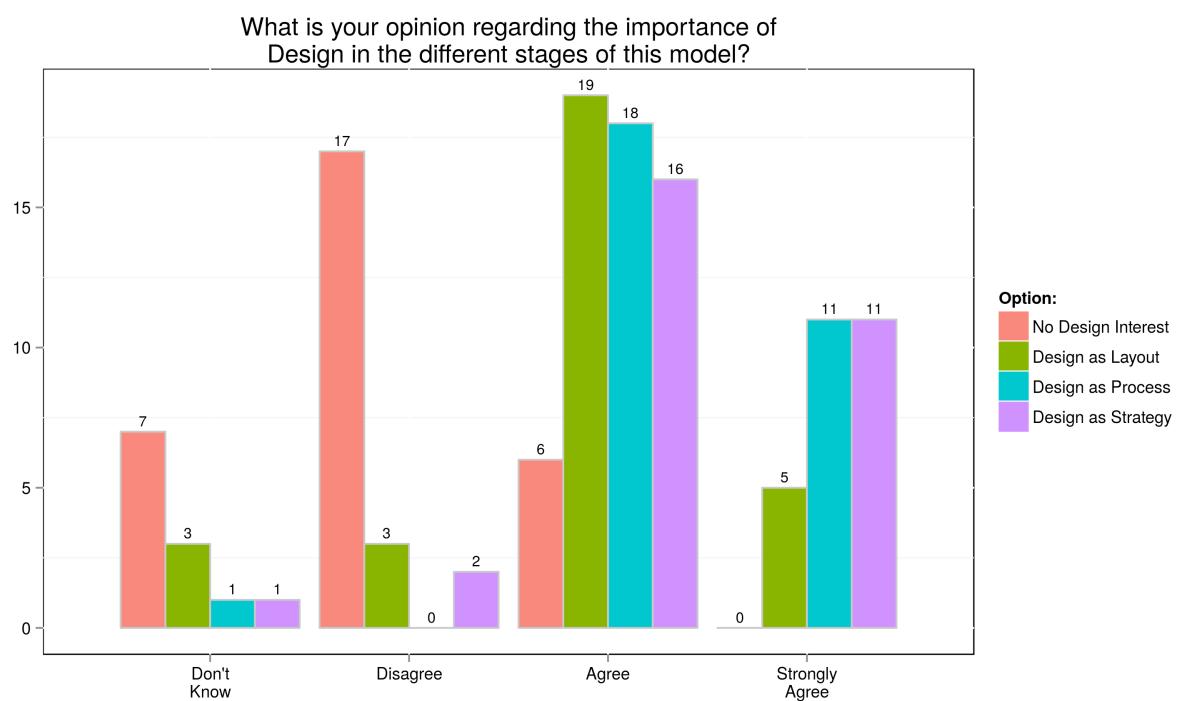


Figure 70. Question 4 - Models Validation Survey

The results confirm that the highest percentage of participants (nineteen answers) agree that design is important in the Design as Layout stage, followed by Design as Process with eighteen answers and by Design as Strategy with sixteen answers. We can also observe that seventeen participants answered that they disagreed with there being no Design interest. This means that design plays a relevant role in social media. A still significant number of participants (eleven) informs that they strongly agreed with design being important in the process and strategy stages. We can conclude from the findings that the most important stages for design to be involved are the Process stage and the Strategy stage. Still we know that these are the participant's opinion and that some mentioned that some of their client's thought otherwise.

Question five considers the second model, presented on figure 66. We asked participants if they believed the model accurately represented social media strategy.

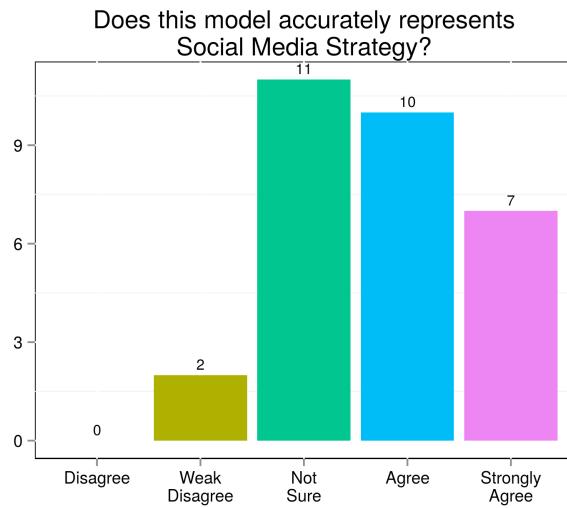


Figure 71. Question 5 - Models Validation Survey

The majority of participants (eleven) were not sure if this model accurately represented social media strategy but we have ten participants who said they agreed and seven who said they strongly agreed which validated the model in its accuracy on representing social media strategy.

We also asked the participants if they believed this model accurately represented or not - social media strategy. According to the findings participants said that this model is correct as it sees design as a comprehensive and integrated system. Some of the participants mentioned the lack of a feedback loop, which they believe is crucial for leaning and adapting and part of a successful strategy.

Question six questioned the participants about which stage they believed it is more important for design to be involved.

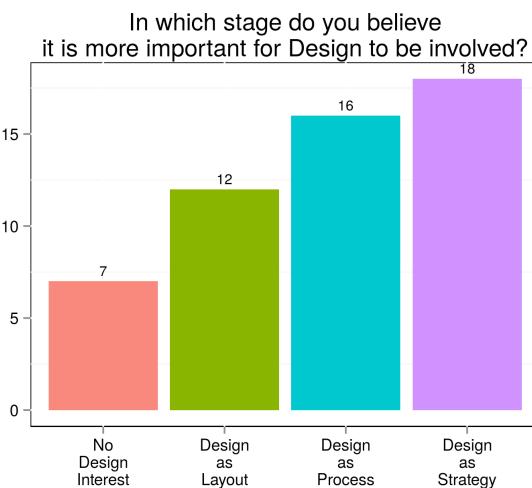


Figure 72. Question 6 - Models Validation Survey

The results suggest that Design as Strategy is the most important stage for the participants with eighteen answers, followed by Design as process with sixteen answers. This demonstrates that participants believe that Design as strategy is important in social media strategy. In this particular question the study allowed for participants to vote for more than one answer.

We queried the participants on why they believed that was the most important stage for design to be involved. The majority of participants had a strong response in favour of design being prevalent in all stages. Participants affirmed that the stages are all important for design to be involved and one participant declared that: "this is the way to ensure adequate design coverage and focus in social media efforts". Considering the findings, design should not be an afterthought and should be integrated in the social media strategy from the beginning to end. Design (in the function of the area of the business responsibility for developing a brand that resonates with the right target groups) is important across the whole business, not even just for social media. Brand recognition is the core or even only focus of social media. Consequently ensuring design for branding is vital in the social media strategy process. Design is important in all stages, but design at its fullest in more important at the Design as Strategy stage. Design should be used as a tool in all stages of the social media strategy. It should drive the process and layout construction as a result of that strategy. Ideally, "design is present at all stages: from strategy definition to its operationalization, implementation and control". Therefore design must be considered throughout the entire process of social media strategy.

Question seven interrogated participants as to whether they believed these types of models help with the understanding of social media. Most of the participants confirmed that these models make the process and the potential for your business clearer for clients. Findings show that the second model is ideal for companies that are more mature and that have been using social as part of their marketing mix successfully for a longer period of time. A participant say that "They can definitely help with certain aspects of social media, and ensure appropriate attention is paid to creating design for content consumption/amplification, design for participation/engagement, and design as strategy".

8.4 Models Refinement

In response to the validation survey the models were refined as follows: on the first model we have changed from a ladder setting into a circle type of graphic. This better represents the reality of an evolving process. In the second model we introduced the feedback step because it is a crucial part of the social media strategy and informs about the effort results, which allow for a more precise and accurate strategy to be developed.

Model 1 v.2 - Figure 73. Model 1 v.2 Design in social media stages

The second version of the first model is presented in a circle, which suggests a process that is on-going and that can start at different stages. Participants have said that design should be in every stage we have added a revolving circle that each design stage can accompany with each different step of the strategy. This means that any company can start at any different design stage depending on the situation of the strategy, process or design they are planning.

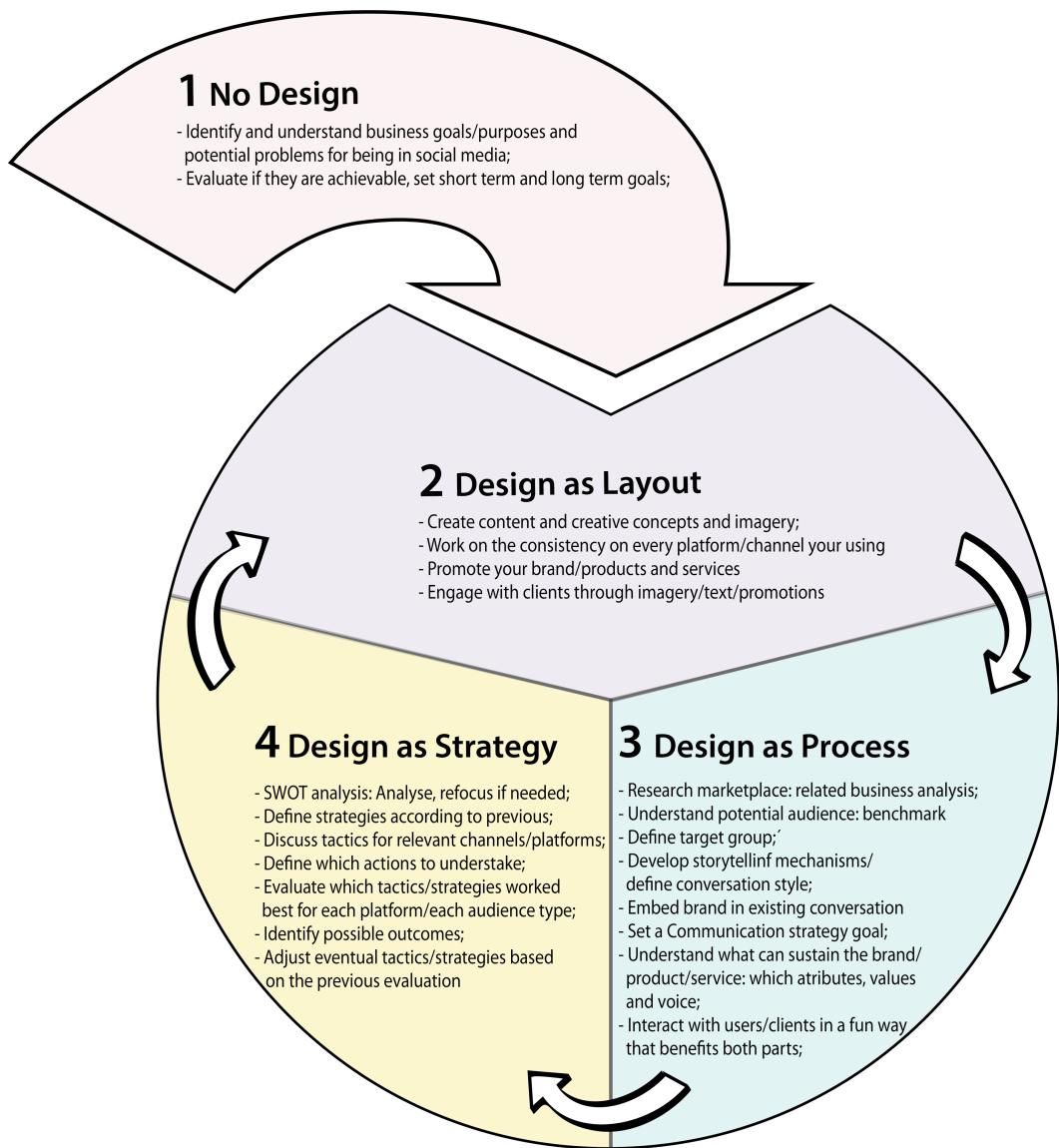


Figure 73. Model 1 v.2 Design in social media stages

As suggested by the participants the No Design interest stage was taken from the circle flow as only some companies are at that stage and once you move pass the No Design Interest stage you no longer go back. You then start at the Design as Layout stage and move on to the other ones. Depending on the specifics of the social media project there might be a need to start at the Design as Strategy Stage or Design as Process stage. All the stages are important at different times of the social media strategy, as represented in the above table.

Model 1 v.3 - Figure 74. Design in social media stages

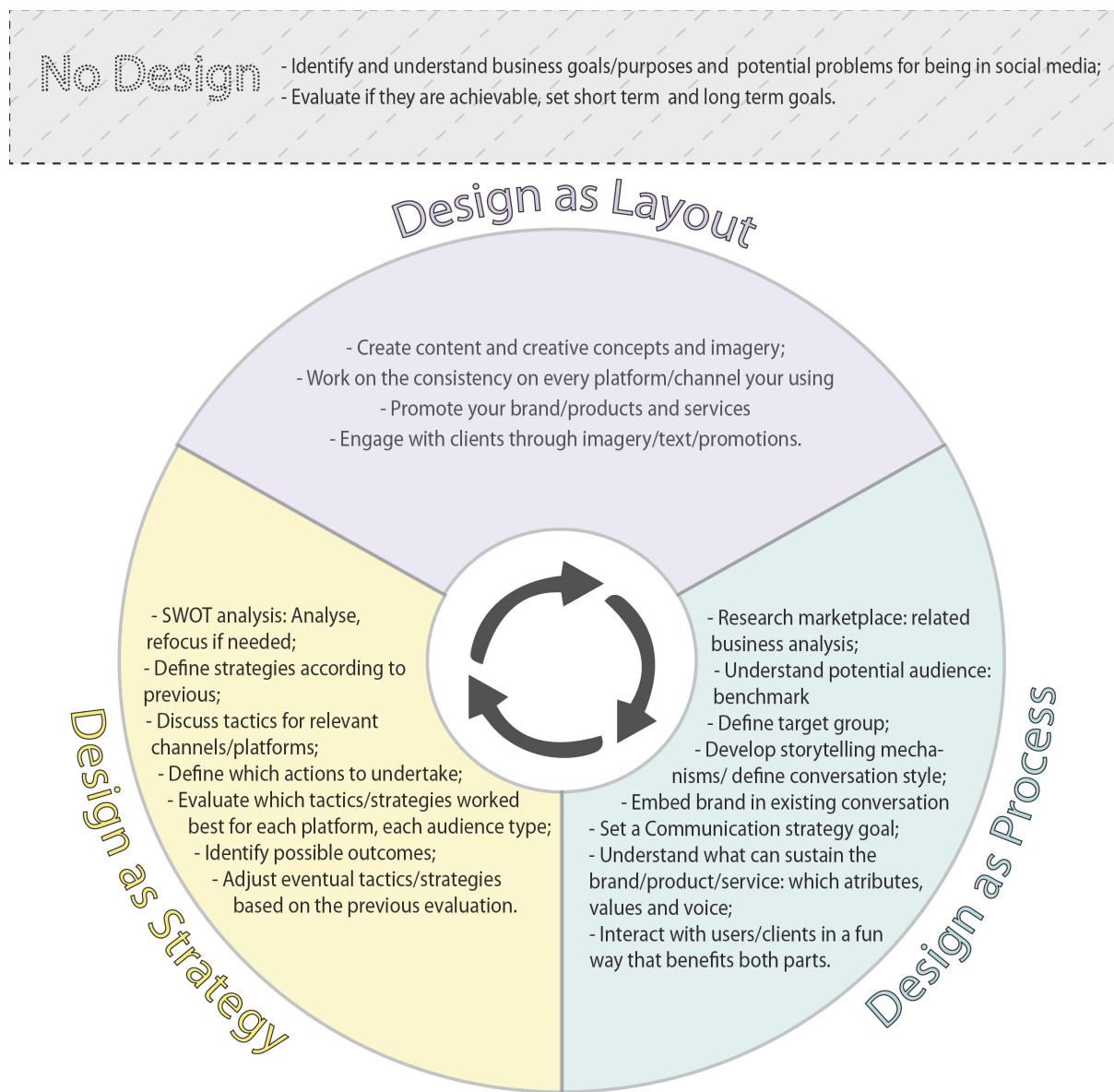


Figure 74. Model 1 v.3 Design in social media stages

The final and third version of the first model represents the findings in a more accurate and precise way. We have excluded from the circle *no design* and given it a transient quality by using a stroked line to contour it. This meaning that the *no design* stage is not permanent and once we move passed that stage we no longer return to it. A loop in the middle of the circle was added to mean that the stages are all connected. Meaning that we can start at any point of the loop, at any stage depending on the project itself. The numbering of each stage was eliminated to better represent this change.

Model 2 v.2 - Figure 75. Model 2 v.2 Social media strategy

The second version of the second model (see next page for figure 75) represents social media strategy and the participants have suggested a feedback stage that is included in the last stages after monitoring and evaluation. Participants also suggested adding a starting point which we represented by an arrow at the beginning of the model. A repeat step was also mentioned in the feedback comments, this was to represent social media strategy as a continuing process that repeats itself.

