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Social Media Marketing in Small Businesses

Case: Social Media Marketing Approaches of a small company in Netherlands.

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Table of Contents

LIST OF FIGURES

LIST OF TABLE

UNIVERSITY OF VAASA

Faculty of Business Studies	
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ABSTRACT

The main aims of this study are to understand what called social media, social media marketing and how small businesses nowadays are doing with this. This research is going to discover social media marketing (objectives, strategy, and tactics) for small businesses as well as a measurable tool to optimize this. The objectives of the study are to clarify the extent of social media, social media marketing, and the benefits as well as drawbacks of using social media in marketing for small businesses.

The theoretical part of the study is based on literature of social media marketing as well as previous studies on social media marketing. The research method is a case study with exploratory approach. The empirical data was gathered by conducting interviews with who have responsible of managing marketing and social media activities in companies.

The case study part of the research analyzed the findings of the studying concerning the links between social media and marketing in small businesses. It provides insights on how a company can use social media as marketing tool in Dutch market. More specifically, the case study part attempts to explore how a small business starts executing marketing through social media and which opportunities as well as challenges social media marketing creates for those companies. In addition, the findings will describe details these social media marketing activities in a Dutch company so that the readers can themselves perceive whether social media marketing can work effectively for small businesses or not. This part also discusses the way in which small businesses might evaluate their marketing through social media.

As a result of the thesis, suggestions for social media marketing actions are introduced to these companies. As a conclusion, the case company is recommended to move forward with the suggestions for next steps in social media marketing.

KEYWORDS: Social Media, Social Media Marketing, Small Business.

1 INTRODUCTION

In this beginning chapter, the readers will understand the reason behind the choice of this research problem in the background of the study. A brief explanation of the objectives of the study as well as research questions will immediately follow. After that, the structure of this thesis will be discussed and conclude the chapter.

1.1 Study background

It is the fact that Internet has changed our lives as well as world since it was invented in one century ago. "Internet is the most significant factor makes our world being flat. It is no longer the borders or boundaries exist among countries and people. We're now living in a socially connected world." Thomas Friedman – the author of book bestseller The World is Flat – stated. Specially, in term of doing business, no one can deny the hugely extraordinary power of Internet. Online Marketing has increasingly become a fertilized area for almost businesses all over the world. Indeed, there is a deal of various tools that Online Marketing is offering for companies, such as search engine marketing (SEM), search engine optimization (SEO), banner ads on specific websites, email marketing, mobile advertising or Web2.0 strategies. Additionally, during Internet's existence, the characteristics of the Internet have changed and it has become a more interactive platform than it was previously. People are increasingly discovering the new communicative possibilities that the Internet can offer. Carton (2009) indicates that social media are Internet-based technologies that facilitate conversation. As the result, marketers know that the consumers are no longer connecting to the Internet only in order to find information on different web pages but also contributing to discussions with their own opinions, experiences or other types of content. They are now all connected with the firms and other users with purposes for sharing information, knowledge, and opinions in the world of social media.

According to Vollmer and Precourt (2008), consumers are turning away from the traditional sources of advertising, such as radio and television, and that they consistently demand more control over their media consumption. Consumers require on-demand and immediate access to information at their own convenience, and that consumer are turning more frequently to various types of social media to conduct their information

searches and to make their purchasing decisions (Vollmer and Precourt 2008, 30-35.) Furthermore, Mangold and Faulds (2009) also explicate that people are witnessing an explosion of internet-based messages transmitted through these media. These have become major factors influencing different aspects of consumer behavior including awareness, information acquisition, purchase behavior, opinions and post-purchase communication (Mangold and Faulds 2009, 358). In some recent researches, they have highlighted that there are estimated 3.5 billion word-of-mouth conversation occurring around the world each day, in detail about 2.3 billion of them – roughly two out of three – make a reference to a brand, product, or service. And manifestly thanks to the growth of digital social media, word of mouth is spreading itself both farther and faster. This use of the social Web is increasingly important to marketers (Evan 2008, 41). Consumers perceive social media as a much more trustworthy source of information regarding products and services than corporate-sponsored communications transmitted via the traditional elements of the promotion mix (Foux, 2006). Consequently, utilizing social network might be considered as one of the most booming strategy for firms in these recent years. Once the time people spend on social networks is growing incredibly, it's a precise time for companies to adapt to social media marketing. Indeed, there is no doubt to state that social media nowadays is big and getting bigger.

Because of the growth of social media, there are many studies has been conducted. One interesting thing should be highlighted is that the number of small business utilizing social media has soared dramatically. Lots of small business owner confirm that though social media trends have been introduced lately that are very well worth considering for their business.

According to the 2010 Social Media Marketing Industry Report, 74 percent of the small business owners surveyed say social media has helped them close business and 85 percent say that it has created buzz for their business. Indeed social media is no longer a curiosity on the horizon but a significant part of companies' marketing mix (Sterne, 2010: xix). "Tough market conditions mandate small businesses to think and act creatively to sustain themselves" Connie Steele, director of Network Solutions, a provider of online services for small business explained for this phenomenon. "Social Media can be the best friend for small business owners who constantly seek new ways

to maximize productivity while keeping costs low. As validated by the SBSI, it is not a question of why small business use social media but rather when the adoption rate will accelerate this year". Since these companies participate to social networks as Facebook, Twitter, Linkedin, Youtube, Wordpress, etc, they are able to achieve an abundant of advantages from social media. Everything nevertheless has both sides; social media is not an exception. In other sides, the up-to-date researches also indicate that social media could kill businesses quickly, especially smaller ones. Some might not know that social media can be a scary prospect for small business; unlike traditional marketing methods, social media puts part of the message in the hands of customers. In addition, most of small business may not able to measure their social media marketing. This could lead to a seriously faulty consequence for these businesses and where the research problem thesis arises.

It urges the significance of doing social media in marketing in a small organization. As it can be seen once social networks such as Twitter, YouTube, LinkedIn, Facebook, etc… are ubiquitous, it is probably easy for a small firm go social. However, in reality it shows that these social media incidents raise a question for all small businesses in general and their marketing managers in particular: ***How Social Media should be incorporated into an existing a small business plan or How they can utilize Social Media as Marketing tool in a Marketing plan effectively?***

In order to learn how social media can be used to full extend in interaction and engaging in a small business marketing, the research is going to spotlight the facets of social media's concept, to find out what opportunities and risks the social media marketing offers for the company, and how the customer's decision making process is influenced by social media. There is also need to define the tactics and tools, and identify the right assessment tools for establishing a solid ground for the social media marketing planning process.