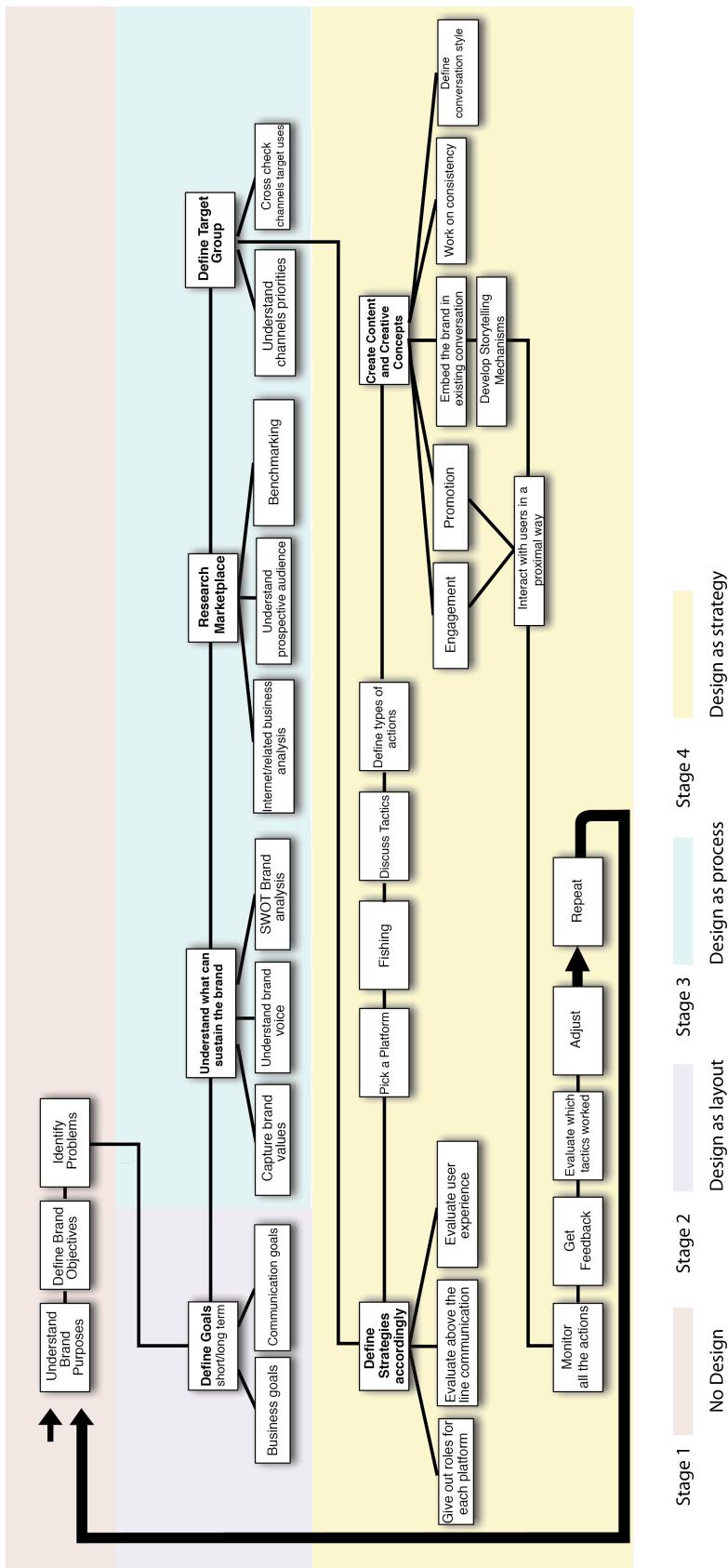


Figure 75. Model 2 v.2 Social media strategy

Model 2 v.3 - Figure 75. Model 2 v.2 Social media strategy

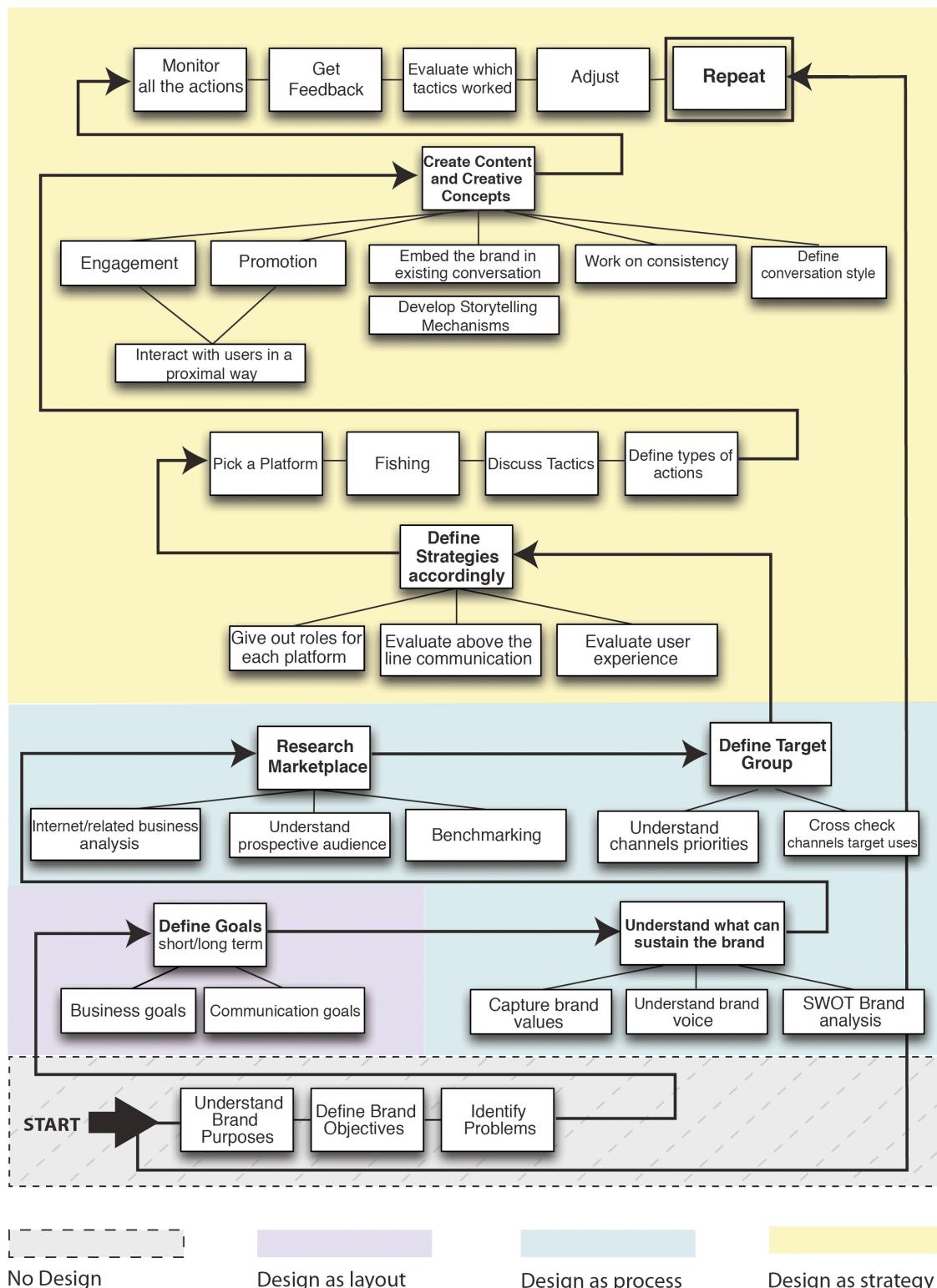


Figure 76. Model 2 v.3 Social media strategy

This third version of the second model is cleaner and represents the results based on participant's feedback in a more accurate way. The model starts from bottom to top, left to right for an easier read and understanding. Like in the third version of the first model the *no design* was given a transient quality by using a stroked line to contour it. This meaning that the *no design* stage is not permanent and once we move passed that stage we no longer return to it. A loop arrow was added at the end of the model (top right) after the repeat step that connects with the start of the model (bottom left). Meaning that this is a process that repeats itself and can start at any point of the loop, at any stage depending on the project itself. The numbering of each stage was also eliminated in this second model to emphasize this change.

These models were designed to represent design in social media stages and its strategy. They combine the literature review and data analysis. We then refined the models with an online survey done to thirty experts. The refinement allowed us to describe the overall process used in design and social media as experts identify basic concepts and describe the reality like it is and the conditions they observed as practitioners. The models aim to represent a current research topic: social media. They are also a step forward to understand design's relationship with social media strategy.

9. Conclusions

Findings from this study note that design is important for branding in social media because of brand consistency, awareness and interaction. We have also found other ways in which design can help branding in social media. Participants claim that design through storytelling, can help connect people to brands in a meaningful way. Social media is an important branding tool as it has a more close relationship with clients and fans. Design is able to add value as good design builds people's trust in the brand. The power of visual appeal is a major competitive advantage because it increases brand awareness. Results also show that design is also important when it comes to brand experience as good design is more easily shared and spread through social networks alike. Design is able to improve the brand's footprint and gather more followers, likes and comments. The design process and strategy is crucial to better understand branding in social media and it is on a different level then aesthetic potential. Design determines the perception of brands and allows users to immerse in its reality, through effective communication, design gives shapes to ideas.

We have found that most of the participant's clients are in the Design as Layout stage. This is because, according to the findings, client's fail to understand the potential of what design can offer them. They ignore the other stages of design, such as Design as Process and Strategy. Client's need to be educated on the value design can bring to branding in social media and studies like this can help clarify that role and highlight its importance. This is perhaps because social media is a highly visual medium and graphic appearance and appeal in those channels is very important. Users have limited time between social platforms, with a limited attention span, so images and content needs to be eye-catching.

From the findings we conclude that the proposed models are useful to represent design in social media and social media strategy. There was a strong response in favour of design being present in all stages of social media and the most voted stages were Design as Layout, Process and Strategy. We have determined that a strategy led in the beginning by design will have more favourable outcomes in the long run.

Design is able to drive the overall effectiveness of social media through different levels of engagement. Following the process shown in the models we composed design helps define business opportunities and goals, define long and short-term priorities. It is also able to create consistent content and imagery through out all the platforms in order to promote the brand/service or product at hand. This will lead to engagement and brand awareness through design. Design will then do a marketplace analysis, in order to understand its competitors, audience and target group. By setting the communication goals embedded in the conversations Design is able to understand the brand and determine its language, voice, value and attributes. This will allow for a better understanding of the branding process in social media. Design will

then be able to analyse and refocus the campaign as needed, define strategies and define actions in the relevant timeframe and adjust when suitable.

This study was conducted with both English and Portuguese participants and we have found many differences in terms of social media implementation and different levels of social media maturity as well. When we started to collect data for this study in 2011 platforms like Pinterest and Instagram were still at a Beta level and not yet highly disseminated as they are now.

In the United Kingdom people who work in social media, whether they are marketers, designers or human resources know the importance of knowledge exchange. Perhaps because social media is all about sharing content and engaging with brands and audiences worldwide, said one of the participants. This is of contrast with the reality of Portugal, which is all about competitiveness, and people who work in social media are afraid to share their knowledge because of confidentiality issues. We could also determine that design is more highly regarded within the English participants were we could also find more designers working in social media. This was not the case so often in Portugal where participants understood the need for design but their client's could not see its use in strategy and in the process stage.

The strategic focus is also different in both situations, Portuguese participants focusing more on increasing the amount of followers and on return-on-investment and in the English case focusing more on getting actual buyers from those followers and focusing more on return on engagement and brand awareness. We could conclude that the Portuguese reality is more limited because of that and wants immediate results to its social media campaigns. We have learned from the survey and interview findings that social media although advertised as such does not give out immediate results and has to be a thought out strategy with different steps and planned through the various stages in different levels of achievement. Clients in Portugal seem to only focus on Facebook and what it has to offer, this is changing gradually but it is a reality that England is not in. English participants have moved to other platforms long ago and are currently making good use of what they have to offer them. We can conclude that this might be because the market in Portugal is smaller and there is no room for actual specialization in the different platforms.

From our observation we could see that the Portuguese situation is catching up to what the United Kingdom is doing but slower, Portuguese professionals are more open to Twitter but not as much as in the United Kingdom.

As we have discovered throughout this study, social media strategy needs to have a determined action plan with steps and be planned in advance. A representation of that could be the models presented in this study.

In the current economic climate design has once more proven to be a useful strategic and communication tool, this is reinforced by the use of design management in companies. On the other hand design is also increasingly important in other business areas that are emerging and considered to be most important: social, ecological, technological and cultural.

Design is linked to the way society interacts with businesses, and in today's world we need a "managed way" to do design. If managed well and implemented correctly with the aid of other professionals it is linked to productivity, innovation and change.

Design is typically viewed from three different levels within a determined company: the strategic, tactical and operational. Most clients seem to be focused only on the operational side of design and neglect design as a strategic tool for their policies, missions and company's agendas. On the other hand design as a tactical tool leading with processes and other systems within the organization can unite different business fronts. We need to have a better understanding of why is it so important for clients and brands to have the operational level of design on their side and educate them to broaden their design understanding to the other levels of expertise design can offer them. It's not all just about the products, services and experiences. It can be also about the implementations of processes and strategies costumers can actually relate too.

This work explores models for design in branding in social media and social media strategy. The role of design in the strategic planning of a branding project has been recorded in the literature, but we identified a lack of systemic representation tools, which without it the evaluation and robust planning of branding in social media strategies is very difficult.

We presented a literature review that motivated a series of studies, which ultimately resulted in our model. Our studies included both English and Portuguese participants.

Our studies show that design is important for branding in social media mainly because of brand consistency. However, participants of our surveys claim that design helps to connect people to brands through storytelling.

Design is responsible for the brand visual appeal, which enables brand awareness, being a major competitive advantage. Design is also concerned with brand experience, which promotes brand dissemination through social networks alike. It is also able to improve the brand footprint, gathering followers, likes and comments. The design process and strategy is essential to understand branding in social media. Design determines the perception of brands, and allows users to immerse in its reality, through effective communication.

Design's presence in social media strategy has four stages: *No Design*, *Design as Layout*, *Design as Process*, and *Design as Strategy*. Each indicates a different degree of involvement in social media strategy.

Most of our studies participants' clients are in the *Design as Layout* stage. Most clients ignore the other stages of design, such as design as process and strategy. Studies like ours help clarify design's role, and highlight the value it may bring to branding in social media

The refinement of our models enabled us conclude that it is useful to represent design in social media and social media strategy. There was a strong response in favour of design being present in all stages of social media and the most voted stages were *Design as Layout*, *Design as Process*,

and *Design as Strategy*. We have determined that a design led strategy will have more favourable outcomes in the long run.

We concluded that social media strategy should have a determined action plan. We propose our models to accomplish this task.

The study is step forward in the exploration of design and designer's role and value when branding in social media. Our contributions are supported and validated through empirical research. Our findings have implications for a wide range of areas: design practitioners, consultants, managers, marketing experts, social media managers, and professionals otherwise involved in design, branding or social media processes.

The study builds on the knowledge of brands in the social media space. Its results have shown a better understanding of social media strategy, resulting in the proposal and validation of our model. The study also enabled the clarification the role of design and designers in the social media space, which empowers design in a relatively new area, such as social media.

Our models present a guide to structure design's participation in social media strategy. We have highlighted the similarities between design strategy and social media strategy, and we have also classified the different uses of design in social media by expanding on existing models.

We have identified new and emerging issues regarding the use of design in social media, social media strategy, design's importance in social media and explored the knowledge on what social media is today.

9.1 Discussion of Findings Against Research Questions

This new era of social media has taught both marketers and designers an important “new truth”: You no longer control how consumers perceive your brand. What matters most today is not what you say about your brand — it is what consumers say about it. It is a problem for both designers and marketers to understand how to integrate these multiple platforms, the different types of consumers and their behaviour, because not all of them engage with social media in the same way (Hanna et al., 2011).

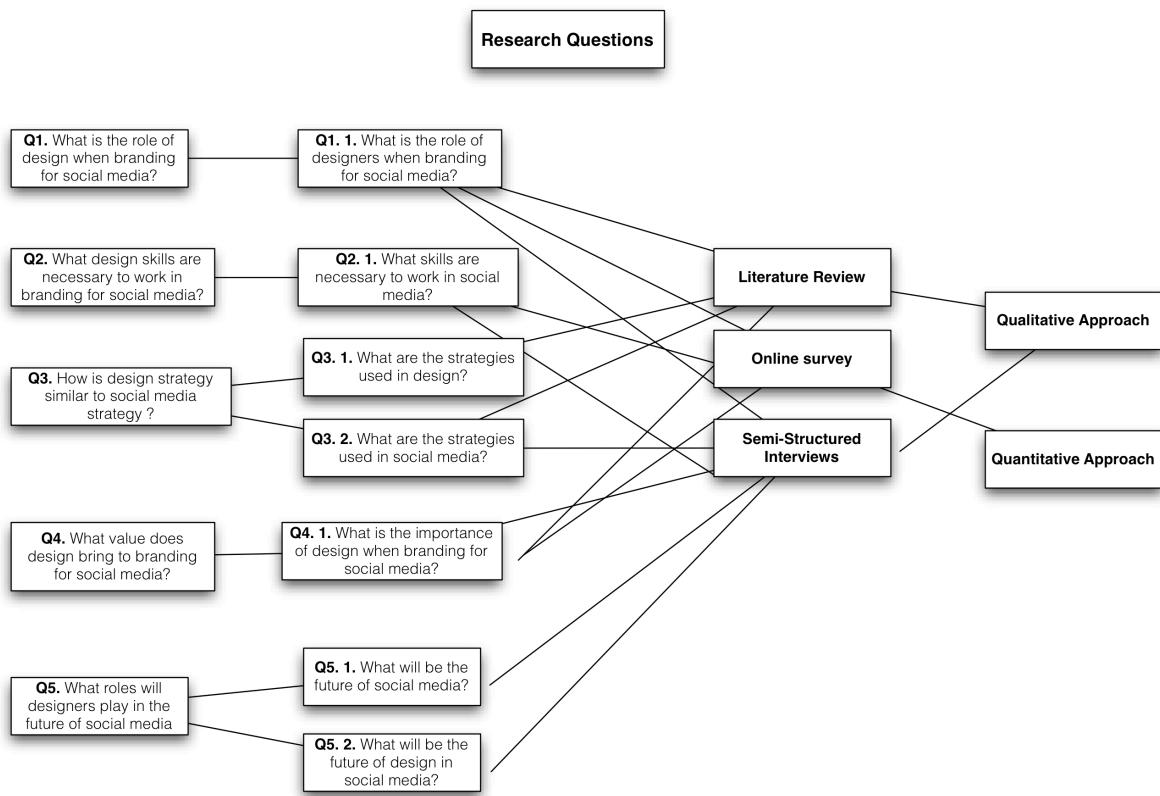


Figure 77. Research questions vs. methods used

This section will explain to what extent the research question have or have not been supported by the research findings. From the findings the questions have been supported through the development of the two models based upon research findings. During the development and conduct of this research, each of the below research questions were answered using the research approach outlined on figure 49. Below we present a discussion of findings against the research questions.

Q1 What is the role of design and designers when branding in social media?

The role of designers is becoming more and more important as the “world” tries to approach different communication platforms such as the Internet and more recently social media

networks. See online questionnaire results and expert interview findings on chapters 7.3 and 7.4.

Considering that social networks are part of a wider trend in communication called 'mass collaboration', it is of the upmost importance for design to be involved. Social media is influencing the communication of brands, fashion, markets, ideas and ideology by shaping a new type of market that designers should be aware of (Tapscott, Don and Williams, 2008).

Globalization only increased the relevance of branding. With new communication channels like social networks brands are able to connect faster and reach a larger audience of people. With this we have hyper competition which makes branding an efficient tool to differentiate from competitors in the long-term (Kotler & Pfoertsch 2007).

Interview results show that in order to build a strong brand DNA, design has to be involved. Design's ability to perform branding solutions has proven to add ROI (return on investment) to a company. There has to be an input to the brand proposition and personality in the whole experience. Having a strong identifier helps add value to the brand and keep them relevant in consumer's minds. See chapter 8 on design management models in social media.

Of course there are the obvious limitations of social media on brands, Facebook and Twitter cannot be personalized to better interact with the brand and consumer. Something that was referenced a lot during the interviews and survey. An organization can put their logo and other limited visual branding both on Facebook and Twitter but it is still confined in the website's interface, "...limiting the semiotic effect that traditional offline branding efforts might have on users. The visual cue of the brand is greatly lessened" (Yan, 2011). So does that mean that the design influence regarding the 'visual' is limited?

The visual side of branding is important and it is part of the design spectrum of tasks but it is not the only think that design can offer to brands in social media. Question four of the online survey states that not only is perception value important with a 79% of participants but also performance value at 45% and strategic value at 42%. Model validation analysis also shows that design is important in the design as layout stage but also at the design as process stage and design as strategy stage (question five).