1.2 Research problem and Research gap

1.2.1   Research problem

With the social networking sites popping up everywhere, the idea of applying it for small businesses comes to mind naturally. In reality, small business continues to

embrace social media. There is almost universal awareness among small business owners of Facebook and Twiteer, while half are aware of Linkedin. The growth in social media is not cutting into investments in company websites, and is actually contributing to their expansion. Utilizing social media for small businesses has become a booming topic for many researchers. Social media has been defined in many ways and also the role of social media in small business has been mentioned. However, the effectiveness of using social media in businesses has been little known in these researches, especially a strategic vision for how social media can contribute to building a business have not yet to be fully explored. Furthermore, although there are many researchers mentioning the role of social media in small business, it is still big gap once the advantages and disadvantages of social media have been not gathered enough in one study.

Social media has offered a way for consumers and peers to take charge of their lives, the people in it, and the products that they use. The takeover of social media has shifted marketing and caused managers to completely reconsider the focus of their jobs. In my point of view, in order to deepen your knowledge regards of social media marketing or making a social media marketing strategy, business owners should know how social media can influence on marketing mix, whether it could add or change four traditional Ps. This is also an emerging issue that has not covered in previous researches.

One the other hand, a common question among small business owners who are considering the leap to social media is whether the time spent will actually translate into the growth of business. While many studies have examined how large businesses use social networking, very little has been done to see how smaller business utilize it. The research wants to understand how small business owners are using social media, and if they are seeing a return in investment for their time spent on social media.

In truth, the number of small business owners who understand, use and capitalize on social media marketing is minuscule. Some just try to out itself in this filed without knowing what they have to conduct. However, in the studies, researchers have trend to count the steps in social media marketing in general rather than focusing on small business. According to this aspect, this paper intends to research the necessary steps for a small business strategize social media marketing.

1.2.2 Research gap

Most of the researchers have focused on the facets of social media. A long list of social media tools is presented in the literature. Social media is mainly considered as beneficial to organizations, especially in term of building relationship between them and their customers or prospects. However, researchers seemly overlapped and lacked either the characteristics of social media or the sustainable roles of social media regarding to marketing. This thesis this is going to delineate the crucial aspects of social media so that the readers could conceive why marketers tend to implement it in marketing. Moreover, according to many recent researches, the number of small business using social media is increasing extraordinary but most of studies had trend to discuss the role of social media in general organization, and normally researchers conducted their study in big corporations. Thus, this study aims at highlighting the position of social media within small-sized business and these significant aspects of social media marketing must be taken into account once organizations make a decision going social.

The role of social media marketing in small business is a topic that has not been much studied. Research often carried on social media marketing in general and dismissed the fast growth of social media in small business. Moreover, since social media is concerned as a booming trend in business world, there are many small businesses engaging into Social Media Marketing without planning or equipping enough source of knowledge. They normally entered to these social media tools and then did not know what they should conduct in the next steps. As the result, this study is going to examine this issue and desire to build up an effective social media marketing strategy for small businesses.

In addition, most of research concentrated on social media's advantages to organizations and rarely discussed its disadvantages. The research hence will approach the standing of social media in small business both benefits and drawbacks.

Furthermore, one of the most challenges confronting marketers is how to measure the success or failure of social media marketing. However, in many precedent studies, the social measurable tools are still controversial. This paper consequently is going to argue the major circumstances regarding to evaluate social media marketing.

1.3 Interest of the topic

Finding out whom your customers are and how they like to be served is essential for the success of any business. Social media platform can help business owners quickly access that information because every minute, hour and month, more and more people – young and old, around the world – take to their computers or mobile devices to connect with friends, post their opinions, and engage in conversation. It's not understatement to say that social media has equally captured the attention of companies of large and small with great promises. Thus it's absolutely vital for business leaders to understand this phenomenon and determine what they need to do to prepare their organizations to thrive at a time when customers wield more power and influence over business than ever before.

While it's true that big brands have bigger budgets, a larger staff and far greater assets at their disposal, small business could gain a number of unique advantages from social media with lower cost. Having number of profiles spread out among various social media sites may help small organizations. By extending companies' presence on other sites, especially those of high "quality" and building links from those sites back to companies, business owners can help elevate companies' ranking in research results and thus increase exposure for their small business. Moreover, by using social to proactively find and build relationships with customers, small businesses may be able to turn them into fans to help deflect and negative opinions that may arise. Consequently, social media presents an incredible opportunity to generate brand awareness among targeted audience. More than a broadcast tool, social media offers a unique opportunity to network online and build business. Business owners might find partners, customers, investors, and employees through social media platforms. In addition, social media can be a great learning tool, by knowing what customers are talking about products and services – or better yet – giving them a place to do on company's site, business owner can find new areas for improvement or innovation. Not only learning from customers, small company could have competitive research. Although their competitors may already be using social media more effectively, the upside is that what their competitors are doing and saying, or what customers are saying about them can lead small business owners find ways to differentiate their brand and get better results. With limited amount

of money for marketing, branding or communication, small business now could count on social media tools. However, given these benefits, it's worthwhile noting that all social media tools are not right for every small business. While it may offer a less-expensive marketing option, social media marketing can sometimes cost more in time than in money. That's why it's so crucial for small businesses to know what social media disadvantages are. Social media needs for intensive labor. If companies intend to build a brand and a name through social media, they must be ready to spend time updating their audience on all the relevant issues. Using social media marketing could be more time and human consuming than companies expect. Moreover, social media may even damage companies' reputation or image quickly once companies make mistakes about their products or services. Social media platform could spread out the news with extraordinary speed.

The tools we use to create social media (blogging, podcasting, video, social networks, etc.) are great at building potential relationships, growing community, serving an audience, helping people find your business, and several other things. But social media tools alone are not especially built to carve out more productive customers on their own. That still requires a strategy that includes surrounding marketing and products to help convert potential segments of the community into potential business customers.

The research is particularly aimed the majorly important factors social can affect on small business development or marketing strategy as well as the advantages and drawbacks of social media to small companies. In order to find the way to improve social media marketing for a small business, the necessary conditions in term of measuring social media have been taken into account.

1.4 Research objectives, questions

1.4.1 Research objective

The general topic of this Master Thesis is Social Media Marketing. The objectives of this thesis are to provide insights how a small business can use Social Media as a marketing tool in consumer marketing. The outcome of this research will provide a comprehensive picture of how the company can utilize social media in its marketing.