As more then ever, brands need to build a connection with users based on engagement itself, like referred before it has to be about experiences and storytellers. Designers are the best at crafting experiences and creating an intrinsic web of storytelling for the consumer.

But we cannot forget that design management is crucial to the task of branding in social media, things like design strategy are being masked as marketing strategy or social media marketing strategy. According to Yan, Jack (2011), for brands to succeed in social media there must be a strategy that serves the organization internally and externally.

- 1) Building a sense of loyalty between all members of the organization,
- 2) Encourage the acceptance and communication of brand values,

- 3) Encourage the audience to dialogue in order to promote the brand,
- 4) Dialogue can help the organization maintain its edge,
- 5) Know the message behind the brand and build differentiation,
- 6) Check if brand is being well interpreted by the audiences,
- 7) Build positive brand associations,
- 8) Build the perceived quality of the brand,
- 9) Try to create more awareness for the brand in other audiences it has not reached.

The model validation part agreed with this premise and we can conclude that the most important stage for design to be involved is the strategy part. Regarding design as part of the strategy since the beginning allows for better engagement, brand awareness and overall more positive results.

Design as a strategic resource has been overlapping design management studies and strategic management studies and design is being viewed as a strategic resource as well as for innovation processes (Borja de Mozota, 2006; Utterback et al., 2006; Jevnaker, 2000; Beverland, 2005).

Q2 What design skills are necessary to work in branding in social media?

These questions were answered in both the interviews and the online survey. The results were quite clear and objective. And we can conclude that the skills necessary to be a designer are the same as to practice branding in social media. According to the skills question results the top three most important skills that participants referred were: Strategy development, communication and creativity. Strategy with 68%, Communication at 83% and Creativity at 63% were voted very important. Market research, strategy, communication and design skills are the most mentioned by the interviewee's. The profile necessary is someone with a design, marketing or Public relationship's background. Regarding strategy, all of the participants seem to have a way of doing things that in a way was quite similar to the design problem solving problem and any business plan problem. All of them seem to focus on the same steps, with more or less particulars.

Communication skills are very important as the new generation of consumers have grown in the online communications world and the communicators and marketers are learning how to adapt to this new reality. As social media is becoming more pervasive in corporate communications, business development, and customer service, there is a need for those who are in the front row of customer and influencer engagement to be the bridge between the marketing gap. There is the need to effectively communicate with customers and peers regardless of demographic profiles. Social media requires participation and engagement with customers, influencers and prospective buyers in their own communities. New communication roles and responsibilities have emerged since branding has become more social (Solis, 2008).

Compelling brand narratives deployed across an interconnected social media presence allow for sustainable engagement. Social media allows for an ideal blend of communication advantages for engaging with supporters (Briggs, 2010). Interview participants have given some examples of success stories on chapter 7.4.

In order to manage a community in social media managers need to be experienced in communication. They need to listen to their audience. Social media involves having community spaces for people to engage directly and this means having to listen and understand what is being said about your brand everywhere. Upon hearing and understanding, community managers can then engage with their own brand voice and not with a marketing message (Brogan 2010). Communicators are brand ambassadors and advocates as they convey the voice of customers and stakeholders. They need to fully understand the community's position in the marketplace and communicate in an appropriate way with customers.

The strategy skill becomes crucial in order to create social media campaigns and an effective social media strategy should clearly define marketing objectives, evaluate the opportunities and select an appropriate form of social media to communicate (Kumar & Mirchandani, 2012).

According to Fraser design has its "in designing the sustainable competitive advantage of an enterprise". Through the use of design methods an enterprise can design new products, services and experiences and drive the design of economics in support of growing strategies. The author states that the design approach is about discussing strategy in an inquisitive spirit, asking questions about serving user's needs, and meeting business objectives.

Fraser believes that strategy is the summation of tangible concepts that satisfy user needs. Design aids in rapid-prototyping and iteration, teams build solutions that allow for a concrete basis for discussion. Conventional practices analyse and build off existing knowledge and frameworks to generate strategies before exploring other possible strategies (H. M. A. Fraser, 2007).

Montaña and Guzmán believe design must be integrated in the firm's business strategy and therefore involved on the first steps of the process and should reflect the orientation and philosophy of the organization. Design influences innovation from a strategic and operational level:

- 1) Concept generation, which consists of the collection of internal and external information and stimuli in order to develop a potential offering;
- 2) Design strategy, which includes defining the activities necessary for perfecting the potential offering;
- 3) Resource procurement, during which the team tries to assemble all of the external and internal resources necessary for realising the design process;
- 4) Implementation of the strategy. The design orientation of the firm frames all of these activities (Montaña, Jordi, Guzmán, 2007).

According to Dorst and Cross, creativity in the design process is characterized by the occurrence of a significant event called the “creative leap”. The authors believe that creative design is not just about fixing a problem while searching for a solution that satisfies. Creative design is a “matter of developing and refining together both the formulation of a problem and ideas for a solution, with constant iteration of analysis, synthesis and evaluation processes between the two notional design ‘spaces’ - problem space and solution space” (Dorst & Cross, 2001).

Creativity and innovation are key when searching for new concepts. Creativity is crucial since the concept creation through the product and/or service development process. The quality of design matters a great deal as good branding needs good creative design (Montaña, Jordi, Guzmán, 2007).

Cox believes that the use of creativity through design leads to “...greater productivity, whether by way of higher-value products and services, better processes, more effective marketing, simpler structures or better use of people’s skills” (Cox, 2005).

Q3 How is design strategy similar to social media strategy?

The focus of social media and its ecosystem is on consumer experience. Social networks are all about storytelling and giving consumers an experience. A lot of companies do not have an integrated strategy that brings the consumers experience to a whole. We’ve learned from the data analysis that companies who are able to expand their ability to engage with consumers achieve their attention and later influence will be have more success in creating a relevant branding positioning (Hanna et al., 2011), data from analysis (2013).

These are all tasks that design strategy deals with. The specific role of design here is to illustrate concepts and product strategies in convincing images, communicating at a non-verbal level (Bürdek, 2005).

Design not only creates value for businesses and gives them a competitive advantage it is also an investment in innovation, positioning, branding and communication that can increase customer trust, loyalty and market share. Design thinking helps deal with the complexities of this changing era of social media and ads creative solutions. Human-centred design gives that competitiveness edge needed to gain market share and consumers attention. Design is of critical important as a strategic asset and it has proven to be more effective when implemented early in corporate plans, not only as visual beautification. Research has shown relationships between design and strategy that go beyond the link between design and product. This comes to show the importance of design management in companies today, especially in a highly communicative area such as social media (Borja de Mozota, 2003). ‘The design process is valuable and relevant to the use of social media, whether designing look and feel of background pages or undertaking a strategic approach” (DS, 2013).

Author Fraser, Heather believes that any brand or organization will benefit from a ‘designer way’ perspective. Design strategy tunes team intelligence, creativity and makes a significant impact in customer’s life, both functional and emotional. The design process is easy to follow but should be taken into the corporate plans and strategies in order to be at its full potential.

The design approach is about combining the three gears of design with a ‘design mindset’, allowing the organization to discover ways of capitalizing, explore new activities and then set the strategies to evolve their business model (H. M. A. Fraser, 2007).

Design offers brands a new way of thinking and a whole different set of practices that can change the way they do strategy by helping them build better organizations (Golsby-Smith, 2008).

“Design processes are more widely participative, more dialogue-based, issue- rather-than-calendar-driven, conflict using rather than conflict avoiding, all aimed at invention and learning” (Liedtka, J., 2010).

A Wilfire report states that social media success begins with strategy, it also says that many brands lack a true social strategy. A recent survey found that in enterprise-level brands: 70% characterized their social media efforts as meeting business goals, but only about 43% said they had a specific strategy on how to reach them (Wildfire Report, 2012).

Engagement is the heart of any social media strategy, research has shown consistently that the more a consumer is engaged with the brand the more likely he is to buy those brand’s products and/or services. Brain & Company, consulting firm, says that ‘Customers who engage with companies over social media are more loyal and spend up to 40% more with those companies’. Which means that brand engagements is correlated with financial performance (Wildfire Report, 2012).

Engagement was a crucial theme in both the interviews and the survey. Design is highly important in order to build a relationship that occurs with every interaction between two people, in real or digital life. Users today are desensitized and visually overwhelmed, and that’s when good design strategy and good design takes over.

Design concerns the user experience and interaction part of social media as well. It deals with the project’s usability and product desirability. It has helped connect and build relationships between brands and consumers since the ideas for the company started. In social media there is a need to craft experiences on a daily basis, content is king and design is a fundamental tool for storytelling. In order to make the story effective it has to embody the brand. Its uniqueness must be noticeable and be able to inspire people to share and eventually buy from it.

Without understanding the core of the brand it is impossible to tell its story. According to Thomas, Jon (2013) a brand’s social media presence has a heartbeat and it helps to answer these questions in order to create a story:

- Who is the audience, and how do they interact with our brand?
- How are they innovating our brand? What are they saying?
- How do we differ from similar brands, and how can we use stories to persuade customers to choose our brand over a competitor’s?

- How quickly should we respond to social comments (positive and negative)?
- Which pop-culture events should we be ready to respond to in real time?
- What user-generated content should we encourage?
- Which contributions should we share?
- Does this app make sense to our brand? Will our audience use it, and more important, can it add value to their lives?

Thomas, Jon, <http://www.postadvertising.com/2013/02/social-media-storytelling/>

Kowitz talks about story centred design and how designers present every sentence the customer reads, every action they take, and every screen it generated in response. The design follows a customer from the initial point through completing a goal, and shows how the design supports every step of it. These techniques are used for mobile apps, marketing websites, analytics dashboards and enterprise (Kowitz, 2013). From the second model presented we can conclude that social media strategy is not so different then design strategy as social media strategy is also project based.

Q4 What value does design bring to branding in social media?

We have seen that the strategic value of design includes contributions from all design disciplines, beyond just industrial design within production. Designers can implement a firm's strategy by creating "ideas, products and product positions for a world where people's buying decisions are influenced by emotion, fashion and context... They do not study the market with the objectivity of a scientist [but] become part of it" (Francis, 2001). Successful design- led companies apply and integrate design values to all aspects of the business, internal and external (Design Council 2005, 2006), to really understand their customers, and forge a unique relationship with them. Creating long-term emotional connections with customers has not been valued as highly as technological innovation or aesthetic design, but in mature markets it is increasingly important (Stevens et al, 2008).

Based on the Borja de Mozota model of design value and book on design Management: *Using Design to Build Brand Value and Corporate Innovation*, and according to the online survey we can see that the perception value is considered to the most important value design adds to branding in social media with 79%. Followed by Performance and Strategic at 45% considering it Quite Important. Lastly we see that design is still not considered to be of real financial and accounting value (Borja de Mozota, 2003).

The validation model study shows that design is valuable in all stages of social media strategy, which mean: design as layout, process and strategy. This concerns other aspects of design besides beautification. Although client's still view design as just layout most of the participants believe the future lies in the stages of process and strategy and that social media strategy should rely on a strategy approach by design at its beginning.

The results also show the value of design in each stage of social media. All of the participants highlighted its importance in every stage of the process.

Q5 What roles will designers play in the future of social media?

When a study is querying about future hypothesis it is always difficult to have a definite answer. This is especially true in an ever-changing area such as social media. New social media platforms are being introduced everyday. New expertise in the area is being introduced through analytics, measurement and new user studies. So the answer to this question is speculative and derives from the knowledge of the participant's expertise and market know how. It informs of a possible outcome of a probable scenario that we cannot predict in a conclusive manner.

This question made participants think about what they taught would be the future of social media. Some of them had similar ideas. The future might lie in a more transparent sort of trading. Social media makes conversations with clients a total disclosure. It allows for brands to monitor their clients and potential clients in ways that can be 'predatory'. The future will allow for brands to tailor services and customize their offer better. Content customization seems to be one of the trends we encountered in the study results. Social media is becoming the biggest communication channel, even bigger than TV. Design needs to be able to curate the social media strategy since it starts and it all begins with brand DNA and brand personality. These concepts allow for the brand personality to be embedded in all brand communications. Engagement is a new reality and interaction and design interaction is the future. Everybody is connected and with the coming of better smartphones and apps with geolocation.

According to the findings social media will become more accessible to companies and brands through design. Being a space for experimentation and collaboration, design will be able to support communication through all social media channels. Findings show that the next step is to ally social media to physical store location promotions. This could be achieved by designing a way for regular store customers to be privileged through social media channels in brand offers, for example. New future possibilities for design in social media could be touch points for brand interaction that might appear in highly populated areas such as subways, bus-stops and city centres.

We were able to answer all of the research questions regarding design's role, value, importance, skills, strategy and future perspectives with regards to social media. The data collected and the methods used contributed for a better understanding of the research questions and allowed for their answers to emerge from the analysis and the literature review.

9.2 Contribution to knowledge

In the thesis chapter on branding (2.) we provided a wider knowledge of branding and applied it to design and social media. The second chapter has developed upon design literature (3.Design), connecting both branding and social media. The social media (4. Social Media) chapter contributed with a social media historical context and provided background on the practices of design and branding. The methods to collect data, such as the interviews and the online surveys, provided the most important source of material for the analysis. This enriched the two models that resulted from the research.

The first contribution to knowledge of this thesis has been its ability to identify emerging issues regarding the use of design in social media. These issues had not received academic attention and therefore are a contribution to theory.

Through this study we were able to better understand and relate the relationships between design, marketing and social media.

We have also developed models that better articulate those relationships as well as clarify design's and designers role in the various stages of social media.

The contribution of this study is of relevance because it is a step forward in the exploration of design and designer's role and value when branding in social media. The findings make a contribution of knowledge based upon the development of the research questions and their validation through empirical research.

Research findings have implications for a wide range of people: design practitioners, consultants, managers, marketing experts, social media managers and general people involved in design processes, branding and social media. We applied conventional research instruments in new fields of investigation, such as the importance of design when branding in social media, a very contemporary setting for research.

We have arrived to a better understanding between branding and design, branding and social media and design and social media. The study allowed for a deeper knowledge of brands in the social media space. The findings have shown a better understanding of social media strategy, as we can see from the models developed and validated. We were also able to clarify the role of design and designers in the social media space. This allows for an empowering of design in a relatively new area such as social media.

The models developed can be a tool to empower design in this new area of expertise: social media. They can act as a guide in structuring design's participation in social media strategy. We have highlighted the similarities between design strategy and social media strategy and we have also classified the different uses of design in social media by expanding on existing models.

We have identified new and emerging issues regarding the use of design in social media, social media strategy, design's importance in social media and explored the knowledge on what social media is today.

In order to pursue an effective search for the value and meaning of design in social media it seems to be vital to first identify parameters and literature references before attempting to apply rigorous theories. Then we proceeded to test these hypotheses in order to gauge the applicability of this research. This research is valuable to the extent that the knowledge gathered from the design, marketing and social media practitioners and researchers helps to understand and develop design in social media and to advance in its effectiveness. This thesis main contribution is as such, in establishing baselines for further systematic research, whilst identifying and developing key parameters, which must be taken into account in developing strategies for design in social media.

9.3 Limitations

This section discusses the study limitations within the context of this thesis, because it is important to state its methodological constraints.

1) Limiting effects on the validity of results have the following factors:

1.1) The first limitation is the size and composition of the sample, which had: six exploratory study participants, one hundred and three online survey participants, twenty-one interview participants and thirty online participants for the models refinement survey. This sample is relatively small if we consider the population of both the United Kingdom and Portugal. The sample is also limited to those countries and as such may not represent the whole of the design sector.

1.2) The companies and participants were taking part in this project in a voluntary way and were free to leave the collaboration with the author any time. The collaboration between designers, marketers and social media managers was more informal than with some companies when handling the study and providing information. Also, with both companies and individual participants we were unable to get client's feedback due to issues with confidentiality, this was more pertinent in Portugal.

Although studies with a small number of subjects can be quick to conduct with regard to enrolling participants, reviewing records, analyzing or asking subjects to complete study questionnaires. We needed to take into consideration the very specific expert profiles when sampling either designers or marketers working within a specific area such as branding and implementing social media solutions for their clients and/or for their company and/or consulting. Although the sample was limited it was of adequate size for statistical analysis. In the future however we would recommend the study to include a bigger variety of design, branding and social media experts in order to further deepen the knowledge of this study.

2) The second limitation of this study was its research design.

2.1) The research method combined qualitative and quantitative data and this mixed-method research approach enabled triangulation of the research findings. However the qualitative part of the research is interpretative in nature and the research analysis could be considered subjective.

2.2) This thesis is mainly exploratory and combines different areas of expertise. The process of data collection was heterogeneous because of the nature of the companies and individuals. A design, branding and social media culture that showcases many differences, both in Portugal and in the United Kingdom. These organizations and individuals investigated in this study are of course only a small sample and results are not or only partly transferable to other countries.

3) The third limitation was the lack of scholarly research on the topics of the literature.

3.1) Literature was limited and therefore this study was conducted in order to further explore it. This research is one step forward into understanding the logistics behind the role of design in social media, however its exploratory nature was able to inform the researcher about important insights regarding this particular topic, understand the relevant people around it and its main problems. Each of the research questions was answered trying to use the appropriate method, whether we were using qualitative or quantitative method.

The wide spectrum of the topics under analysis was also a limitation, as it concerned many areas of expertise and different fields of study. The discipline of social media itself has not been actively engaged with academia. In the literature review stage very little information concerning the topic was published. Therefore the literature review is a summary of the most relevant branding, design and social media literature relevant to the research topic. We have explored relationships between variables that have not been previously examined within the context of a design management model.

4) The fourth limitation was the limited timeframe of this study.

4.1) The timeframe of this five year study did not allow for a more elaborated sample to be collected or a more in-depth study to be conducted. As in most studies, participants are not always as eager and willing to participate and being experts in the area, they had limited time to collaborate with the researcher in data collection.

4.2) The resources of the author of this thesis did not allow for more countries to be involved in this study (for example). Although we were able in this limited timeframe to get participants for both the initial survey, interviews and the validation survey that followed. In order to fully observe social media strategy and have a sense of its dynamic capabilities based on design management models was only partly possible (see future work section).

Therefore, an obvious strength of this study is that the research question can be addressed in a relatively short space of time. Of course if an association is found it is important to make clear in the conclusions that it was from a hypothesis-generating study and a larger confirmatory study is needed. The main problem with small studies is interpretation of results, in particular confidence intervals and p-values. However we believe that the study is not compromised by its limitations in terms of the quality of the finding or its ability to effectively answer the research questions. The limitations discussed can be overcome through future research.

In spite of these, this study is an important step towards understanding the value design can bring to the reality of social media, branding in social media and further developments in the designers roles when branding in social media.