Therefore, the aim of the thesis is to better understand the characteristics of social media and the role of social media marketing in small businesses. The influence of social media' facets on small organizations have to be analyzed. The benefits and drawbacks of social media marketing are explained in this paper as well.

One of ultimate objectives of this study is to find out the criteria to help small businesses planning effectively suitable social media marketing. Moreover, there are many tools in social media that small business is able to use for its social media marketing. Hence, the research intends to offer a guideline for a small business for marketing activities through social media. The final aim for the study is to emphasize the important scales in a measurable tool for social media marketing.

Briefly, the research dedicates to small business owners who are looking for any way to engage prospective customers as well as expand their image at the lowest costs possible through social media marketing.

The Empirical Objective will be as follows:

- To analyze how Social media marketing is utilized in a Dutch small business.
- To analyze how Social media marketing performance is.

1.4.2 Research questions

Based on the research problem, a main research question can be identified

➢ How can a small business do marketing through social media including: objectives, strategies, and tactics?

To clarify, the criteria of defining objectives, strategies and tactics are considerably important in executing social media marketing. The theoretical knowledge is used to give insights on which specific objectives; strategies and tactics can be used in social media marketing.

In order to answer the main research question, this research will answer the sub-questions below:

- What's social media?

- What's social media marketing?
- What opportunities and challenges small business meets when using Social media marketing?

It's the fact that consumers now are using a variety of social media so a small business could use together different types of them. This landscape will comprise of various opportunities and challenges for a small business. The literature analysis aims to describe social media, diverse categories of social media, how these are used among consumers, and the differences in Social media marketing. In addition, the literature analysis provides a fundamental of opportunities and challenges of utilizing social media in marketing of a small business.

- What key indicators can a small business use in measuring the impact of Social media marketing in its performance?

In order to carry out social media through marketing, a small business must know how to measure the impact of this to its performance. The literature analysis is used to identify what measurable factors are utilized in Social media marketing.

All of the results from literature review are compared with the out comes from interviews with the marketing professionals in the selected companies.

1.5 Structure of the study

The present study is divided up into 5 main chapters as indicated in Figure 1. The first chapter provides general introduction for the study. Chapter 2 forms the theoretical framework. Chapter 3 and 4 introduce research methods and empirical analysis, and the last 5th chapter establishes summary, conclusions and managerial implications. More in depth introduction of all chapters is offered below.

The first chapter of the study, as mentioned above, is an introduction to the research. This chapter discusses the general ideas of the study, which is related to previous studies, interest of research, research problem, research objectives, and research structure.

The second chapter provides the theoretical framework of the study. In this chapter, the

main theories, concepts and terms concerning social media in marketing is discussed in more in depth.

The third chapters describe the methodology of the study. The research approach, the data collection process and background information of the respondents are explained. The way data are analyzed is also presented. The chapter finally discusses the reliability and validity of the research.

The fourth chapter details the findings of the research. They are analyzed, interpreted and presented in different themes. Some citations are added to illustrate the explanation. The last chapter presents the major results and concludes the study. The results emerge from the comparison and combination of previous research with the findings. The contribution of the study and its implications are presented. Finally, suggestions to further research are made.

Table 1. Structure of the Study

RESEARCH SETTING	→	**Chapter 1** INTRODUCTION
THEORETICAL SETTING	→	**CHAPTER 2** ▪ What is Social Meida? ▪ What is Social Media Marketing? ▪ What opportunities and challenges Social Media Marketing could bring to a small business? ▪ How Social Media Marketing can be used in a small business? (Objectives, Strategies, Tools and Measurements)
RESEARCH METHOD AND EMPIRICAL ANALYSIS	→	**CHAPTER 3** RESEARCH METHODOLOGY **CHAPTER 4** EMPIRICAL ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS
CONCLUSIONS AND MANAGERIAL IMPLICATIONS	→	**CHAPTER 5** SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND MANAGERIAL

2   LITERATURE REVIEW

In this chapter, the theoretical framework for the study is presented. The chapter introduces social media and the social media's categories. How social media can be used in marketing, what opportunities and challenges social media marketing brings to a company, and how the social media effects on the purchase decision of customers. A set of goals, strategies and tools that can be utilized in social media marketing, and different measurements of social media marketing will be presented in this chapter.

2.1 Social Media

What is social media? It is a controversial concept among researchers since the concept of social media is very broad and abundant. Given the tremendous exposure of social media in the popular press today, it would seem that we are in the midst of an altogether new communication landscape (H.Kietzmann, Hermkens, P.McCarthy, & S.Silvestre: 2011).

Hence, this paper firstly approaches the content of social media from Wollan, Smith and Zhou' perspective. In their studies, social media is not a new phenomenon, as it has been perceived. It's simply derived from the concept of social communication. Social media starts from a natural, genuine conversation between people about a mutual interest or concern. Regards to this, people have been providing recommendations and opinions to others; their thoughts as well as experiences about the topic will be shared during the talks. Thanks to these conversations, do people not only share their opinions but also collect from other participators. As the result, they could make a better or more informed choice once participating into Social Media. It should be highlighted there are millennia channels, that helping people have a two-way conversation. In modern history, such channels have included face-to-face discussions, letters, the telephone, and, more recently, email. There are number of characteristics however that distinguish today social media from other types of social conversations.

- It enables one-to-many or many-to-many conversations.

- It features content created and posted by consumers of that content.

- It is easy to use.

- It is highly accessible (everyone), highly scalable (everyone + everywhere), and operates in real time (everyone + everywhere + every time).

- It is entirely public and transparent (Wollan, Smith & Zhou, 2011: 11).

However, commonly the term of social media has been discussed from the advent of the Internet, which has created new avenues for reaching people. Social media has tended to be used alternatively with the term Web 2.0. The interchangeable usage of the terms is acknowledged by many researchers such as Constantinides and Fountain (2008, 231-231), Safko and Brake (2009, 6), and Kaplan and Haelein (2009, 60). However, they still contain some different features. Meanwhile Constantinides and Fountain (2008, 232) consciously choose to use the two terms Social media and Web 2.0 identically, Safko and Brake (2009, 6) in turn state that the terms are closely related but not exactly synonymous, and differentiate between their usage. Kaplan and Haelein (2009, 60) support this view, and describe also that there seem to be confusion among managers and academic researchers alike what exactly should be included under term Social media, and it differs from the related concepts of Web 2.0 and User generated content (UGC). As the result, in order to make these contents less confusing, in term of this study, each of the term will be defined and used separately, despite the fact that this study focuses only on Social media.