9.4 Future Work

There is a large range of possible directions future research might take. Some of them are a direct response to the research limitations we presented in the previous section. During the course of this study, research findings indicated the need for further investigation and more advanced study in this area. Being an exploratory study in nature this has been a process of understanding the importance and value of design in branding for social media. This work serves as a foundation for further developing the field of social media design. Other future work might address opportunities for a new research direction.

- 1) We were unable to replicate this study in other European Countries. It would be very interesting to repeat this study in other European countries to establish a global European view of the thesis matters. We were able to analyse two different countries: Portugal and United Kingdom and found many differences in the way they approach social media. We assume other European countries will present different challenges and could broaden the findings of this thesis.
- 2) Case studies would be interesting to study in light of the elaborated models. The cases we did analyse in this thesis were suggested by the participants based on their observations or experience working in the field.
- 3) It would also be valuable to further expand the number of participants in the study. Gathering the testimony and feedback of more experts would allow us to expand on the findings and get a more in depth knowledge of the issues.
- 4) This study is based on expert's opinions and feedback, it would be of value to gather client's testimonies to understand design's reality and to better frame the need and value of design. By understanding the client we can better shape design's offer and make it more valuable.
- 5) Designing a focus group workshop with more design, marketing and social media experts to test and refine the models so we could further elaborate on the results presented in this study.
- 6) We could further develop this thesis and explore it more by adapting the suggested models to different social media ecosystems. Expand the models to specific brand situations and possibly other contexts. We could also further develop the models based on specific social networks, using examples and case studies from existing design campaigns.

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11. Appendices

A1. Participant information sheet

A2. Interview guide for expert semi-structured interviews

A3. Online Survey guide

A4. Online survey models guide

A5. Article Published: Gancho, Sara; Cooper, Rachel; Martyn, Evans (2015), The importance of design in social media – models for a framework analysis, Proceedings of Design for Business Research Conference and Journal, 12 – 13 May, 2015, Melbourne, Australia.

A6. Article Published: Gancho, Sara; Cooper, Rachel (2014), Branding Today - The importance of design in social media strategy, e-Journal of Laboratory for Orientation of the Organization Genesis by LOGO, Design Graduate Program, Federal University of Santa Catarina (UFSC), Brazil. e-Revista LOGO - v.3 n.1 2014 - ISSN 2238-2542.

A7. Article Published: Gancho, Sara; Cooper, Rachel; Martyn, Evans (2013), The impact of Design in social media today, Proceedings of 2nd CAMBRIDGE ACADEMIC DESIGN MANAGEMENT CONFERENCE, 4 – 5 September, 2013, Cambridge, United Kingdom – ***Highly Commended Paper.***

A1. Interview guide for expert interviews



PARTICIPANT INFORMATION SHEET

Project Title: Semi-Structured Interviews

Researcher: Sara Gancho

Intent of this Letter

We would like to invite you to participate in a research study conducted by the PhD Design Management course at Lancaster University for the Contemporary Arts at Lancaster University. We want to inform you why we are conducting this research and how important it is that we have your collaboration on it if you decide to participate. Please take time to read the following information carefully. You can discuss this study with other people and contact us directly for more information regarding it. We aim to inform the participants of the purpose of this study that will be conducted by Sara Gancho from Lancaster University for the Contemporary Arts between the summer term. Explain what might happen if you decide to participate and describe to you what it means to participate and what we use the research findings for. Please feel free to ask us about anything that is not clear from this letter or where you would like to have more information.

The Title of this Research Project: The role of design as a custodian of brands within the social media space.

The aim of this Research Project: is to better understand the management and strategies that are being employed while working with brands in social media.

Why Do We Want to Find Out About this?

There is little academic research on the role of design in social media and we want to understand how designers are working with brands in social media. To find out more about how it is being managed and what strategies are being developed by design practitioners. We aim to collect case study material from these companies in order to create further knowledge about these fairly recent practices.

Why have I been invited?

Your job as a key expert in social media projects makes you a relevant person in this study because we will be studying the role of design and its contribution to social media.

Do I have to take part?

No. It is up to you to decide. There are no negative consequences for anyone who decides not to participate. If you do decide to participate, we will describe the study to you in detail and go through this information sheet with you. We will then ask you to sign a consent form to confirm that you have volunteered to take part.

You are free to withdraw at any time, without giving a reason and without affecting your relationship with your peers, Professors or Lancaster University and without loss of any benefits that you may otherwise be entitled. In the event that you withdraw from this study, the study investigator may ask your permission to continue study follow-ups as it relates to the study. New information developed during the course of this project, which might affect the understandings of consent and willingness to

continue to participate will be brought to your attention. The co-researchers may end your participation in this study if they feel it is in the best interest of the participants. No guarantees have been made as to the results of your participation in this research project.

What will happen if I take part?

This research consists of the following activity:

1) Semi-structured interview

- You will be given the option of participating in a follow up face-to-face (preferably) or Skype interview about some of the topics discussed in the online survey.
- If you want to participate by only filling out the online survey you can do so as well, the interview is entirely optional.
- Details about the interview's place and time will be discussed with you and arranged according to your convenience.

Will my taking part in this study be kept confidential?

Yes. The following procedures and measures are in place to ensure the anonymity of participants in analysis and publication/presentation of any results: (1) each participant will be assigned a number, names will not be recorded. (2) The researchers will save the data file and/or any videos or audio recordings by participant number, not by name. (3) Only members of the research group will view the files in detail. (4) The recordings and files will be stored in a secured location by the researchers. (5) Only authorized researchers will have access to these files.

Contact Information

If you have any questions about this study, you should feel free to ask them now or anytime throughout the research project by contacting:

Researcher:

Sara Gancho

PhD Candidate

Lancaster Institute for the Contemporary Arts (LICA),

The LICA Building, Lancaster University,

Lancaster LA1 4YW, UK

s.gancho1@lancaster.ac.uk

You may report any objections to this research project, either orally or in writing to:

Project supervisor :

Rachel Cooper, PhD or Martyn Evans, PhD

ImaginationLancaster

Lancaster University

01524594527

r.cooper@lancaster.ac.uk, m.evans@lancaster.ac.uk

Understanding of Participation

I have read all 2 pages of this form and understand and agree to the material contained there on. I will receive a copy of this form. I understand that in signing this consent form, I give members of the Lancaster University Research team permission to present this work in written and/or oral form for teaching or presentations to advance the knowledge of science and/or academia, without further permission from me.

I agree to participate.

Subject Signature

Date

A2. Interview guide for expert interviews



Project Title: Semi-Structured Interviews

Researcher: Sara Gancho

Interview Guide Time: Aprox. 45 minutes

Mode: Face-to-face or Skype depending on participant availability

Outline

1. Tell me a little bit about yourself and how you came about working in social media?
2. What does your company do in terms of branding/design/marketing?
3. What are the social media platforms your clients are more excited to be on?
4. Are there any new platforms that are becoming big?
5. Do you think brands need to be in social media?
6. Who do you deal with (from the brand) to decide on the strategy for social media?
7. What do you think about brands in social media?
8. What do you think about design in social media?
9. Do you think design is important for branding in social media?
10. What do you think are the skills necessary to work in social media?
11. How do you plan a strategy for social media? Is it similar to an overall brand strategy?
12. Are you aware of the term design strategy?
13. What are your client's goals when they want to be in social media?
14. Do you think client's are aware of what design can provide for them in terms of branding in social media?
15. Walk me through a social media project of yours - steps and strategies
16. What do you think will be the future of social media?
17. Is there anything you'd like to add to the topics we have discussed?
18. Any other contacts of people you think are experts in this area? Any follow up? Ideas? Suggestions?

A3. Online Survey guide

Online survey on design practices in social media

This is a survey addressing the role of design in social media and it is part of a PhD program. The findings will inform our understanding of the relationship between branding, design and social media. As a participant in this survey you will be a part of the research project and as such you will be eligible for a copy of the resulting report. We will be very grateful if you would complete this survey. Please read the survey questions carefully and take your time understanding them before you answer. Thank you for your time. If you have any questions or comments feel free to contact me: Sara Gancho PhD Student Lancaster Institute for the Contemporary Arts (LICA) Lancaster University, Lancaster, LA1 4YW, UK s.gancho1@lancaster.ac.uk

*Required

What is your job title? * _____

What areas of design do you work in? *

- Interior & Exhibition
- Product & Industrial
- Communications
- Fashion & Textiles
- Other: _____

1 - Do clients come to you or your company to support their social media needs? *

- Yes
- No

If yes, How often?

- Very frequently
- Frequently
- Sometimes
- Occasionally

Never

2 - How often would you say the following business functions have asked you for Social Media Solutions? *

	Very frequently	Frequently	Sometimes	Occasionally	Never
Human Resources	<input type="radio"/>				
Sales	<input type="radio"/>				
Customer Service and Support	<input type="radio"/>				
Product Development	<input type="radio"/>				
Marketing	<input type="radio"/>				
Strategy	<input type="radio"/>				
Internal Collaboration and Learning	<input type="radio"/>				

Other: Please specify and rate. _____

3 - What skills would you say are more important for a Social Media professional to have? *

	Very important	Quite important	Fairly important	Slightly important	Not important
Strategy development	<input type="radio"/>				
Communication	<input type="radio"/>				

	Very important	Quite important	Fairly important	Slightly important	Not important
Creativity	<input type="radio"/>				
Public Relations	<input type="radio"/>				
Research development	<input type="radio"/>				
Networking	<input type="radio"/>				
Management	<input type="radio"/>				
Advertising	<input type="radio"/>				

Other: Please specify and rate. _____

4 - Please rate the contribution of design to add value in social media *

	Very important	Quite important	Fairly important	Slightly important	Not important
PERCEPTION VALUE: Branding, Marketing, Production, Corporate communication	<input type="radio"/>				
PERFORMANCE VALUE: Technology management, Human resources management, Innovation and ideas management, User orientation	<input type="radio"/>				
STRATEGIC VALUE: Prospective, Knowledge management, Generating a	<input type="radio"/>				

Very important	Quite important	Fairly important	Slightly important	Not important
----------------	-----------------	------------------	--------------------	---------------

vision, Strategy

FINANCIAL and
ACCOUNTING VALUE: ROI
value for society, Stock
market value, socially
responsible enterprise

Other: Please specify and rate. _____

5 - In which stage(s) of the 'social marketing total process planning' do you think is more important for design to be involved? *

Very important	Quite important	Fairly important	Slightly important	Not important
----------------	-----------------	------------------	--------------------	---------------

SCOPE- 'Costumer' market
research | Stakeholder
Engagement | Behavior &
Key Influences |
Resources| Intervention
Mix |Behavioral Goals

PRIMARY DEVELOP-
Marketing
Mix/Messages/Creative
Segmentation | Secondary:
Pre-Testing/ Refine
Adjustment

SECONDARY DEVELOP -
Pre-Testing/ Refine
Adjustment

IMPLEMENT - Active
Monitoring | Spot other
opportunities | Tackle
possible problems | 'Live'
Adjustment & Refinement

	Very important	Quite important	Fairly important	Slightly important	Not important
EVALUATE - Process Impact Outcome Cost	<input type="radio"/>				
FOLLOW UP - Capitalize Follow up for medium/ long term	<input type="radio"/>				

Other: Please specify and rate. _____

6 - Please rate the following social media websites in terms of the level of interest that your clients are engaging you to work on. *

	Extremely interested	Very interested	Moderately interested	Slightly interested	Not interested
Twitter	<input type="radio"/>				
Facebook	<input type="radio"/>				
Youtube	<input type="radio"/>				
Company/Brand/Service/Product Social Media website	<input type="radio"/>				
Linkedin	<input type="radio"/>				
Foursquare	<input type="radio"/>				
Google+	<input type="radio"/>				
Flickr	<input type="radio"/>				

Extremely interested Very interested Moderately interested Slightly interested Not interested

Blogs



Other: Please specify and rate. _____

7 - Please give your general thoughts on the use of design in social media. Give examples if possible. *

Are you available for a follow up interview regarding this study? *

Yes

No

If yes, please leave your contact information below: Name, Company, Email, Phone number

Thank you for your interest in this study!

A4. Online survey models guide: Social Media Models Analysis

This is a further study addressing the role of design in social media and it is part of a PhD program. The findings will inform our understanding of the relationship between branding, design and social media. As a participant in this survey you will be a part of the research project and as such you will be eligible for a copy of the resulting report. We will be very grateful if you would complete this survey. Please read the survey questions carefully and take your time understanding them before you answer. Thank you for your time.

If you have any questions or comments feel free to contact me:

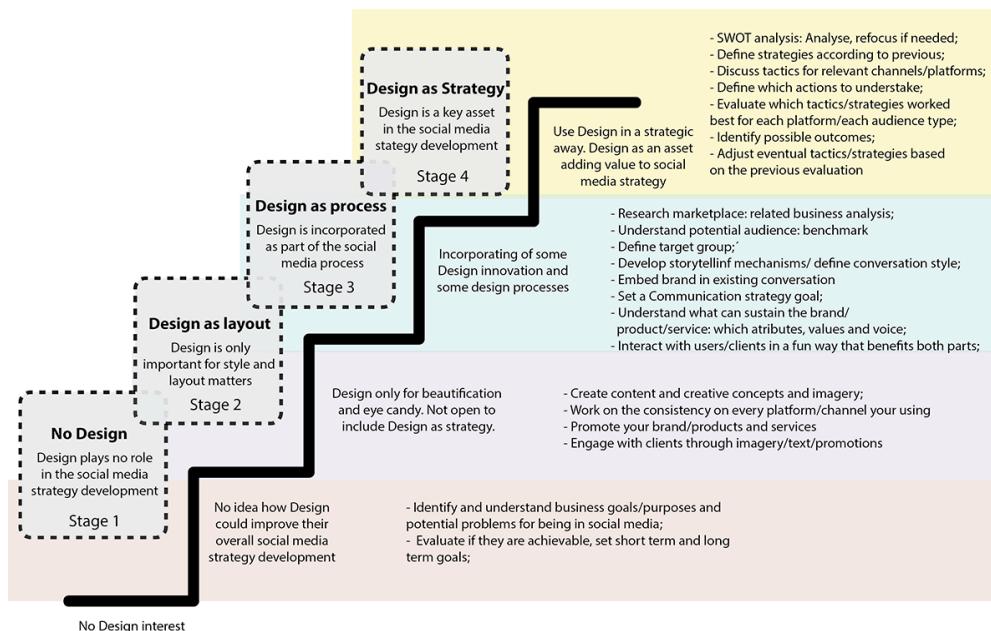
Sara Gancho
PhD Student
Lancaster Institute for the Contemporary Arts (LICA)
Lancaster University, Lancaster, LA1 4YW, UK
s.gancho1@lancaster.ac.uk

*Required

*Required

The following model regards the implementation of Design in companies who work in Social media. We call it the Social Media Design ladder. It starts with stage 1 with no Design interest or no knowledge of how Design can help their business, followed by Stage 2, seeing Design only as a means of beautification of images. Stage 3 is regarding design as part of the social media process and including some Design resources into their creative process. The final stage of the ladder is stage 4, seeing Design as strategy and using design management to add value to social media. Please study this model carefully and answer the following questions regarding it: * to maximize the image: Right Click and View Image

Social Media Design Ladder



Does this model accurately represents Design in Social Media? *

1 2 3 4 5

Disagree      Strongly Agree

Why? Please elaborate on your response.

In which stage do you believe the majority of your social media clients are at? *

- Stage 1 - No Design Interest
- Stage 2 - Design as Layout
- Stage 3 - Design as Process
- Stage 4 - Design as Strategy
- Other: _____

Do you believe that your clients are aware of what Design can offer to social media? *

1 2 3 4 5

Not aware      Highly aware

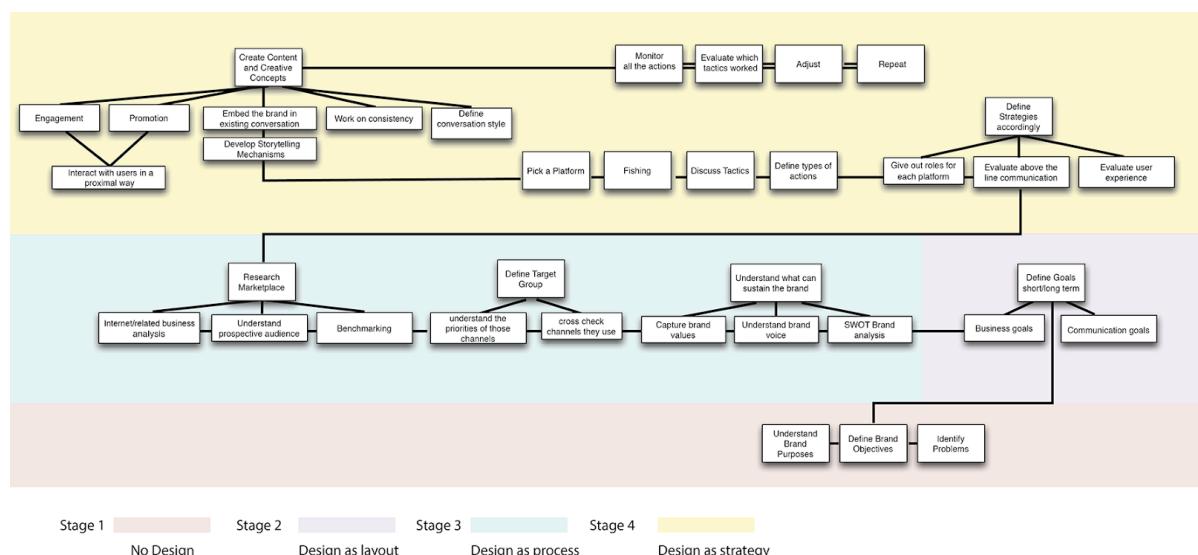
Why? Please elaborate on your response.

What is your opinion regarding the importance of Design in the different stages of this model? *

	Do not Know	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
No Design Interest	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Design as Layout	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Design as Process	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Design as Strategy	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

The next model is about the different steps in a Social Media strategy and it combines the colours used on the previous one as you can see in the label below. This model is not linear and steps can be repeated or executed at the same time or not at all depending on the type of client/brand and goal. Please study this model carefully and answer the following questions regarding it: * to maximize the image: Right Click and View Image

Social media strategy Model



Does this model accurately represents Social Media Strategy?

1 2 3 4 5

Disagree      Strongly Agree

Why? Please elaborate on your response.

In which stage do you believe it is more important for Design to be involved? *

- Stage 1 - No Design Interest
- Stage 2 - Design as Layout
- Stage 3 - Design as Process
- Stage 4 - Design as Strategy
- Other: _____

Why? Please elaborate on your response.

Do you believe these types of models help with the understanding of Social Media? *

Thank you for your time and interest in this study

A5. Article Published: Gancho, Sara; Cooper, Rachel; Martyn, Evans (2015), The importance of design in social media – models for a framework analysis, Proceedings of Design for Business Research Conference and Journal of Design, Business & Society , 12 – 13 May, 2015, Melbourne, Australia.