According to Kaplan and Haenlein (2009, 61), Web 2.0 is a term that is used to illustrate a new way in which software developers and end-users started to exploit the World Wide Web as platform whereby content and applications are no longer created and published by individuals, but are continuously modified by all users in participatory and collaborative fashion. Further Kaplan and Haelein (2009, 62) argues that as Web 2.0 represents the ideological and technological foundation, User generated content can be seen as the sum of all ways in which people make us of Social media. In a broad sense, Web 2.0 is comprised of computer network-based platforms upon which social media applications/ tools run or function (Weinberg & Pehlivan, 2011). Consequently, the remarkable distinction between them is that content is created by consumers publishing in social media (e.g., a tweet on Twitter, a post on a Facebook Wall, a video

on YouTube).

Social media, which is a central concept in this study, is defined various ways in previous research. As yet there is no generally accepted definition of the term Social media; this study is going to discuss some of the extant study among researchers respect to chronological order. Black & Nazzaro (2006) argues that social media describes a variety of new and emerging sources of online information that are created, initiated, circulated and used by consumers intent on educating each other about products, brands, services, personalities and issues. Smith et al. (2008, 2) perceive Social media from a sociological perspective as collective goods produced through computer mediated collective action. Kaplan and Haenlein (2009, 61) define the 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 of exchange of User generated content". Safko and Brake (2009), who also share a similar perspective in defining Social media with Kaplan and Haelein (2009) suggests that Social media refers to activities, practices, and behaviors among communities of people, who gather online to share information, knowledge, and opinions using conversational media. Conversational media covers the web-based applications that make it possible to create and easily transmit content in the form of words, pictures, videos, and audios. Zarraella (2010) explicates that social media is best defined in the context of the previous industrial media paradigm. He supposes that traditional media, such as television, newspapers, radio and magazines, are one-way, static broadcast technologies. Specifically, few years ago if you disagree with some functions on product you cannot send the staff instant feedback. New web technologies nevertheless have made it easy for everyone – and, most importantly – distribute their own content. With the same situation, now you can give you point of views about this product by a blog post, tweet, or Youtube video that could be viewed by millions virtually for free. Social media can be considered as a mean that allows consumers to share their opinions, criticisms and suggestions in public. In short, according to Zarraella Social media differs from traditional media (TV, radio, newspapers, etc) in two radical ways. First, the users generate the content. Second, it's interactive. People do not just read your blog spotting, your tweet, or your review; they comment on it. Indeed, that interaction is the essence of the form. Social media therefore can turn communication into an interactive dialogue. Briefly, the

bottom line of social media is that it enables people to connect, communicate, and collaborate (L.Jue, Marr, and Kassotakis, 2010: 43).

All in all, Social Media is an umbrella term that covers a group of web-based software applications, the content generated by users of those applications, and the services that make both accessible to just about anyone with a web browser (K. Waters, & Lester 2010: 2). Or simply social media is the media we use to be social (Safko, 2011: 3) to co-create, know, like and trust.

2.2 Different categories of Social Media

As mentioned above, social media is an umbrella term for different types of online communication channels. It might be such a difficult mission in order to list all of social media channels. The reason is that social media applications and websites are so numerous across the World-Wide-Web. While studies examining various aspects of social media have proliferated in recent years, very few have attempted to formally categorize Social media (Parent, Plangger, & Bal: 2011). Fraser and Dutta (2008) are considered as very first researchers who give five broad categories: *egocentric sites* that allow users to build profiles; *community sites* that replicate in the virtual world those communities found in the physical world; *opportunistic sites* that facilitate business; *passion-centric* sites that aggregate fans; and *media-sharing* sites that let users share rich media (image, audio, video) content. Adapted from Fraser and Dutta (2008), Wood (2010) redefines on those concepts by expanding these definitions and bringing some examples.

Categories of social media site	Appeal	Example of site(s)
Egocentric Sites	Allow users to construct profiles of themselves on virtual platforms facilitating identity construction and connections.	Facebook.com, MySpace.com, Bebo.com
Community Sites	Imitate real-world communities, allowing groups to form around like beliefs.	BigWaveDave.com, BlackPlanet.com, Dogster.com
Opportunistic Sites	Allow for different social organization of users and facilitate business connections. Often defined vertically.	LinkedIn.com, Academia.edu, alibaba.com
Passion-centric Sites	Allow users to connect based on interest and hobbies. Often defined horizontally.	TheSamba.com, chatterbirds.com, germancarforum.com
Media Sharing Sites	Allow users to share rich media with each other. Defined by content, not users.	Flickr.com, YouTube.com, slideshare.com

Source: Adapted from Fraser and Dutta (2008)

Figure 1. Categories of Social media

Besides, it will be deficient if one of the most prominent forms of Social media categories studied by Kaplan and Haelein (2010) is not been mentioned. In term of their research, Social media is divided into 4 sessions:

- Collaborative projects (e.g. Wikikpedia, comparison shopping sites)
- Blogs
- Content communities (e.g. Youtube)
- Social networking sites (e.g. Facebook)

In addition, in order to discover the world of Social media, social media platform is also taken into account. These platforms have empowered consumers to connect, share, and collaborate, creating spheres of influence that have fundamentally altered the way marketers engage in influencing activities (Singh, 2005 and Walmsley, 2010). According to Harris (2009), there are literally hundreds of different social media platforms. This might be reasonable to explain why marketers need to be actively experimenting on several of the major platforms. This paper however will highlight on some following social media's platforms:

Figure 2. Key social media platforms

- Blogs: Its original term was initiated from "Web logs", in which person can express feelings about their daily life by writing about their family, friends, events or hobbies. But very quickly, blogs were adapted to meet professional and business goals. (Wilson, 2010: 7).

- Micro-blogs: It is considered as a short-format of blogs. Instead of creating a readable essay like in blog, people can have short-postings with limited in scope and data. Twitter, Facebook and My Space are three particularly presenters as well as three notable competitors in micro-blogs.

- Mobile: Mobile marketing is the fastest-growing segment of technology-driven marketing (Safko, 2010: 14). It's cheaper and more convenient than laptops, desktops and broadband. With the unstoppably marvelous growth of technology, people with their mobile-phones are staying in touch with one another, accessing their email, sending photos, audio, video, blogging, and surfing the web regardless where they are. People now do not need an Internet-connected PC in order to implement these activities.

- Search engines: Internet search plays a considerably valuable function of the

Internet. And, as the more number of web and blog pages have increased, the more integral search will become to business Internet experience and its customer and prospects. Search engines have and will continue to help users quickly access the one morsel of information they need out of the trillions of bytes of data. (Qualaman, 2011: 10). That's why Google, Bing, Yahoo, Yelp and many others have created business search engines to capture this growing search field.

- Inter-personal: Though this category seemly is not related to technology, it still offers businesses many opportunities in order to associate with their customers and prospects. It could include some type of customer product review feature, or web meeting, text messages between customers and companies' members.

- Videos: Many businesses are using videos to provide added-value features for customers such as instructional videos, educational or marketing videos. It's common to find a channel on YouTube – a first-standing video webpage – mentioning to businesses, products, or even comparison among organizations' marketing strategy.

- Photo-sharing: "A picture is worth a thousand words" Napoleon Bonaparte stated. And it might turn definitely true, once Flick, Picasa, SmugMug, PhotoSwarm, or the many other photo-sharing sites are getting millions or billions pictures per day from their users. As the result, these sites would be good for companies to approach their source of potential customers.

- RSS: Really Simple Syndication (RSS) is the name of technology and also the name of just one of technology providers. An RSS feature on a blog or web allows you to sign up and automatically get notified whenever there is an update to the site including a new blog or news. (Safko, 2010: 14). You do not need to open from site to site to see the up-to-date news; RSS will notify you when it has. Business owners therefore may use its function to catch a glance of their customer.

- Social Networking Sites: This category discusses the many platforms we use today in social media to connect, share, educate, interact and build trust. (Safko, 2010: 10). For example, in LinkedIn, people can create their professional profile in order to boost their career perspectives. This place offers a variety of chance

for people connect with friends, former associates, colleagues or even whom they don't know yet but those ones can link to job advancement. As the result, there are a substantial number of companies posting their profile as well as recruitment advertisements on LinkedIn every day.

Furthermore, for the purpose of this study, it is important to discuss how the various social media channels are used among consumers in Netherlands. The Netherlands has extraordinarily high Internet penetration with 82.9% of the country's population having Internet access and mostly via broadband. Compared to global and European penetration, Holland has a much higher percentage of its population surfing the Internet than most other countries. Since almost everybody has a reliable broadband Internet connection in the Netherlands, social media has grown fast. One important factor should be underlined in Netherland market is that not only the international networks have raised dramatically, but also the local ones.

According to comScore, Inc, a leader in measuring the digital world, a latest study (April, 2011) of social networking usage in the Netherlands showed that the Netherlands is the No. 1 worldwide when it comes to social media. The Netherlands has an exceptionally high representation among social networking sites. The study reveals that the Dutch social networking market continues to grow strongly as sites like Facebook, Twitter and Linkedin extend their respective footprints in the market.

Despite the overall maturity of the Internet market in the Netherlands, comScore Media Metrix report showed that the social networking category continues to advance, growing from 18 percent to 11.5 million visitors in March 2011 (representing 96 percent of the online population when in total, there were 11.9 million people that moth active on the Internet). A sharp increase in traffic on social networks can be seen from the last year in Netherlands, from 21% to 31% (Online Internet-barometern 2010). No doubt, social media plays an important role in the life of Dutch people.

There are four majorly main social networking used in Netherlands: Hyves, Facebook, Twitter and Linkedin. Young people between 15-24 years are relatively frequently users of the Internet services that allow communication between multiple users, and social

networks have an obvious place in their lives. However, there is a different rate of age categories in term of four common networks. It can be seen clearly in the Figure 3.

Leeftijdscategorie	Facebook	Hyves	Twitter	Linkedin
15-24	39,5%	79,1%	17,3%	8,3%
25-34	44,7%	67,5%	16,8%	17,3%
35-44	36,6%	65,5%	18,2%	22,2%
45-55	32,7%	65,6%	19,6%	19,1%
55+	28,2%	46,4%	15,7%	9%

Figure 3. Age Categorization of Dutch users for Facebook, Hyves, Twitter and LinkedIn

Indeed, "The social networking marketing in the Netherlands is really quite unique and full of interesting storylines" said Mike Read, svp and managing director of comScore Europe. "It is one of the few markets remaining where a local social networking player [Hyves] continues to lead Facebook, but that lead is becoming increasingly tenuous."

As it mentioned above, Hyves.com is the most popular social media in Netherlands. According to the estimations from Bex* Communicatie's research (2010), Netherlands has accounted for more than 9 million users out of 11 million on Hyves.com. Specifically, there are 8 million unique monthly visits and 6.5 billion page views per month. The average age of users is 27 years old. Hyves.com is most popular in the age group of 13 to 34 years covering 80% of all users. Age group of 35 to 49 years and over 50 years are the second and third highest group in Netherlands.

Moreover, regards to the research of comScore Media Metrix, Hyves continues to hold the top position among social networking sites in the market with more than 7.6 million visitors in March, but Facebook is quickly gaining ground, surging 76 percent in the past years to nearly 6.6 million visitors. Twitter.com and Linkedin. Com rank third and fourth, respectively, with more than 3 million visitors and each growing approximately

70% in the past year.

Top 5 Social Networking Sites in the Netherlands March 2011 vs. March 2010 Total Netherlands, Age 15+, Home & Work Locations Source: comScore Media Metrix	Total Unique Visitors (000)		
	Mar-2010	Mar-2011	% Change
Total Internet : Total Audience	11,927	11,953	0
Social Networking	9,742	11,490	18
Hyves	7,692	7,650	-1
Facebook.com	3,717	6,556	76
Twitter.com	1,923	3,207	67
Linkedin.com	1,830	3,118	70
Windows Live Profile	2,924	2,769	-5

Figure 4. Top 5 Social Networking Sites in the Netherlands

Another interesting facet to this market is that the Netherlands has the highest Internet penetration worldwide for two of the other key global social networking sites, Twitter and Linkedin. In specific, 26.1 percent of the Dutch visited business-networking site LinkedIn while 26.8 percent used Twitter. In each case, more than one in four Dutch Internet users visits these sites during the course of the month. While the top ten countries in LinkedIn penetration are either English-speaking or in Western Europe, the top countries for Twitter touch virtually every corner of the globe. It is undeniable the Netherlands is in many ways a nexus of global social networking behavior.