The value and importance of design when branding for social media: Models for a framework analysis.

Abstract

This paper presents an investigation into understanding the role of design and designers, when managing creative brand strategies for social media. We identify the design skills necessary to work in branding for social media, and discuss how design and marketing strategy are related to social media strategy. We also look into what roles designers may play in the future of social media.

We consider three different domains and areas of expertise: marketing, design and social Media. With regard to Marketing we opted to focus on the branding literature that is concerned with strategic brand management, and also on the social marketing management literature. We attempt to connect aspects of brand design that are crucial to the social media field. Concerning design, we focused on its importance to both branding and social media, while addressing the importance of design management in branding today, and how it is connected to new research in social media. We analysed how social media has developed into a growing and important platform for brands to connect with consumers and vice versa, and also how it generates business and return of investment. Our goal is to clarify the importance and impact of these areas for social media strategy, branding and business.

We also present a series of empirical studies, using surveys and expert interviews, tailored to capture quantitative and qualitative data, which enabled the proposal of models representing the design practices for branding in social media, which were also validated and revised through a survey.

Introduction

With the ever changing nature of markets, social media exhausts traditional marketing theories (Hampf, Anders & Lindberg-Repo 2011). This work presents a model, representing an exploratory study of the relationship of design management and social media within the process of branding.

Design is linked to the way society interacts with businesses, which increasingly require a *managed way* to do design. If managed well and implemented correctly with the aid of other professionals it is linked to productivity, innovation and change. In recent economic climate, design has shown to be a useful strategic and communication tool, which is reinforced by the increasing adoption of design management by companies. Design is also important in emerging business areas, e.g., social, ecological, technological, and cultural.

Design is viewed from three different levels within a determined company: the strategic, tactical, and operational. Most clients seem to be focused only on the operational side of design, neglecting its potential as a strategic tool for policy, mission, and other agenda.

Design as a tactical tool, leading processes within the organization is able to unify different business fronts. However, promoting its adoption requires a better understanding of why it is important for clients and brands to have the operational level of design. This knowledge is essential to effectively educate clients to broaden their understanding about the levels of expertise design can offer them. Beyond products, services, and experiences, design is related with the implementations of processes and strategies customers can actually relate too.

Design should be able to drive the overall effectiveness of social media through different levels of engagement, and help define business opportunities and goals, and even long and short-term priorities. It should also be able to create consistent content and imagery throughout all media platforms to promote the brand, service or product at hand.

Design management is suitable to promote engagement and brand awareness, through methodical marketplace analysis, in order to understand its competitors, audience and target groups. By setting the communication goals embedded in the conversations, design is able to understand the brand, and determine its language, voice, value, and attributes. Such enables a better understanding of the branding process in social media. Design should be able to analyse and refocus campaigns as needed, define strategies, and define actions in the relevant timeframe and adjust when suitable.

This work looks to find the correct tools to understand the role of design in branding for social media. We frame our work by a literature review connecting three different areas of expertise: marketing, design and social media. It is a comprehensive review of branding models, design management models and social media models.

To provide a better understanding of the relationship between design and social media with regards to social media design management, we promote an exploratory study about the importance of design process and strategy in social media.

The results of the exploratory study outline an online survey for expert opinion and feedback regarding the importance of design in social media;

Our goal is the definition of a model explaining the design reality in social media. This model should provide a classification of the current role of design in the organization's branding strategy for social media. This classification should inform about the current outcomes that can be expected from design, and what are the strategic actions available for social media branding endeavours.

The remaining of this work is organized as the following: section 0 presents the literature review, and a discussion (section 0) of the interactions between the keys areas of design in branding for social media; section 0 states the research problem and outlines the work towards a comprehensive model, and presents the exploratory study (section 0); section 0 presents the details about the online surveys and expert interviews, results analysis, model proposal and validation (section 0); finally, section 0 presents some conclusions.

Literature Review

Branding originated to differentiate products and services. It was initially related with the creation of strong and distinctive product images. Nowadays the markets are more competitive and information and advertising is ubiquitous. A brand is a living organism and invaluable as a source of promise for the consumer, whose experiences and expectations towards the brand should be accounted for (Kapferer 2008; O'Malley 2010b).

Kornberger (2011) proposes that brands are the new interface between consumption and production, and are becoming the link between consumers and products. Brand meaning, and its related emotions, is key to the exchange of goods process.

Zyman (1999) states that current marketing practices are not the best approach for the future. The author argues that marketing is ineffective and advertising is no longer the only source of information about brands that people have.

Leonhardt and Faust (2010) argue that brands have a strong intangible dimension, which requires design to create new sources of meaning and tangible experiences through brand touch points. The authors suggest that design has been under-leveraged in building brands but it can orchestrate their overall presence, digital and otherwise. Stating that each company has its different values and voice, the authors argue that creating a dynamic and informed brand should be a product of collaboration between design and strategy. The visual and verbal elements work to express the company products or services, which sets them apart from the competition. This process enables the creation of an image for the future of the company.

Shaughnessy (2013) argues that involvement in branding involvement enables designers to grasp several industry aspects, from logo design to advertising, copywriting and slogans, which aligns with the goal of branding: to make a company unique and recognizable, and to project a desired image.

Lucas Conley states that branding is more than marketing, advertising or positioning. In fact, all these concepts work together to achieve more than its simple sum (2009).

Shaughnessy (2013) argues that brand management would be easier if design were only a minor part of brand building. Such allows for two major side effects to occur: first the design language might become poor; and second, design becomes just a junior partner in brand creation.

Pribble III (1992) states that design, in its various forms (product, environmental, information and corporate identity), should be relevant to every area of operation of an organization, because it provides a strategic competitive advantage. A two-way education process must occur to recognize the need for more and better design work. Marketers should develop an understanding of the design process, and designers should develop an understanding of the marketing process. Higher education, in both design and marketing, plays an important part in creating awareness and understanding of the potential of the integration of these two disciplines.

Matthew Healey (Healey 2008) discusses the importance of design for branding. The author believes design in branding starts with product development. Progresses into packaging, labelling, advertising, and the resulting marketing material appropriate for the brand, such as: webpages, brochures, signs, clothing, or gifts. To the author, design is the single most important tool in branding, because it

concerns the visual and tactile. Other senses can also be designed, but not frequently. Design practitioners understand how people interact with things in their environment, and play a valuable role in brand development. Trained problem-solvers, designers can aid and inspire the brand regarding possible issues that may arise, and are key to the creation of meaningful and lasting brand identities. According to the author, several advertising and branding agencies support the idea that designers should be able to collaborate directly with clients in brand development.

According to Best, design is part of the brand building process, which includes innovation and strategy (2008). The author argues that design thinking can create differentiation through branding, and may have a serious impact on consumer behaviour, which can help companies sell services and/or products more efficiently. Design thinking incorporates cognition, emotion, message, and the social relationship with consumers, whose aesthetic preferences may come from design principles, and may be quite diverse according to their experience with design itself. Following a design thinking approach to brand identity development enables brand equity and brand architecture.

Fraser (2007) argues that whatever the sector or the nature of its business, any organization can benefit from the *design way*, which fosters team intelligence, creativity and the ambition to make a meaningful impact to the customer's life, both functionally and emotionally. The author states that the process should be embedded into the strategic planning practices of the organization. The design approach combines the essential gears of design in a *design mind-set*, enabling the discovery of opportunities to capitalize on new and unmet needs, exploring possibilities outside the activity system of the organization, and setting strategies to evolve its business model.

(Evans & Cooper 2006) argue that consumer-centred product design is becoming a best practice for industries. Market research techniques concerned with data translation into sensory dimensions, such as ethnography, anthropometrics, and other observational techniques, are increasingly relevant to the new product development processes. Cooper (2011) further discusses design as a practice, and a theoretical discourse, concluding that either perspective draws on a wide and diverse field of knowledge and skill.

Mozota (2003) argues that visual symbols have a greater value than words in the marketplace, which enables design as a tool for creating integrated brand experiences.

Salzer-Morling and Strannegard (2004) propose that brands are turning into symbolic signs that focus on creating influences and experiences. Positive aesthetic product design lead to positive brand evaluations, which facilitates product and brand categorisation, and consumer interaction.

To Kreuzbauer R. (2005), the aesthetic aspect of design helps to satisfy the consumer's experiential worlds, and generates loyalty and a sense of exclusiveness. Design aesthetics are added value to the customer, and produce positive effects on the performance of the organization.

Chiva and Alegre's research concluded that design management is able to enhance the performance of an organization. Design management is the organizational and managerial skill that enables the organization to develop efficient design, which relates to performance (2009).

Branding, Design and Social Media

Social media is often used as a branding tool, both for commercial brands and for *people's* brands. A study by Herder shows that 82% of managers in America use a form of social media tool (Herder & Law 2009). According to eMarketer, 57% of marketing business functions within a company use social media, followed by Internal and Collaboration business that are at 39% (eMarketer (ed.) 2012).

(Briggs 2010) suggests that social media can drive meaningful connections and provoke conservations with actively engaged audiences.

(Li, C and Bernoff 2008) state that it is highly important to understand how relationships work in social media. There is an impact on personal relationships caused by the technological change. According to (Garretson 2008), an increasing percentage of consumers are active and engaged in co-creation, from product design to promotional messages.

(Christodoulides 2009) states that Marketing is turning into a service-dominant logic, which needs to focus on the integration of brand in value adding processes. These processes create and modify consumer experience, dialogue and learning. The author believes that now is the age of co-creation, and that value can be created in a dialectical process. Consumers are equal partners in mutual value development; not just passive recipients of marketing messages. Brands should engage in people, in order to re-connect with the audience. The author proposes a holistic view of consumers as people, giving emphasis on the different roles consumers have, and focus on their needs. The author concludes that the traditional Marketing model is inadequate for the present reality, i.e., marketers cannot depend exclusively on advertising. Social media enables interaction with individuals and communities according to their particular interests and needs. A brand is now a relationship builder.

(Yan 2011) discusses one of the problems with dealing with brands in social media: the strategy may fall into the same errors as previous viral email and web strategies. If there is no interaction between brands and consumers, then the strategy is missing the point of using social media. Social media has to be highly sociable, and there has to be interaction and engagement. Without these concerns, consumers may dismiss the content as unwanted, such as the traditional viral emails. (Owyang 2009) also highlights the increased power and engagement of consumers with branding in social media.

(Beuker & Abbing 2010) make the case that different metrics apply to the marketing mix strategy on social media. Shared content and interaction between brands and customers is key. The authors conclude that this often unmentioned interaction is the most relevant factor or success on social media.

Abbing, Erik Roscam and van Gessel (2008) discuss the adoption of social media tools by design disciplines. A key motivation for this adoption is monitoring, to learn more about consumers needs. The authors also argue that social media may profit from design expertise, mainly because design disciplines offer a way to fulfil brand promises into a meaningful experience for the user, which may enhance the social media experience. Graphic and industrial design are particularly relevant, given the role both play in building brand awareness and recognition.

Discussion

The main argument for importance of design in branding is in branding's transcendence of identity, which requires the creation of a customer interaction strategy that goes beyond clicking a website and seeing an advertisement.

Fraser states that once embedded into the *DNA* of an organization, design methods can help generate on-going possibilities for growth and evolution, recognizing that as the marketplace evolves, the needs of the user evolve and thus the business model must evolve to avoid extinction. The more an enterprise sees its business model or *activity system* as a living organism rather than a fixed model, the more a company will be poised to respond to on-going opportunities to meet new needs. A company that views *design thinking* not as a one-shot vaccination but rather an on-going fitness program for strategic growth will be better conditioned to stay ahead of the curve in an increasingly competitive global marketplace. The ultimate results are bigger breakthroughs in thinking, more innovative strategies for success, and development of new business models to better meet user needs and create greater economic and human value (H. M. a. Fraser 2007).

Nowadays design is seen as an economic advantage. Its use as a communication and strategic business tool has placed design management in the heart of the business plan. Design is also important in other social issues such as ecology, new technologies, innovation and cultural processes and enterprises. Design is linked with the way society, the environment, and businesses interact. Today's organizations are integrating design in their practices and approach design in a managed way (Best 2006).

Design affects management at different levels and can be active on strategic, tactical and on operational levels. It can set long-term, to day-to-day goals.

Recent brand disseminating strategies aim for every social media channel available, not accounting for which is actually more effective to engage with their prospective and actual consumers. When an organization develops a brand strategy, it should carefully consider which platform is adequate, in order to have a global social media strategy that delivers different information throughout the different channels.

Marketers are usually in charge of brand management, and social media presents a challenge on how to keep control of your brand online. However, consumers are becoming equal partners in developing mutual value and are not just marketing recipients. This leads to brands being challenged to engage with consumers in order to capture more audience, and keep the audience present on several social media channels.

There is a more holistic view gaining momentum, whose emphasis is given on the different roles consumers have and focus in responding to their needs.

Social media demands social brands that are able to engage in conversations, inspiring resonant stories. Social media can be a space for authentic brand narratives. An established, well-known and sharable brand story is able to provide the basis for gathering like-minded individuals.

Combining design and social media enables the design leader to better understand the consumer. Media might have been the marketing department's territory but today it fits into the design leader

skills as well. As the role of design in business gains importance, the role of the design manager in adapting design to this new media as well.

We propose that design is at the core of the social media brand strategy. To understand how design interacts with the other concerns of the branding strategy we need to be able to model this strategy and verify the interactions that marketing, branding and design activities have with each other. To that cause we propose to investigate the current role of design in the social media strategy.

The role of design management in social media strategy

From the literature review on branding, social media, and design management, we did not find a model explaining the role of design role in social media strategy.

To plan and evaluate the role of design in branding for social media we need to rely on a model that relates the relevant aspects involved. This model should provide a classification of the current role of design in the organization's branding strategy for social media. This classification should inform about the current outcomes that can be expected from design, and what are the strategic actions available for social media branding endeavours.

Our goal is to define such model and strategy outline.

From the literature review, we identified the concerns that marketing, branding, and design share in the social media environment. We propose to use this input from the literature to design and implement a survey and series of expert interviews to capture the current practices and business configurations, in the context of branding for social media. Specifically, we are looking to identify the role of design in this process.

We propose to design our model from the findings of our study, and validate it with a second survey.

Exploratory studies

To define an initial framework for our survey and interviews, we looked to establish expert connections with which we could discuss the relationships between Marketing, Design, Branding and Social Media. In this preliminary study we interviewed five experts.

We extracted the main themes of discussion, which are: the reasons to use social media; the efficiency of social media as a channel for branding strategy; the role of marketing in social media; the role of design in social media; the future of social media regarding marketing and design.

Models for design practices in social media

Our goal is to propose a model for the role of design in branding for social media. Since social media remains a novelty to designers, marketers and even users, there is not clear definition of the designer's role. The traditional role of design itself needs clarification, as it is often changes depending on the size, type and even general goal of the organization. Designers may be directly working with brands in social media, or addressing tasks decided by a team of managers or marketers. We aim to understand where design has its influence, and what type of design is being done.

Data collection

The primary data collection methods are an online survey questionnaire, and semi-structured follow-up interviews.

Survey on design practices for social media

The survey enables standardized data collection, which is later codified and analysed. The survey was an online questionnaire, and we reached potential participants through email. Answers were anonymized.

To design the questions we focused on the list of topics to address defined by the preliminary study, presented in section 0.

We obtained 103 valid answers to the online survey. Each participant was given the choice of a follow-up interview.

Expert interviews on design practices in social media

Several survey participants declared their interest in participating on a follow-up interview. We conducted interviews with 21 experts.

Since the area of research is fairly recent, both professionals from design, marketing management and social media were involved in our sample, which included both United Kingdom and Portuguese professionals. The interviewees were either freelance workers dealing with branding in social media, with their own portfolio of clients, or professionals who work for companies that do branding in social media, and are part of the social media department. We also included professionals who have their own company, or are work in a department dealing with social media.

Results

The survey and interviews analysis result confirms design's relevance to branding in social media, although not without some limited influence due to how the platforms are designed. Some participants believe that the current network websites do not allow for real engagement with the audience and there is a need to redesign those interfaces. Design is key to obtain consistency throughout all media. Storytelling helps to bring people closer to the brand and that makes it more engaging to the user. Design can work as a differentiator and amplify interaction between brands and clients/fans.

Although design has been proven to add financial value to a brand, it is sometimes neglected to minimize costs in short term. Most participants believe good design is essential to promote brand trust, increasing its chances to be shared or liked. Due to its strength in both communication and visual appeal, design is a major competitive advantage. Design thinking is a critical element because it gives shape to ideas and is critical to all effective communications. The aesthetics and friendliness of social media networks are highly dependable on design. Perceptions of a product or service are influence by their design and need to reflect the identity of the brand.

Interview participants consistently mentioned graphic appearance. Social media outlets are mostly visual, which is why content design is so important. In the online world it only takes from four to eight seconds to impress the audience. Well-crafted and consistent eye-catching graphics are essential for this process.

Strategy wise, design is essential because it maximizes the impact of messaging and drives the overall effectiveness of social engagement. Design enables the continual reassessment of strategy and goals, which increases the outcome impact of social media campaigns. Design allows for evaluation and problem solving in the overall social media strategy, playing an important role during the social media implementation.

User experience and interaction are important design areas, which are vital to social media. With the overwhelming presence of visual elements interacting with users, there is the need to carefully craft experiences.

We learned that design has an important role in different stages of the social media marketing total process model. Participants agree that design is relevant in all stages but its even more important on the primary development phase, which consists of Marketing Mix, Messages, Creative Segmentation, Pre-Testing and Adjustment. The survey results point out which are the most relevant skills to be working in social: Strategy development, Communication, and Creativity. All skills are considered as highly important to the task, all already familiar to designers, and are arguably the top three skills necessary to be a designer.

Results confirm the concerns by (Yan 2011): that social media is actually falling into the same mistakes as email marketing. Social media should be integrated in the overall brand strategy. Brands should join in the conversation consumers are having about them. They should listen to their target.

Results also show that the bigger the company, the more difficult it is to actually get social media on the right track. Companies are used to traditional marketing methods. Therefore, it is important to match the message with the business model, with the challenge being crafting the message itself. This process is mistakenly understood as easy and fast, with the illusion of immediate results, with minimum effort.

Participants said that branding in social media is becoming increasingly important as consumers take the lead in brand evaluation. It is important to determine the message and communicate it in the right channels, focusing on engagement and delivering a story through interaction, i.e., storytelling.

On the problems of branding in social media, the participants focused on the lack of policies and control over what is being said about brands and what is being *collected* through consumer data.

To deal with the lack of control of social media exposure, the branding strategy should promote interaction and directional communication with the target audience, creating empathy through proximity in underlying conversations. Branding looks for consumer feedback about a product or a service, encouraging the sharing of that information.

The engagement in social media has transformed marketing, which is now mostly focused on collaboration and content creation, promoting conversations rather than unilaterally communicating through sentences on billboards. However, social media investment returns are hard to measure, mostly because there is no clear link between social media content and actual purchases. Some interviewees stated that they do try to measure the link between the return-on-engagement (ROE) and return-on-investment (ROI).

Several participants support the idea that there seems to be little room for real design innovation through social media due to the confined communication space. However, all participants recognized the importance of design for social media, with design ultimately being the *materialization of all thinking*.

The importance of design goes beyond just creating the first impact with consumers, it targets its market and keeps brand communication relevant through the use of storytelling techniques in order to allow ideas to be converted into objectives. Design promotes consistency and sense of continuity to brand content.

We found that the skills necessary to be working in social media appear to be the same as one would expect from a designer or marketer. Market research, strategy, communication, and design skills are the most mentioned by interviewees. The necessary profile is someone with a design, marketing or public relationships background.

All of the participants address the definition of the branding strategy through design problem solving and with a business model approach. All focus on the same steps, with little variation.

In order to have a successful social media strategy, branding needs to be relevant where the target audience is, focusing social media efforts on the right platforms. An important issue that rose from findings is that some organizations are not aware or know how to use monitoring tools to track their online presence, which reduces their ability to understand what customers are saying about the organization, brand, services and/or products. Perhaps more importantly, these organizations may also not be able to monitor user concerns, not answer their questions, or eventually do not communicate at all in the online channels.

Online communication is not suited for all brands, but once the brand have recognized its importance, in order to increase brand awareness, it needs to have a strategy to approach the audience in the appropriate channels, and engage with users through content creation. The goal is high brand awareness and presence in people's lives, promoting an immediate brand association with certain images, words and expressions.

From this discussion, we suggest that the future of social media seems to lie in a more transparent way of trading, and in making the conversation with the client clearer, and in total disclosure. Learning about the clients through social media monitoring enables brands to offer tailored services and customization, focusing the brand appeal in the individual rather than a group of people. The social media environment requires a local and relevant positioning, rather than global and generic.

Concerning the differences between Portugal and United Kingdom practices, our findings show that concepts like engagement and interaction are not the focus of social media campaigns in the majority of social media agencies in Portugal (with some exceptions), while in the United Kingdom they are viewed as one of the most important parts of the social media strategy.

In the United Kingdom, professionals who work in social media, whether with a marketing, design, or human resources background, are aware of the importance of knowledge exchange. A participant argued that such is motivated by the fact that social media is concerned about sharing content and engaging with brands and audiences worldwide.

Portugal has a higher resistance to knowledge exchange. Most professionals are restricted by confidentiality constraints, being reluctant to share knowledge, which posed as a challenge to our efforts for learning about campaigns that are currently online.

From our sample, design is more highly regarded within the United Kingdom participants. It was also there we found more designers working in social media. Portuguese participants understood the need for design, but most of their clients failed to see its use in the strategy and process stage.

Strategic focus also differs in between countries: Portuguese participants focus more on increasing the amount of followers and return on investment; United Kingdom participants focus more on getting actual buyers from those followers, and more on return on engagement and brand awareness.

We conclude that the Portuguese reality is driven to immediate results to its social media campaigns. However, according to our survey, social media, although advertised as such, does not give out immediate results, and requires a robust strategy plan.

Regarding platform use, Portuguese clients mainly focus on Facebook¹. United Kingdom clients consider a wider option of platforms. Nevertheless, the Portuguese reality is converging to the same as the United Kingdom, with small but increasing adoption of Twitter².

Model proposals

There are no existing models explaining the importance of design in social media, or the importance of social media design strategy in branding.

Mendel (Mendel 2012) states that models are increasingly important in design, as designers are often collaborating with other disciplines, which forces design to also deal with new systems and services.

We devised two models based on the data collected. These two models are the result of the analysis presented in section earlier and driven by the literature review. Through the analysis of the online survey and the semi-structured interviews we can transfer aspects about design in social media into the *design ladder model*, by Kootstra (2009).

The design ladder model is a framework that facilitates the evolution of the use of design by a company. It is a four-step model, beginning by no use of design, to considering design as a key

¹ <http://www.facebook.com>

² <http://www.twitter.com>

strategic element. This model is helpful because it assesses the different ways companies are integrating design. Ideally we would like companies to consider design in the forth step.

We evolved the *design ladder model*, focusing on social media, and including a description of the design roles at each stage of the ladder, proposing the *design in social media ladder model*. Each stage of the model includes relevant topics and steps. Each step is related to the role design has in social media strategy. Figure 1 presents the design in social media ladder model.

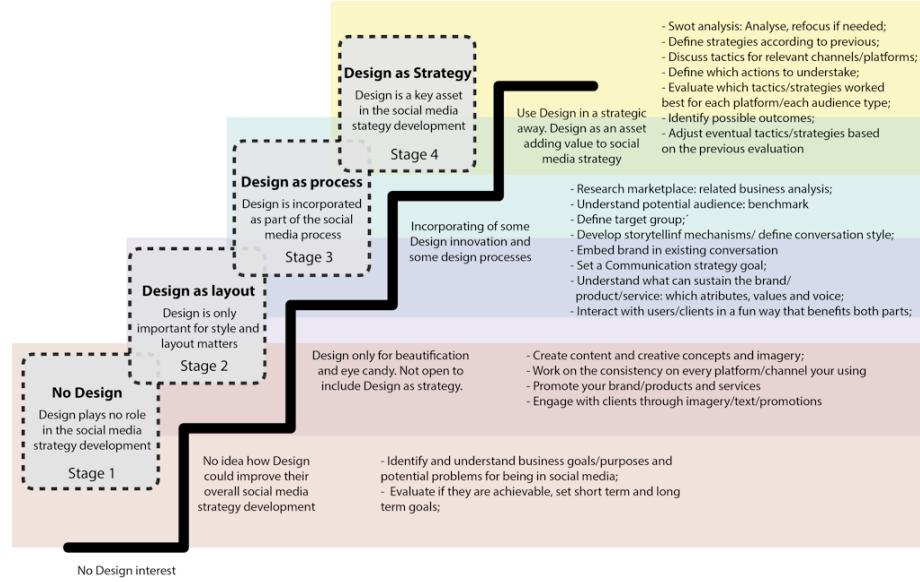


Figure 1. Design in social media ladder model.

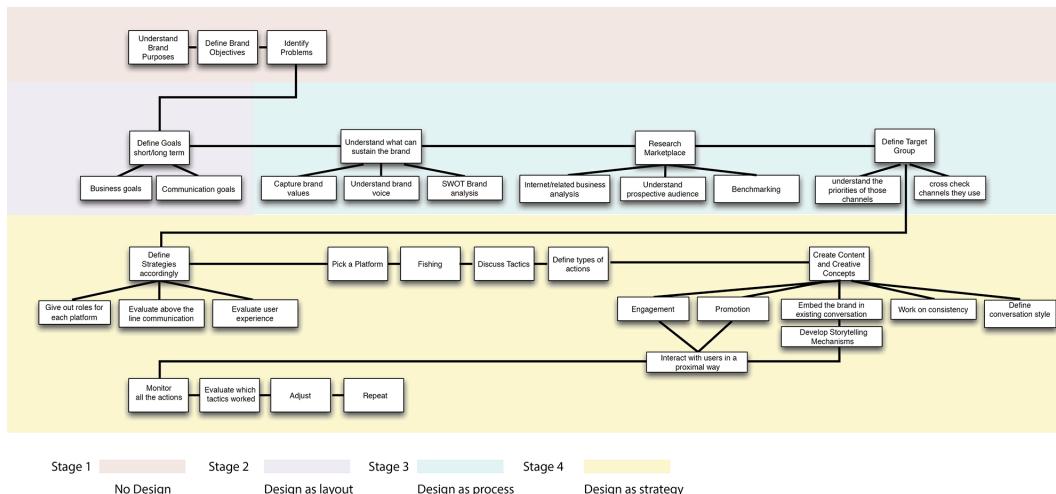


Figure 2. Social media design strategy.

The actual social media design strategy is presented in Figure 2. The model stages evolve from the bottom left, the *No Design* stage, where design plays no role in the development of social media strategy. The second stage, *Design as Layout*, design is the content creator of imagery and concepts, keeping consistency in all platforms. It is also responsible for brand promotion and awareness, engaging with clients in that context. In the third stage, *Design as Process*, design incorporates

innovation and processes in social media. The designer communicates strategy goals, develops storytelling, and interacts directly with the client, embedding the brand in existing conversations, relying on research market, benchmarking and group targeting definition. In the last stage, *Design as Strategy*, designers are able to define, coordinate, and decide on strategy tactics to be developed. Designers are also able to take actions based on the analysis executed in previous stages, evaluating which strategy and tactics are appropriate for each social media channel, or current event. Designers may also refocus and re-evaluate the whole process based on the previous social media campaigns outcomes.

The strategy model in figure 2 shows the relationship between different design ladder stages. Stage one, *No Design*, initiates at the top of the figure, followed by *Design as Layout* below, and on the right, *Design as Process*, the remaining space at the bottom is all related with the *Design as Strategy* stage.

Models validation

To validate the model and strategy proposed in section 0, we conducted an online survey, which included some of the previous survey participants, and new, with the total of thirty valid responses. All participants are practitioners of branding in social media, with marketing, design, or social media backgrounds.

Results show that the models are useful to represent design in social media and social media strategy. There was a strong response in favour of design being present in all stages of social media and the most voted stages were design as layout, process and strategy.

Participants agree that design is able to drive the overall effectiveness of social media through different levels of engagement. The model and strategy helps define business opportunities and goals, define long and short-term priorities, and able to create consistent content and imagery through out all the platforms in order to promote the brand/service or product at hand, which leads to engagement and brand awareness.

The validation results show that the social media strategy is best represented in a circular layout, capturing the iterative nature of the process. There are also other aspects that were subject to comments and suggestions, which help to revise the model, as presented in the next section.

Revised models

From the validation results, we changed the model layout from a ladder setting into a circle, which better represents an evolving process. We introduced the feedback step in the strategy, because it is an essential part of the social media strategy and informs about results, which increase the accuracy precision of the strategy.

Figure presents the revised model: the design in social media stages model. The layout suggests a process that is on going, capable of initializing at different stages. The participants stated that design should be in every stage, therefore we have added a revolving circle, which each design stage can accompany at different steps of the strategy.

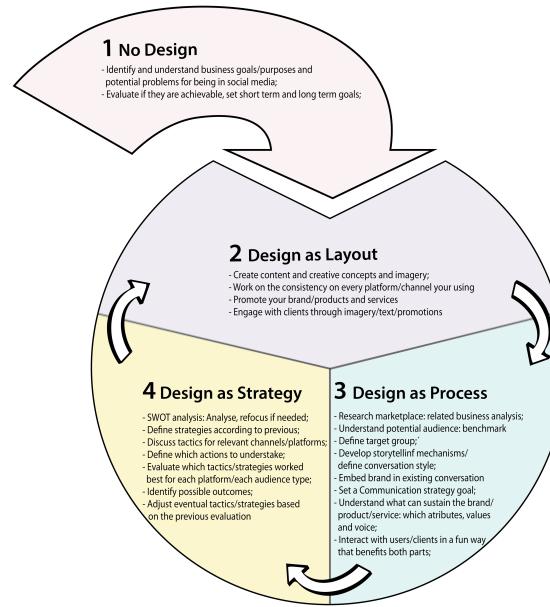


Figure 3 Design in social media stages model.

Participants suggested the *No Design* interest stage to be taken from the flow, arguing that organizations that move from that stage no longer return to it. For most cases, organizations with design interest initialize the process at the *Design as Layout* stage, moving on to the other stages. However, depending on characteristics of the social media project, the process may need to start at the *Design as Strategy* or *Design as Process* stages.

All stages of the model are important at different moments of the social media strategy. However, participants have suggested a feedback stage on the strategy, which is included in the last stages after monitoring and evaluation. We also added a starting point represented by an arrow and another arrow at the end connecting to the start representing an iterative process, continuing and repeating as the project evolves. Figure presents the strategy.

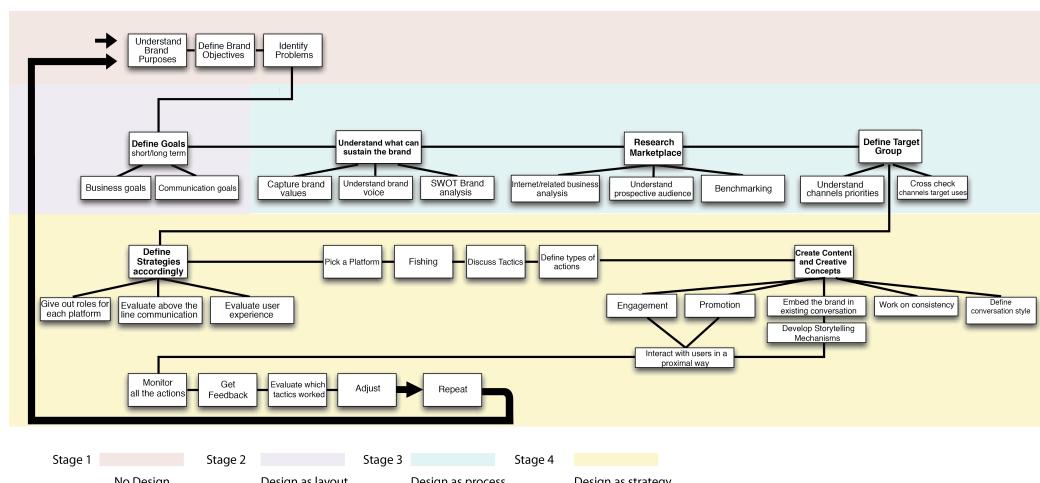


Figure 4. Social media strategy.

Conclusions and Implications for theory/practice

This work presented a model for design in branding in social media. The role of design in the strategic planning of a branding project has been recorded in the literature, but we identified a lack of systemic representation tools, which without it the evaluation and robust planning of branding in social media strategies is very difficult.

We presented a literature review that motivated a series of studies, which ultimately resulted in our model. Our studies included both English and Portuguese participants.

Our studies show that design is important for branding in social media mainly because of brand consistency. However, participants of our surveys claim that design helps to connect people to brands through storytelling.

Design is responsible for the brand visual appeal, which enables brand awareness, being a major competitive advantage. Design is also concerned with brand experience, which promotes brand dissemination through social networks alike. It is also able to improve the brand footprint, gathering followers, likes and comments. The design process and strategy is essential to understand branding in social media. Design determines the perception of brands, and allows users to immerse in its reality, through effective communication.

Design's presence in social media strategy has four stages: *No Design*, *Design as Layout*, *Design as Process*, and *Design as Strategy*. Each indicates a different degree of involvement in social media strategy.

Most of our studies participants' clients are in the *Design as Layout* stage. Most clients ignore the other stages of design, such as design as process and strategy. Studies like ours help clarify design's role, and highlight the value it may bring to branding in social media

The validation of our model enables us conclude that the it is useful to represent design in social media and social media strategy. There was a strong response in favour of design being present in all stages of social media and the most voted stages were *Design as Layout*, *Design as Process*, and *Design as Strategy*. We have determined that a design led strategy will have more favourable outcomes in the long run.

We concluded that social media strategy should have a determined action plan. We propose our model to accomplish this task.

The study we presented is step forward in the exploration of design and designer's role and value when branding in social media. Our contributions are supported and validated through empirical research. Our findings have implications for a wide range of areas: design practitioners, consultants, managers, marketing experts, social media managers, and professionals otherwise involved in design, branding or social media processes.

The study builds on the knowledge of brands in the social media space. Its results have shown a better understanding of social media strategy, resulting in the proposal and validation of our model. The study also enabled the clarification the role of design and designers in the social media space, which empowers design in a relatively new area, such as social media.

Our model is presented as a guide to structure design's participation in social media strategy. We have highlighted the similarities between design strategy and social media strategy, and we have also classified the different uses of design in social media by expanding on existing models.

We have identified new and emerging issues regarding the use of design in social media, social media strategy, design's importance in social media and explored the knowledge on what social media is today.

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18



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BRANDING TODAY - THE IMPORTANCE OF DESIGN IN SOCIAL MEDIA STRATEGY

BRANDING HOJE: A IMPORTÂNCIA DO DESIGN NA ESTRATÉGIA DE MÍDIA SOCIAL

RESUMO

Este artigo é uma breve discussão sobre o papel do design na gestão das marcas para mídia social. O artigo trata de alguns dos problemas de marca hoje e como a comunicação está mudando a relação entre empresas

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e consumidores. No contexto de branding para a mídia social o artigo comprehende como a estratégia de design pode ajudar marcas a se envolver melhor com seus clientes e aperfeiçoar a sua experiência integral. Marcas devem ser visionária e enfrentar os diferentes esferas de potencial que os espera com design. São dados dois exemplos e suas abordagens de como o design pode ajudar na estratégia integral de mídia social das marcas.

PALAVRAS CHAVE

Branding. Design. Estratégia.

ABSTRACT

This article is a brief discussion into the role of design when branding for social media. It talks about some of the problems of branding today and how communication is changing the relationship between companies and consumers. In the context of branding for social media it understands how design strategy can help brands better engage with their clients and improve their overall experience. Brands must be visionary and embrace the different realms of potential that awaits them with Design. Two examples are given and their approach on how Design can help in the overall brand's social media strategy.

KEYWORDS

Branding. Design. Strategy.

1. INTRODUCTION

Consumers are used to regarding a brand as an important aspect of a product, and it can also add value to a product or service. The brand also carries the reputation of a product or company. People often have and image or an idea of a brand and they associate it with a product, service, trademark, or other image-related asset, e.g., the Shell sign. A brand can be regarded as a trusted, reliable product or service whose use brings predictable results and experiences. Others can view the brand as an economic asset and tangible expression of what accountants call "good will", that attempts to put a dollar value on an otherwise

intangible corporate possession (Moon, Michael and Millison 2000).

Successful brands have their name recognized by the audience and that builds strategic awareness. Branding is more important today than ever due to the huge amount of advertising, media fragmentation, the commoditization of products, and the seemingly limitless choices consumers are offered in just about every product category (O'Malley 2010).

Brands can be perceived as influential regarding the buyers decisions. They can create an emotional bond of trust that is not always based on logic or intellectual reasoning. The brand also helps to increase accompany or product/service value, enhancing it by association (Kapferer 1997).

Branding is now the most important aspect of business, and everyone wants to measure its value. If you have a powerful brand your business will bloom. It becomes increasingly more important to make the consumers see that your brand is the only one that could fill all their needs and desires (Millward Brown 2009).

Branding has become part of pop culture. Numerous products have a brand identity: from common table salt to designer clothes. Non-commercially, branding can also apply to the marketing of entities, which supply ideas or promises rather than goods and services - such as political parties or religious organizations. (Ellwood 2002).