Top 10 Countries in Internet Penetration for LinkedIn.com and Twitter.com by Reach (%) March 2011 Total Internet, Age 15+, Home & Work Locations Source: comScore Media Metrix			
LinkedIn.com	% Reach	Twitter.com	% Reach
Netherlands	26.1%	Netherlands	26.8%
Ireland	21.0%	Japan	26.6%
United States	17.6%	Brazil	23.7%
Canada	15.6%	Indonesia	22.0%
United Kingdom	14.9%	Venezuela	21.0%
Denmark	14.4%	Canada	18.0%
Australia	13.1%	Argentina	18.0%
New Zealand	12.9%	Turkey	16.6%
Belgium	12.6%	Philippines	16.1%
Singapore	12.0%	Singapore	16.0%

Figure 5. Top 10 countries Internet Penetration for LinkedIn.com and Twitter.com

2.3 Social Media in Marketing

After the brief on the various categories of social media, and how these are used in Netherlands, this part focuses on examining the social media in marketing. Furthermore this will also discuss the new aspects of social media to marketing mix (4P).

The use of the Social Media in the lives of people is potentially huge. With the social media at hand, there is an easy communication between and among people; relationships are built because of the social networking sites (Brown, 2008: 10). As it can be noticed Social Media is a better way to find and locate people whom you have lost contact with. It also provides entertainment to people because of its capability to capture as well as store the moment and have it viewed and reviewed. Indeed, Social Media is a bridge to enhance relationship between people regardless time and distance.

It's because that Social Media offers to build on the personal empowerment and liberation from business' s perspectives, consumers now are actively connecting with each other and talking about everything from cars and health to scarp-booking

techniques and pool chemicals. By providing a two-way street, social media can give companies something that's almost better than new customers: feed-back from existing customers (Waters & Lester, 2010: 13). Different from traditional customers who used the Internet in order to read, watch and buy products and service, customers now are utilizing Social media increasingly to create, modify, share, and discuss Internet content. Thanks to Social media's creation, customers could have opportunities to raise their voice for an entirely new level. Consequently organizations are able to have an in-depth look into customer behavior – in their own environment – not just companies' transactions. It is no doubt to admit that Social Media has enabled new ways to maintain their relationships with existing customers and clients. Social Media therefore could be the most effective mean of communication between organizations and their customers. From this perspective, this represents the social media phenomenon, which can now significantly impact a firm's reputation, sales, and even survival (H. Kietzmann, Hermkens, P.McCarthy, & S.Silvestre: 2011). As the result, by employing Social Media (content created by everyday people using highly accessible and scalable technologies such as blogs, message broads, podcasts, microblogs, bookmarks, social networks, communities, wikis, and vlogs), marketing functions in organizations may able to gain lots of advantages. In term of Social Media's characteristics, it is confirmed as long-term marketing commitment (Zimmerman & Shalin, 2010: 9).

Undeniably, Social Media turning into an influential marketing channel is news to many companies and organization (Drury, 2008: 274.) So, what is called *Social Media Marketing?* Defining this term is as challenging as defining the social media itself. The definition of social media marketing is hard to truly describe; however simply it might refer to marketing done through social media's technological concepts and techniques to achieve specific goals for a company. Social media marketing is a new flavor of marketing that uses these interactive social platforms such as MySpace, Facebook, YouTube, Flick, Yahoo group, etc. to create communities of like-minded interests, and perhaps, interact and converse with customers and potential customers. Weinberg (2009) refers social media marketing is as a process that empowers individuals and companies to promote their websites, products or services through online social channels and to communicate with and tap into a much larger community that may not

have been available via traditional advertising channels. It connects service providers, companies and corporations with a broad audience of influencers and consumers. Or Wilson (2010) argues that social media marketing is a promotional activity whereby a business targets customers or prospects through social media sites in an effort to increase sales, strengthen brand loyalty, or achieve other business goals. The key word for social media marketing is social (Gunelius, 2011: 10), so as long as companies are contributing to the conversation that's happening on the social Web, they're doing it right. Though Social media marketing takes place in a variety of forms, all concentrate on as same as traditional marketing goal – increased profitability for business (Wilson, 2010: 15).

In some really recent researches, it is said that today's approach to marketing, the approach infused with social media, leans much more heavily on the 4Cs of marketing. It refers to four concepts that marketers cannot leave behind when they want to launch social media marketing in business. John (2011) states that tones of relevant, education-based, and perhaps user generated *content* that is filtered, aggregated, and delivered in a *context* that makes it useful for people who are starving to make *connections* with people, products, and brands they can build a *community* around. In short, social media marketing gives business an array of tool that permits users to create content, within a given context, to help establish connections and engage in a community.

Content + Context + Connections + Community = Social media marketing

The first starting point is typically content – a blog post, video, podcast, article, photo, a resource such as industry-specific glossary or calendar of events, or other means expression. Content plays a key role because simply it transfers or delivers the company's messages to its users. In order to build strong relationships, businesses need to provide valuable information that meets their customers' requirement. The context in this case is the particular tools in which the content will be shared: in a blog, a social networking or bookmarking site, a media-sharing site, or a forum. Companies' customers will spend their time in a right given-context where stores helpful as well as necessary content. Traditional marketing is about interrupting. Social media marketing

is about sharing and interacting. That's the reason to explain the third C in social media marketing is Connection. When the company has a valuable content in the right context, they could start connect to their customers or prospects easily. Marketing is all about getting people to know company, like its product or service, and trust enough to buy. In the third phase "Connection", these mentioned above should come naturally if the company builds up a precise content in a right context. The final piece of the puzzle is for the preceding steps to lead to a community. If the company has taken the time to develop strategy for content, context and connection, then all of the pieces would together to lead to this point. It is important once companies could shape their communities because those are made up of their prospects and clients. Moreover, community is how social media scales. Community is what happens when customers start supporting themselves with content they create. This content flows naturally across the community because initially it is understood by all its members. Community will likely let customers begin to trust into companies' product or service. All in all, the four C themselves are essential if businesses want social media marketing work for them. There are different contents that company can spread in a variety of context, and it creates the connection not only company and its customers but also among them. As the result, the company could build up their communities that independently develop (Community uses customer-generated content in a customer-aligned context for a customer-serving purpose) so that support and trust into them.

Unlikely a traditional marketing which depends upon purchased placement on high-traffic media such as television or print, Social Media marketing is frequently available for no direct charge to a business in term of paid placement, but requires a marketer to devise a method to attract interest by providing information or resources that are judged by the targeted audience as offering values. Consequently, in the context of social media marketing, it is important to discuss the influences of social media on the traditional marketing mix (4Ps) and which fundamental elements of social media marketing are.

It's the fact that the 4Ps of Marketing, or Marketing Mix, have been the traditional building blocks of the marketing foundation since the early 1950s. While there have been changes and additions, these pillars have generally stood the period of time and

remain key pillars in the science of marketing. However, marketers have explicated that social media has altered the nature of the 4Ps. The following explanation is going to clarify how social media has caused the 4Ps to evolve.

- Product: This first "P" refers to things like functionally, appearance, and quality of product. In short, these are physical attributes of the product. With the role of social media nevertheless these marketers are able to realize that providing functionally that meets consumers' needs is no longer sufficient, products now must be talk-worthy. Since consumers and the general public, using via tools like Facebook, Twitter and ratings and review sites, often have their own knowledge about products even sooner than companies, products subsequently have to deliver on their promises and work. Products need to have the added values relative to their cost; this may occur intrinsically and/or through an enhanced brand experience and/or with the addition of supplemental features such as training.

- Price: As a standalone product attribute, price is not physical but encompasses a variety of factors (e.g. list price, discounts, allowances, etc.) related to the market. Since social media expand digital connectedness, which provides price transparency, companies must offer the price of their products fairly as well as competitively across distribution channels. For example, in traveling market, especially airfares, customers join companies' social media sites so that they could find these best offered-prices. As the result, the company must take it carefully into account because customers might call their firms our in public easily with an abundant list of social media if they spot inconsistencies in term of their prices.

- Place: The third "P" is about supply chain, logistics and points of distribution. Nowadays, besides retails, direct sales, or print catalogs, a business must have a presence across a broad array of social media offerings. This might include company run pages, third party social sites such as reviews and social shopping, and/or conversations among consumers. For example: there are many companies starting to open a shop in their Facebook page. In consequence, companies must

consider where prospects, customers and the public want to socialize around their products.

- Promotion: This last "P" refers to communication through a variety of mean like advertising, public relations, personal selling and sales promotion. Marketers create special deals for customers around their product offerings. However, today promotion is not just about the offer to consumers. Social media has caused a fundamental shift in the last P. Companies know that many of their customers are now gathered on social media platforms that has allowed customers to easily engage in communications with companies and with other customers. Different from another traditional one-way promotion channel such as TV, radio, or print, social media gives consumers two-way of communicating. Therefore in reality, the companies have to know how their messages or offers are being delivered in these new platforms. Now in the fourth P, companies should involve listening to customers, engaging customers, providing values and building trust.

Since social media has placed control of the messages about products and brands squarely in the hands of the customers, customers are shaping the perception of companies, their brands and their products. Marketers should perceive the changes that social media have brought to the traditional 4Ps marketing mix.

In addition, due to the impact of social media in marketing, there are some studies in which researchers explore the mix with a different angle relative to social media marketing. Also 4 new Ps are mentioned but in a bit different way of what are used in the marketing mix.

Figure 6. Social media marketing mix

- People: This is the first P in social media marketing mix and also is considered as the most crucial part. Social media has offered a way for consumers and peers to take charge of their lives, the people in it, and the products that they are using. Today, consumers are in control. People know that they can be heard now through reviews, Blogs, and any form of social media over the Internet and they are determined to get their opinion out. As the result, the first thing that company should take into account is to utilize social media to listen what these people are talking about. Organizations easily collect those instantly available opinions from their customers or prospects both positive and negative. Then can use these aspects to analyze and find ways to change the bad ones and enhance the good ones. Indeed, it could be seen that people who talking about companies' products, services and brands are able to be in R&D team if organizations listen to their own opinions or ideas. That is the reason why this first element – people is such an essential criterion in social media marketing mix.

- Platform: The key to making things happen for a business revolves around people, but platform is a place in which business owners could find their target consumers. Twitter, Facebook, or LinkedIn are initially thought when companies think about the word social media, but in reality there are many more platforms what can advance their product or service. The solution is to seek out where their target market is locating. Business owners should remember that uploading a video on YouTube, or starting a Facebook account does not mean that their customers will check it out. Companies need to find where people are, choose suitable platforms, listen their target market, expand to another platforms and then interact with others forms of media such as basic forms like television ads, email, billboard etc.

- Participation: Nothing happens on social media without participation and this is the third element of social media marketing mix. People are telling their opinions and problems and that's is substantially important for businesses communicate back as well as let their customers know what organizations are doing to fix problems, or are improving products' advantages or show how much their target market's feedback are appreciated. This is the way for businesses actively engage with people (the first element) thanks to platform (the second element). However, companies should notice that participation doesn't mean simply posting blogs, starting a conversation, updating statuses or replying to forums, it means knowing how to build a relationship and trust with people who are using companies' product / services or are thinking of.

- Promotion: The last element of social media marketing is the one that is already happening if companies integrate the first three elements. Promotion might refer to which messages a business want to spread out to people. Companies participate in the platforms where people talk about their products/services and build up their brand image as well as reputation once they respond to their customers' opinion or simply answer their customers' questions. Organizations will boost word of mouth marketing through social media platforms in the last element. Companies probably might not see the affect in sale through word of mouth activity right away but as long as the organizations move forward, they would gain a lot advantages by the last element in social media marketing.

These four elements mentioned above are very critical in social media marketing. Additionally, this will give companies fundamental information about the differences between marketing done through social media compared with marketing through traditional channels. If used correctly, social media marketing could be very powerful tool for companies to achieve their business goals.

2.4 The challenges and opportunities of Social Media Marketing in small businesses

Weber (2009) argues that social media marketing is not only for the largest multinational corporations it might be even easier and more effective for a small and medium-size company to take maximum advantage of it. And indeed in the reality, according to many recent researches, the number of small business using social media is extraordinary increasing. Consequently, taking the challenges as well as opportunities or advantages as well as disadvantages that social media marketing offers for a small business into account is definitely inevitable with this paper.