Brands have evolved into a powerful marketing asset. Starting from being just a message about the products identity, they are now something with its own concept, with its own identity. A brand represents the value of a company or organization. Through out its strong identity a brand can create relationships with its consumers, with the people who work directly with it (employees, suppliers, etc.). These relationships can be possible if the brand fulfills the stakeholder's aspirations. The better these relationships are, the better the probability of obtaining a long term relationship that will lead to preference, loyalty and an interest to invest. This paper will focus on the role of design for developing branding strategy in the digital age.

2. BRANDING IN SOCIAL MEDIA TODAY

In the article "The lure of global branding" (Aaker & Joachimsthaler 1999) it is said that most companies are viewing the world as their potential

global market, and that brand builders want to globalize their own brands in a worldwide dimension, following what appears to be a market trend. They are attracted by high profile cases of success but have no idea about how risky it all could be. According to David Aaker and Erich Joachimsthaler, in order to create a global brand we have to have global leadership. Global leadership is not obtained instantaneously; companies must use structures, processes and cultures to allocate brand-building resources in a global way. Aaker and Joachimsthaler describe four methods to achieve global brand leadership. Firstly, they believe that companies have to stimulate the sharing of insights and feedback for best practices across countries and try and embrace change instead of just saying: "it won't work here". Secondly, companies should rely on a common brand-planning process, consistency across markets and products. Thirdly, companies should assign global managerial responsibility for brands in order to fight local bias. Fourthly, companies need to develop and execute brilliant brand building strategies before stepping into the global market, otherwise branding will just happen on its own, and it could as easily fail or succeed, without control over it (Aaker & Joachimsthaler 1999).

Every year, Interbrand evaluates brands that make a great deal of investment in their businesses. Neumeier (2003) says that even though companies invest time, energy, resources and study in their brands, most of them still care more about sales, services, quality and marketing and branding just happens while undertaking other endeavors.

Companies are trying to isolate branding from other assets in order to study, measure, manage and influence the process, rather than just let it happen. However, brand managers, strategists and researchers are discovering that it takes more than strategy to build a brand: it takes strategy and creativity (design) together (Neumeier 2003).

In most companies, the Marketing Department is separated from the Design Department (Neumeier 2009). Designers learn about what the Marketing Department is doing through briefings for some advertising campaign, sub-brand creation, sales launch, event promotion, and so on. Neumeier defendsthat on one side we have the strategists and marketing people who favor left-side brain thinking, and on the other side we have the designers and creative who favor right-side brain thinking. What happens is that the left-side brain reasoning does not always know what the right-side brain thinking process is doing and vice-versa. When this happens, strategy

and creativity separated from one another, which leads to a brand gap: "It can cause a brilliant strategy to fail where it counts most, at the point of contact with the costumer, or it can doom a bold creative initiative before it is even launched, way back at the planning stage" (Neumeier 2009).

The author also states that if the gulf exists it can separate a company from its costumers so completely that the company ceases to communicate any message at all. A brand gap can have two possible outcomes:

- 1) it creates a natural barrier to communication and
- 2) it creates a natural barrier to competition.

A strong and clear brand communication goes straight into people's minds without any message distortion. Brands that can reach out to people and overcome this gap can start to build a relationship with their costumers and initiate the foundations of *charismatic brands*. The charismatic brands often appear in everyday culture, are of highly mentioned and can be characterized by the people's belief that there are no substitutes for them. Therefore, charismatic brands usually dominate their market's shares from around 50% or higher, and get the highest price premiums (Neumeier 2003).

Brands have enjoyed a meteoric rise according to Kornberger (2011) and are the mechanism that tries to connect organizations closer to people. Nowadays brands seduce us into consumerism but at the same time they are also cultural forms that allow us to express ourselves.

For example, with NIKEiD [1] shoes customization, where the brand leverages advertising as social engineering while turning it into an art form at the same time (see figure 1).

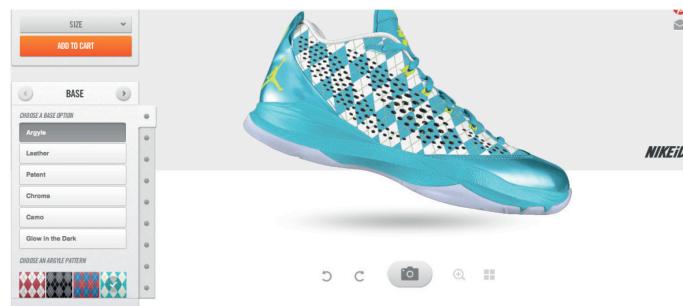


Figure 1: NikeiD

Brands enable the individual to construct one's identity on the basis of one's consumption patterns. Brands have become the resource for identity formation. They are like ready-made elements(Warhol, Duchamp) for styling our lives. H. Douglas says that consumers want to be the protagonist of their own lives, but they want the story written out for them. Brands in that perspective could provide the narratives they live by, because they represent values, not functionality. They are able to turn products into social meanings and consumption into a social phenomenon. Above all, in this information overuse driven world brands provide a safe haven because they provide us with some certainties, clarity and stability(Kornberger, 2011).

However, the problem has changed, and according to Kornberger (2011) the challenge now is not so much controlling the internal production process but to interact with one's environment and engage with it in a co-creative and innovative activity.

"The brand is the only interface for co-creation. Especially in the non-mediated media of the internet, brands are the only anchor point that provides stability and recognition". Consumers are relating to brands more directly as organizations lose control over production and distribution. "Brands are emerging as a new interface between consumption and production".

In a globalized world this impacts brands as well. We are shifting from the service based economy of the late 20th century into the "experience economy" or, as the Nomura Economic Research Institute describes it, "The age of creativity".

Brands need to match the shifts expressed by the economic model and develop experiential customer interfaces. These will fall into the 5 I's brand dimensions, i.e., identify, inform, imagine, immerse and intrigue. Businesses need to define a balanced strategy for the bricks-to-clicks [2] paradigm, as well as the new economy of clicks-to-bricks [3]. They need to create synergy across the traditional and the new media rather than remain with a single one (Ellwood 2002).

According to Meyers and Gerstman, most of the cyberspace entrepreneurs believe that the Internet is just another way/tool to communicate their message, and that they do not need to resort to different strategies (other than the ones they have already) in order to promote and sell their products and services(Meyers, Herbert M. and Gerstman 2001).

According to Zyman (1999:p.1), "Traditional Marketing is not dying

– *it is dead*”, and the ability to move the masses has been lost partly because of technology. Technology has created a consumer’s democracy because it gives people a wide range of choices, and in order to have the consumer’s attention, companies need to find ways to relate/speak to small groups of people and individuals instead of trying to appeal to the masses/wider audiences. Therefore, it is important to know the individual and their individual groups. An interesting way to approach this could be analysing social networks (Zyman 1999).

Ollins (2003) defend that brands are ideally suited for the age of the global village. The branding mechanism was designed for and by modern techniques to sell products by creating and projecting simple and clear ideas, over and over again. Today, Branding has become more successful than what its creators expected.

Meyers and Gerstman defend that the Internet may have offered the perfect solution for marketers to solve their problems with communication with clients. It created opportunities to interface with individuals and small-targeted groups at any given moment. Even if a product is not marketed directly on the Internet, marketers use its channels to communicate a positive brand personality and increase its value towards consumers (Meyers, Herbert M. and Gerstman 2001).

Brand presence on the Internet has to have continuity and interface/ interact with other communication media in order to survive.

According to Meyers and Gerstman, some brands are classifiable as “Instant”. Such brands surface the Internet daily and have a short life span. While the benefits that the technology offers are captivating, in order for a brand to succeed it has to be developed and maintained with thoughtfulness, foresight and always in context with the target audience. So technology, if used frivolously, can work against the company itself (Meyers, Herbert M. and Gerstman 2001).

Upshaw (1995;p.10) states that “The splintering of conventional media and the advent of interactive communications has presented marketers with a two-edged blade: New media offers more opportunities to seed brand messages via narrow targeting, but they will also make it more difficult for many brands to efficiently reach large enough audiences to create profitable volume levels” (Upshaw 1995).

Although Marketers control the placement of their brands and

packages on store shelves, they cannot control it on the cyberspace, and this has become a major concern.

A brand is now the image of what consumers have of it; it is no longer what advertising agencies say it is. Modern-day branding has to adapt to an environment where consumers can talk to each other and their conversations are spread far and wide and are even archived and available to inform future users. There are consumers blogging about their preferences and how a company treated them, every day. Consumers can review and rate products and give each other feedback and recommendations. A brand shouting its message is no longer the only source of information; consumers have many other sources of trust and objective opinions (Zyman 1999).

A brand can say it is famous for great customer service, but the ultimate factor is going to be how consumers actually perceive the brand. How current consumers describe the brand to others has far greater weight in the minds of future consumers. Furthermore, digital channels break through information and geographic boundaries. Consumers can now compare features and prices of dozens of similar products, e.g., digital cameras. Consumers no longer rely on a few in-store selections and the limited information they provide. Consumers can also buy products that better suit their needs, even if those products are not available in local stores, turning to online businesses. Branding claims are *irrelevant*. Consumers are empowered now and will speak up (Conley, 2008).

We can say that a brand's reputation is earned over time and the brand is a symbol of this reputation, which helps new customers simplify their purchase decision. Fake brands, on the other hand, are the ones that fabricate what they think customers should think or feel about them; typically, they shout the loudest at consumers, writes (Conley 2009).

Branding has come to a point where it is hardly impossible to convey to all of the consumer's habits and expectations. So we need to innovate. "True innovation", as Conley (2009) refers to it, is hard work. However, we now have the tools and venues where feedback from customers is readily and continuously available. Advertisers can review user feedback, comments, and archived suggestions. Instead of branding, companies practice *brand stewardship*. Brand stewardship is defined as constantly being aware of what your customers think of your product and what they need. With this knowledge, advertisers are empowered to innovate products and services,

to substantiate their promise to customers and earn a reputation over time, i.e., the brand.

Conley introduces a new concept called *brand gravity*, which is the accumulated reputation that attracts new customers to buy and keeps current customers in orbit. The new branding process is true and rapid. It calls for continuous innovation, informed by real-time consumer feedback that leads to consistent delivery of stellar products and an earned brand reputation. That is why branding (as it is mostly done today, i.e., shouting made-up messages) is ineffective, irrelevant, irritating, now that there is a correct way to achieve *branding excellence* (Conley, 2008).

Storytelling is a concept that has arrived in branding literature, and has connections with Design. It is a touch point between subject areas that could benefit branding. It could be one of the answers to branding excellence. Storytelling and stories itself have been connected with user experience design as scenarios, storyboards, flow chats, personas and other techniques that are used to communicate how a new design will operate. As part of a user experience design, storytelling serves to ground the work in a real context. It enables design to connect with ideas for the people who will eventually use the product or service (Quesenberry, Whitney and Brooks 2010).

Design stories can be useful tools in several phases of the design process, including the design phase, the design communication or documentation phase and in formative evaluation (Parrish 2006). Many organizations try to manage corporate images through a mix of corporate advertising, corporate storytelling, customer relationships management and other marketing models referred above as well as marketing communication and public relations techniques (Hatch & Schultz 2003).

3. DESIGN STRATEGY IN SOCIAL MEDIA

Design strategy tunes team intelligence, creativity and makes a significant impact in customer's life, both functional and emotional. The design process is easy to follow but should be taken into the corporate plans and strategies in order to be at its full potential. The design approach is about combining the three gears of design with a *design mindset*, allowing the organization to discover ways of capitalize, explore new activities and set

strategies to evolve the business model (Fraser 2007).

Using Design strategy to develop tools for Social media is something that is being done with high levels of success. We illustrate this by presenting the case of Diesel [4] (see figure 2), which originated from a simple premise, in 2010. Diesel supplied their point of purchase stands and kiosks with a photographic camera, through which people that came to the store would take a picture of the product they were trying out, e.g., a sweater, or jeans. The customer would then be able to post the photo on their Facebook wall, showcasing the item. The photo would then be published on their Facebook profile wall and on the screen, where friends could comment, saying if they liked it or not. Diesel expected that the user's friends saw that this person was at the store to buy a product, and from then on they had a high grow on fans. What the company did not predict as the outcome of this campaign was the creation of a different social media concept on store. The campaign had a massive outcome in PR as it turned out to be a very effective advertising tool. 40% of the fans heard about the campaign from other places than the store, and other websites that had nothing to do with the communication strategy. Nowadays we cannot look at a social media strategy or digital strategy in an isolated way. This 'design storytelling experience' gives the consumer a sense of belonging and allows him to engage with the brand in a one-to-one perspective. We have to see how we can conjugate not only with our business but with our global communication strategy.



Figure 2: Diesel Social Media Campaign

It is generally accepted that it is important to have an online presence on the web, but how can business be sure that their brands are being relevant in all platforms? How can it maintain a position of relevance and consistency in all the different types of channels? The answer to this is Design strategy.

Because of the Internet, brand strategies have gone through significant transformations. In order to succeed in a computer mediated environment brands need to use design to build relationships, enable interactivity and better tailor offerings for the online world (Christodoulides 2009).

The social media presence needs to be developed strategically to coordinate the different views of the organization, its aims and activities, in order to plan the different opportunities that arise in social media and social networking. (McDonald 2007).

4. CONCLUSIONS

Combining Design in social media allows the design leader to better understand the consumer. Media channels might have been the marketing department's territory, but today it fits into the design leader skills as well. As the role of design in business gains importance, the role of the design manager in adapting design to this new media as well.

Design is the materialization of all thinking and was already important before social media came along, in traditional mediums such as advertising. Ultimately it is through image that we capture an audience, and channels like Facebook are very visual. Design about creating that first impact but also about developing the strategy that makes storytelling happen for the user. We need to fit the right images with the particulars of the different platforms. Design can create different synergies between platforms and allied with its branding knowledge can be a powerful asset.

Advertisement can no longer be understood as a monologue; there has to be a dialogue with the consumer. For that to happen, communication has to go online and it has to make sense in that medium. Designers have the tools, expertise and skills to make social media branding success a reality, whether it's through storytelling or other social media strategies. They can improve consumer's engagement with the brand; they can attract more customers and therefore generate more income. They also can make the brand more aware in people's minds and in their everyday lives, thus

improving brand equity in general. Designers are also experts at innovation and in delivering new technological or/and methodological approaches whether it is a new service design or a new product design. We believe that designers should be engaging in social media branding endeavors because they have management, strategy and creativity skills that, combined together with market knowledge and consumer reach, make up for the perfect social media entrepreneur.

To summarise then, design can create differentiation through branding and that can have a serious impact on consumer behaviour, which can help companies sell their services and/or products more efficiently. Design strategy incorporates cognition, emotion, message and also the social relationship with the consumer. Consumers have aesthetic preferences that may come from design principles and can be quite diverse according to their experience with design itself. Design in conjunction with brand identity development builds brand equity and brand architecture, all powerful assets in Social Media.

NOTES

- [1] http://www.nike.com/us/en_us/c/nikeid, accessed on 18/01/2014
- [2] Is a business model by which a company integrates both offline (bricks) and online (clicks) presences.
- [3] Is an e-commerce business model from the click (online) to the bricks (store).
- [4] http://allfacebook.com/diesel-cam-brings-facebook-to-the-fitting-room_b14236 accessed on 17/01/2014

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2nd CAMBRIDGE ACADEMIC DESIGN MANAGEMENT CONFERENCE, 4 – 5 SEPTEMBER 2013

The impact of design in social media today

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Keywords: *design, social media*

Social Media is becoming increasingly important as a global information space, holding more than a billion users; it is transforming the way we interact with everything. Little has been said about the importance of Design as a research tool in social media and its influence on how we communicate with brands and markets by shaping it into a different and new type of market, that both users and brands are trying to understand.

A lot has been researched about social media: what is it used for, what companies can gain from using it, how to engage with customers in social media, different social media strategies one can use. However, design and designers have been ‘left out’ of the often vague and dispersed literature. This paper aims to collect that information in the form of a literature review, followed by an online survey done with design and marketing experts. Aiming to clarify these two areas: social media and design management and possibly enrich future research.

Aims

The aim of this research is to identify the importance of design when branding for social media. Social media concerns branding and a study shows that 82 % of managers in America use it as a branding tool. (Herder, 2009). As social media is emerging as an important tool for both branding and design it becomes increasingly important to define and understand its importance regarding these areas.

It has become clear that the designer has a substantial knowledge base related to Brands and Marketing. Understanding of the role of Design in Branding and in the different design disciplines is

very important. The use of social media by brands is becoming a challenge for designers, as they are designing social media spaces, and the look and feel and content of this is ruled by marketing. There is little academic research on the use of social media in branding and design. Therefore this thesis investigates the role of design as a custodian promoting brands within the social space.

Underpinning the work presented are five research questions:

What is the role of design when branding in social media?

What design skills are necessary to work in branding for social media?

Is design strategy similar in any way to social media strategy?

What value does design bring to branding for social media?

What roles will designers play in the future of social media?

Literature Review - Branding today

In the article “ The lure of global branding” by the Harvard Business Review Journal (1999) it is said that most companies are viewing the world as their potential global market, and that brand builders want to globalize their own brands in a worldwide dimension, following what appears to be a market trend.

The world is facing globalization and this will impact brands as well. With the economy changing we are shifting from the service economy of the late 20th century in the “experience economy” or, as the Nomura Economic Research Institute describes it: “The age of creativity”.

Brands need to match the shifts expressed by the economic model and develop experiential customer interfaces. These will fall into the 5 I's brand dimensions of: identify, inform, imagine, immerse and intrigue. Businesses need to define a balanced strategy for the bricks-to-clicks paradigm, as well as the new economy of clicks-to-bricks. They need to create synergy across the traditional and the new media rather than remain purely with one. Ellwood (2002).

Although Marketers control the placement of their brands (products and services) and packages on store shelves, they cannot control it on the cyberspace and this has become a major concern.

A brand is now the image of what consumers have of it; it's no longer what advertising agencies say it is. Modern-day branding has to adapt to an environment where consumers can talk to each other and their conversations are spread far and wide and are even archived and available to inform future users. Everyday there are consumers blogging about their preferences, about how a company treated them. Consumers can review and rate products and give each other feedback and recommendations. A brand shouting its message is no longer the only source of information; consumers have many other sources of trust and objective opinions.

Design has become global, the new capitalist context generation of design consumer's is emerging and the remit of design practice has been there during the same period. It is no longer perceived as the

"added value" of objects, rather it could be for example planning and shaping digital interfaces for computer games or the creation of a country's public image. Julier (2008).

Aiga (2011) believes that Designers are ideal to understand the human-centred solutions that can help people's lives.

Designers bring empathy and creativity to social challenges. The first helps to understand the human-centred solutions that can make a real difference in real people's lives; creativity can defeat habits with innovative approaches to making a measurable difference. It is the designer's approach to the process of solving complex problems, particularly in the willingness to test risky options that transcend the traditional view of problems, that is a strategic advantage. Every designer is encouraged to become engaged with socially relevant projects in order to use their creative talents to their highest and best purpose and to demonstrate the value of designers and design thinking.

According to Greenfield and Yan (2006) Internet is a powerful tool in social research. The newest phenomenon of online social network is now considered a new field of inquiry in the sciences (Herring, Scheidt, Wright, & Bonus, 2005; Mee, 2006). The phenomenon is rapidly changing as technology improves and takes social networks to a whole new different level. As research advances there is a distinction between personal blogs and social networks sites. Williams, Amanda L., and Merton, Michael J. (2008).

Tapscott and Williams (2006) consider social networks part of a wider trend in communication and call it "mass collaboration". Features like "transparency, peer collaboration, audience participation and globalization are changing markets", so companies like YouTube or MySpace are very important. Wikipedia is described as influencing the communication of brands, fashion, markets, ideas and ideology by shaping a new type of market.

Jenkins (2006) characterizes it as convergence culture: media convergence, participatory culture and collective intelligence (Jenkins, 2006:2). Social media was developed in this unique convergence of these parameters.

This social media ecosystem has its focus on the consumer experience. Social networks are all about experiences says Mike DiLorenzo, director of social media marketing and strategy for the NHL. The experiences begin when marketers can successfully incorporate integrated marketing communication strategies into social media and combine them with traditional media. A lot of companies create social media platforms and operate them independently, not as an integrated strategy that brings the consumers experiences forefront. Social media does not replace traditional media but it can expand marketing's ability to engage with consumers and achieve their attention and influence. Hanna R., Rohm A. , Crittenden V.(2011).

Nowadays interactions between companies and consumers are quite different then they were twenty or ten years ago. The whole dynamic has changes and now consumers are dictating the rules, as they influence brand messages and meaning, their opinions are regarded when thinking about a product or a service .Hanna R., Rohm A. , Crittenden V.(2011).

It has become politically incorrect to say that design has real strategic value. Reynders, Hendrik (2003). Although several studies have reported otherwise (Porter, 1985; Stabell & Fjeldstad, 1998; Borja de Mozota, 2003) , design is reportedly one of the first things that some companies cut when there is a financial set back. Best, Phil (2008) believes there are two different strategies existing in the current marketplace: low-cost producers and those who use design as a way to differentiate their offer to add meaning and value to shoppers, consumers and sellers. I would include a third one: companies who use design to differentiate their offer to add meaning and value and them produce their products/services in low costs.

Designers can work on solutions for mobility, communication, knowledge and identity (Cooper and Press, 2003) but also develop the corporate identity of a company; it also designs saleable products and operating environments. (Cooper and Press, 2003). So it is safe to say that social media spaces are part of these environments? Designers should be involved in the developments of social media approaches because that is one of the things design does best – design and operate environments. Social media is just another environment that might follow the brand's short and long-term strategies or have a specific strategy of its own. Bearing in mind the previous, what are designers actually doing in social media? Firstly, the social media professional is not called a designer, although he might actually do a designer's work. Secondly, the typecast for a social media person is usually admittedly around the areas of business, e-commerce, public relationships, strategy management or community management.

According to Haig, Matt (2003) brand failure on the Internet has become a norm and companies who do make a profit are seen as “freaks”. Not being on the Internet is no longer an option and the companies that do not have a presence online are putting their brand position in danger. So why are brands failing so much on the Internet? Brands have the tendency to see the Internet, and by extension, social media, as a separate communication medium or sales channel. What happens is that social media and Internet strategies should be a part of the companies short and long term design strategy plan. Social media has a very particular way of delivering messages to the consumer and a potential of engaging him in a conversation about brands, whether that happens on the back of his mind, subconsciously or when he's an active participant and shares, comments and “likes” brand content. Brands are afraid of social media because it can easily fall out of their control. But is not that happening already? Whether there is a brand presence online or not? Aren't consumers now holding the key that opens a communication channel between them and brands? So how can Design, that has been so ‘out’ of the whole business strategy planning decisions, help build a solid foundation for social media channels to communicate their brand in a more valuable way?

Approach

Each study type must have a number of important factors accommodated in order to describe the research methods effectively. Steps for how the study will be conducted must answer the vital questions: who, what, where, when, why and how (Gay et al., 2006; Isaac & Michael, 1981; Leedy & Ormrod, 2005; Yin, 1984) and (Levy & Ellis, 2006). This paper focuses on the online survey that was done for the PhD thesis.

We considered most research methods before deciding on the approach necessary to undertake this study. We preferred Internet pooling to mailing questionnaires to participants and aimed to develop

on the topics that came out of the pilot study. The focus of this study is to answer the proposed research questions and aims to investigate into the role of design and designers in branding for social media

Pilot Study

In order to fulfil a range of important functions and get valuable insights from experts a need for a pilot study was determinant. More discussion about the subject at hands improves the process and provides better outcomes. Conducting a pilot study can give warning in advance in the case of project faults, inadequate research protocols and whether the methods are appropriate or too complicated. (Baker 1994: 182-3). Pilot studies can also improve the validity of the proposed questionnaire.

In the pilot study a survey regarding the use of social media by companies in general was developed, it revolved around five questions, from those answers a table of conclusions was made and analysed which led to a better understanding of the value of design and marketing in social media but also a better understanding of social media and why it is so largely used by companies and for what purposes is it being used for.

We choose the social survey method because it collects date in a standardized way from a specific sample of participants. This enables the data to be later codified into a quantitative form. We conducted face-to-face interviews and Internet surveys, there are also telephone surveys. The internet survey was a self- completion online questionnaire which enables us to collect a large amount of data in a statistical form from a number of people in a relatively short time. This questionnaire was sent out through email and the interviewer could read the questions and fill in the questionnaire in their own pace. In this case questionnaire design was quite important to get to the right answers. Although response rates on electronic surveys are a bit problematic, people find it easy to respond as it is confidential. In face-to-face interviews it can be hard to manage the field force of interviewers. These methods were organized in a logical and systematic fashion through the questionnaire design up to the face-to-face interviews. When the research is carried out properly the researchers influence is null, the researcher is able to be objective.

Sampling

In the specific case of this study there weren't many professionals to consider a large statistical population. Since the area of research is fairly recent both professionals from Design, Marketing and Managements were involved in our sampling. We sampled both UK and Portuguese professionals that were either: freelance workers dealing with branding for social media and had their own portfolio of clients, professionals who work for companies that do branding for social media and are part of the social media department and professionals who have their own company and/or are part of a department who deals with social media.

The population was defined by including all the people who deal with social media, work with social media on a regular basis. We tried to search for company through some keywords and once we found a professional they have often recommended another person they knew did a similar job. From that we were able to develop a representative sample based on a subset of that population. It was interesting to find that using social media to reach social media professionals was very profitable in

terms of interviewee response and the people who were contacted by that method usually replied positively to do a further in depth interview.

Survey Analysis

The survey questionnaire is composed by three open response items, two of them fill-in and short and the other question for a longer answer. Two other questions were multiple choice ones and the other five consist of a five point likert scales.

These questionnaires were mailed to the respective participants and messaged through social media networks such as Twitter and LinkedIn. This survey collected a total of 104 answers.

The survey was available from *April 19 2012*, to *April 9 2013*. There are 103 valid responses.

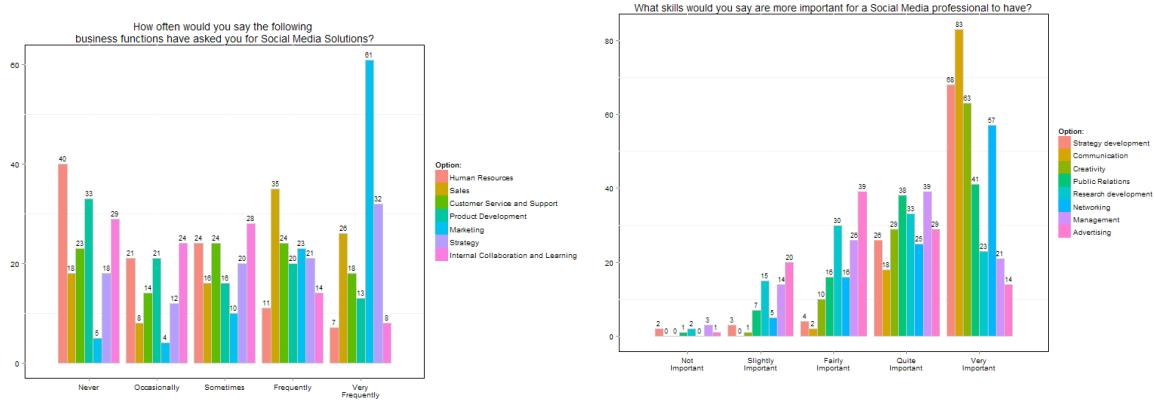
Data Description

Each question has several options, and each option can be answered with a specific rank (apart from Question 1, the ranks have 5 ordered values). For each question we use the median as the measure of central tendency. The data is interpreted as ordinal. The Median Absolute Deviation (MAD) informs about the absolute deviation of each score. It is determined by $MAD = \text{median}(|X_i - \text{median}(X_j)|)$, with X_i a score, and $\text{median}(X_j)$ the median of scores. To describe the probable variation of each answer in the population, the confidence interval used is 95%. The tables show both lower (2.5%) and upper (97.5%) limits, i.e., we can be 95% sure that a random answer from the population will not fall outside the limits. To simplify the confidence interval columns, the ranks are encoded as numbers, according with each question.

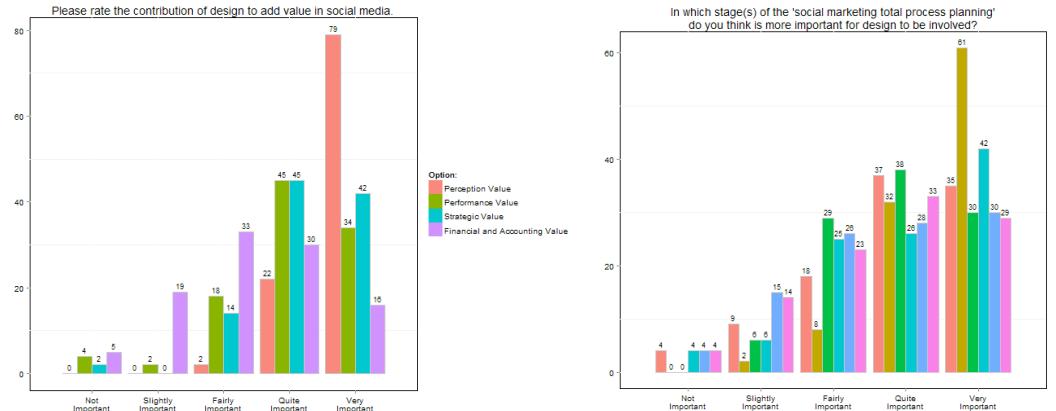
Each plot shows the number of answers for a question. The number of answers with a particular rank for a particular option are represented by a single bar. At the top of the bar is the corresponding absolute number of answers.

Key Findings

The majority of participants were involved in social media (91,3%). Marketing, Strategy and Sales were the areas within the company that resort more to social media solutions according to the survey.



When questioned about which skills were necessary to be working in social media participants referred: Communication, Strategy development and Creativity as the top three. When it came down to determine the value that design adds to social media most participants agreed it was in fact the perception value, followed by performance value, then strategic value and lastly financial and accounting value. All of the referred phases of the social media total marketing process were considered to be quite important except for the primary development, which was considered to be very important. This means that design in the primary development stage has more relevance for the whole social process.



It came with no surprise that Facebook was the social media network that clients were more eager to be working with, followed by Twitter, YouTube and the company's own social media website. Lastly we have Flickr and Foursquare. Also mentioned but not analysed were Pinterest and Instagram who at the start of this survey were only in their early stages, Pinterest being just at a beta stage. Although Google+ is referred as having a well made and functional design by some of the interviewees it only has a slight interest in the eyes of clients, this could be due to the lack of people interacting in that space as compared to Facebook or Twitter for example.

Survey Conclusions

This survey provided good feedback from the participants regarding the importance of design in social media. All of the participant confirm design's importance and some of them mentioned that design has a limited influence due to how the platforms are designed nowadays. Some participants believe that the current network websites do not allow for real engagement with the audience and there is a need to redesign those interfaces. Design is also crucial to create consistency through out all media. Storytelling helps to bring people closer to the brand and that makes it more engaging to the user. Design can work as a differentiator and amplify interaction between brands and clients/fans.

Although design has been proven to add financial value to a brand it is sometimes neglected to minimize costs. Most participants believe good design equals trust and there is a higher chance for it to be shared or liked. Due to its strength in both communication and visual appeal design is a major competitive advantage. Design thinking is a critical element because it gives shape to ideas and is critical to all effective communications. The aesthetics and friendliness of social media networks are highly dependable on design, and they need to attract as many people as possible. Perceptions of a product or service are influence by their design and need to reflect the DNA of the brand.

Graphic appearance was mentioned a lot by the participants; because design as a layered discipline is used in every single piece of information in social media. Social media is very visual and that is why content design is so important. In the online world it only takes from 4 to 8 seconds to impress the audience. Eye-catching graphics are crucial for this process and they need to look consistent and professional.

Strategy wise design is essential because it maximises the impact of messaging and drives the overall effectiveness of social engagement. Design allows for continual reassessment of strategy and goals and that can give a higher impact on the outcomes of social media campaigns. It allows for evaluation and problem solving in the overall social media strategy, playing an important role during the social media implementation.

User experience and interaction are vital to social media and these are important design areas that can determine the success of a social media platform. There is the need to craft experiences with the users who are visually overwhelmed by all sorts of images around them.

We also learned how design could be of importance in the different stages of the social media marketing total process model. Participants agree that design is relevant in all stages but its even more important on the primary development phase, which consists of Marketing Mix, Messages, Creative Segmentation, Pre-Testing and Adjustment. This survey also allowed us to understand which skills are necessary to be working in social media and we see that the top three: Strategy development, Communication and Creativity are all highly important skills that designers already have and are very familiar with. We could even say those are the top three skills necessary to be a designer.

This new era of social media has taught both marketers and designers important a new truth: You no longer control how consumers perceive your brand. What matters most today is not what you say about your brand — it's what consumers say about it. It is a problem for both designers and marketers to understand how to integrate these multiple platforms, the different types of consumers and their behaviour, because not all of them engage with social media in the same way. Hanna R., Rohm A. , Crittenden V.(2011).

We've learned from the data analysis that companies who are able to expand their ability to engage with consumers achieve their attention and later influence will be have more success in creating a relevant branding positioning. . Hanna R., Rohm A. , Crittenden V.(2011).

The role of designers is becoming more and more important as the "world" tries to approach different communication platforms such as the Internet and more recently social media networks.

Considering that social networks are part of a wider trend in communication called 'mass collaboration', it is of the upmost importance for design to be involved. Social media is influencing the communication of brands, fashion, markets, ideas and ideology by shaping a new type of market that designers should be aware of. Tapscott and Williams (2006)

Globalization only increased the relevance of branding. With new communication channels like social networks brands are able to connect faster and reach a larger audience of people. Kotler and Pfoertsch, 2006, p. 35. With this we have hyper competition which makes branding an efficient tool to differentiate from competitors in the long-term (Kotler and Pfoertsch, 2006, p. 37).

In order to build a strong brand DNA, design has to be involved. Design's ability to perform branding solutions has proven to add ROI (return on investment) to a company. There has to be an input to the brand proposition and personality in the whole experience. Having a strong identifier helps add value to the brand and keep them relevant in consumer's minds.

Of course there are the obvious limitations of social media on brands, Facebook and Twitter cannot be personalized to better interact with the brand and consumer. Something that was referenced a lot during the interviews and survey. An organization can put their logo and other limited visual branding both on Facebook and Twitter but it's still confined in the website's interface, "...limiting the semiotic effect that traditional offline branding efforts might have on users. The visual cue of the brand is greatly lessened." Yan, Jack (2011). So does that mean that the design influence regarding the 'visual' is limited?

The visual side of branding is important and it's part of the design spectrum of tasks but it's not the only think that design can offer to brands in social media.

As more then ever, brands need to build a connection with users based on engagement itself, like referred before it has to be about experiences and storytellers. Designers are the best at crafting experiences and creating an intrinsic web of storytelling for the consumer.

But we cannot forget that design management is crucial to the task of branding for social media, things like design strategy are being masked as marketing strategy or social media marketing strategy.

Design not only creates value for businesses and gives them a competitive advantage it is also an investment in innovation, positioning, branding and communication that can increase customer trust, loyalty and market share. Design thinking helps deal with the complexities of this changing era of social media and ads creative solutions. Human-centred Design gives that competitiveness edge needed to gain market share and consumers attention. Design is of critical important as a strategic asset and it has proven to be more effective when implemented early in corporate plans, not only as

visual beautification. Research has shown relationships between design and strategy that go beyond the link between design and product. This comes to show the importance of design management in companies today, especially in a highly communicative area such as social media. Borja de Mozota (2003). The design process is valuable and relevant to the use of social media, whether designing look and feel of background pages or undertaking a strategic approach. 'Interview quote.'

Implications for theory/practice

Author Fraser, Heather (2007) believes that any brand or organization will benefit from a 'designer way' perspective. Design strategy tunes team intelligence, creativity and makes a significant impact in customer's life, both functional and emotional. The design process is easy to follow but should be taken into the corporate plans and strategies in order to be at its full potential. The design approach is about combining the three gears of design with a 'design mindset', allowing the organization to discover ways of capitalize, explore new activities and then set the strategies to evolve their business model.

Engagement was a crucial theme in both the interviews and the survey. Design is highly important in order to build a relationship that occurs with every interaction between two people, in real or digital life. Users today are desensitized and visually overwhelmed, and that's when good design strategy and good design takes over.

Design concerns the user experience and interaction part of social media as well. It deals with the projects usability and product desirability. It has helped connect and build relationships between brands and consumers since the ideas for the company started. In social media there is a need to craft experiences on a daily basis, content is king and design is a fundamental tool for storytelling. In order to make the story effective it has to embody the brand. Its uniqueness must be noticeable and be able to inspire people to share and eventually buy from it.

Kowitz, Braden (2013) talks about story centred design and its connection to social media explaining how designers present every sentence the customer reads, every action they take, and every screen its generated in response. The design follows a customer from the initial point through completing a goal, and shows how the design supports every step of it. These techniques are used for mobile apps, marketing websites, analytics dashboards and enterprise.

We have seen that the strategic value of design includes contributions from all design disciplines, beyond just industrial design within production. Designers can implement a firm's strategy by creating "ideas, products and product positions for a world where people's buying decisions are influenced by emotion, fashion and context... They do not study the market with the objectivity of a scientist [but] become part of it." [Francis 2001]. Successful design-led companies apply and integrate design values to all aspects of the business, internal and external [Design Council 2005, 2006], to really understand their customers, and forge a unique relationship with them. Creating long-term emotional connections with customers in social media and in business in general has not been valued as highly as technological innovation or aesthetic design, but in mature markets it is increasingly important. Stevens, John, Moultrie, James and Crilly, Nathan (2006).

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