Garretrson (2008: 12) showed that consumers increasingly use social media not just to research products and services, but also to engage the companies that buy from, as well as other consumers who may have valuable insights. For that reason, Social media marketing certainly can bring numerous opportunities for establishing a brand and raising awareness. Once the majority of the population is already visiting social media platforms like Facebook, Twitter and YouTube, getting company brand name all over those networks is a brilliant way to let people know about company presence. Especially, with a small business, social media marketing might spread their message to users, customers, or prospects more effectively than tradition methods. At least, it might be easy to realize that the viral nature of social media has the capability to spread the news farther and reach a large number of people in a short time. Making brand name known across these networks is a fast developing method of creating awareness and to establish brand identity. Moreover, since the companies have the ability to make "social" connection with consumer markets, social media marketing benefit companies by strengthening as well as expanding relationships to customers. More importantly, social media marketing offers small businesses a quicker and more cost-effective way to reach highly targeted markets than marketing through traditional media, such as

websites, newspapers and television. The majority of social media sites are free to access, create profile and post information. The advantage of reaching targeted market for little or no cash investment is substantial for a small business. In addition, hitting a front page of social video, news and bookmark sites would send small business huge amounts traffic an almost instantly. Social media marketing thus may bring large amounts of back-links that benefits company's ranking in search engines. Besides, social media marketing is to stay connected with other stakeholders or partnerships of the company such as technology vendors, and distributors. Social media can be seen as opportunity for R&D department to get immediate feedback on the product/service and make corrections, and to move to next challenge. When a small business gets their image running on a social media network, they are already on a fast track forwards getting attention of people to their offerings. That is why small businesses could use social media marketing in order to improve their product or service on sales.

In fact, the 2011 Social media marketing industry report has revealed the top benefits for business owners. It answers the questions which main advantages that small businesses could utilize from social media marketing. The following figure points out that almost all marketers in small business find that social media helps them stand out in an increasingly noisy marketplace because of its greatest positives.

Figure 7. Top Benefits for Small Business Owners

On the other hand, though it is clear that – for better or for worse – social media marketing is very powerful, it is hard to deny that still many executives are reluctant or unable to develop strategies and allocate resources to engage effectively with social media. The reason is that the entrepreneurs will see their organizations and themselves struggle with many newborn challenges and weaknesses in social media marketing. Doubtlessly, marketing through social media requires small company adapt into much more different techniques than marketing through traditional channels. Weber (2009) explicates that marketing to the social media requires adopting a completely new way of communication with an audience in a digital environment. Drury (2008) clarifies that marketing with traditional media was much about delivering the marketing message to the target audience. But with the increase of social media networking, he emphasizes that marketing with social media is about building a relationship and conversation with target audience. It has become a major and focal part of marketing adopting the pull marketing strategy. Marketing is no longer one dimensional it has become a two-way process engaging a brand and an audience. Marketing within social media is not solely about telling and giving a message, it is more about receiving and exchanging perceptions and ideas (Drury 2008). As a consequence, probably changing in the way to communicate with customers could be the biggest challenge that a small business has to cope with. Plus, this also leads company to face with the disadvantages of social media marketing. Small business should remember that when they make a mistake offline, a few will know but when they make a mistake in a community in social networks, this many damage their reputation or brand much easier than ever before. Using social media for marketing could be more time consuming than a small business expect. Building a brand through the social media is a lengthy process as it is continuous. A business will have to spend a lot of time updating its audience on the relevant issues and the updates might come in by the hour. Business owners should be aware that social media marketing doesn't mean to open company profile on Twitter, Facebook, YouTube or LinkedIn or simply join a social network, it requires marketers such a huge effort as well as time to be active in their social media platforms. As the result, in order

to get social media marketing's full effects; a small business needs to understand how it works, when and how to use it and which channels to focus on. They should notice that tapping into social media marketing when they are ready to commit not because there's a lot of buzz surrounding this.

In order to stay competitive it is important for the case company to understand what opportunities they can gain and what challenges they must encounter respects with using social media marketing. Above all social media marketing is definitely useful or helpful for small business if used properly, but owners must realize that ultimately it will take lots of time and dedication.

2.5 Objectives, strategies, and tactics for Social Media Marketing

The next part of this chapter is going to target on the objectives, strategies, and tactics that are used for social media marketing. Before embarking social media marketing, it is crucial to map out the specific business goals of a company. Different companies have different types of goal such as increasing the revenue, lowering the costs or improving the customer satisfaction. Prior to establishing social media marketing, it is remarkable to define which achievable goals are that the company needs to set through the activity. There are some common goals for social media marketing:

- Increased Brand Awareness: This is considered as the most common goal for social media marketing and an important step in marketing a new product or service. The reason is that social media marketing can be used to spread the word about company's products or services offering, and improve public perception of its brand or image.

- Reputation Management: Social media can be considered one of the most powerful factors shaping the face of communication across borders in today's world. As the result, this has affected the way companies need to plan their communications for optimum reputation management. Social media are channels through which organizational reputation could be shaped and managed, by relying on the importance of dialogue and on the dialogue participants.

- Engagement: The main purpose of social media in business context is to engage people. (Safko & Brake, 2009: 25) Engagement is the level of involvement,

interaction, intimacy and influence customers having with a brand over time (Haven & Vittal 2009). By utilizing social media platforms, company can engage with customers much more easier.

- Improved Search Engine Rankings: Social media marketing can improve business's natural search engine ranking because the more activities company create in social media platforms, the more company enhance their brand awareness as well as exposures.

- Increased Relevant Visitor Traffic: Since business has gained their communities in given social media tools, it's valuable for them to upgrade their visitor traffic

- Improved Online Conversion Performance: Social media can contribute to improved conversion performance because it creates two-ways conversation as well as upgrade the role of customers.

In brief, Weinberg (2009, 25-28) explicates that the social media goals should be defined with the help of SMART principle being specific, measurable, attainable, realistic, and timely.

Once organizations are determined to pursue social media marketing, after setting the goals, companies need to dig into social media marketing strategy as well or in another way, it is important for companies to focus on getting the execute right. Social media marketing strategy is a process that orients social media activities of organizations so that they can achieve their social media marketing goals. It should be centered to answer the questions: what company's social media goals and objectives and how they tie into overall company goals, how to take part into social media sites, and how to build as well as strengthen relationships between companies and users. Additionally, there are three general areas for business owners keep in their mind when planning social media marketing strategy interactivity, sharing and collaboration. (Hey, 2010: 23). Interactivity can come in the form of writing blog posts, commenting on others' posts, or participating in social networking communities. Sharing can be as easy as uploading images and video clips onto media communities. Collaboration can be achieved by contributing to social bookmarking sites or wikis.

After business owners create social media marketing strategic plan based on marketing objectives or company's goals, they now should find ways how to use social media

platforms to carry out social media marketing strategy. Tactics should be a right answer for businesses.

John (2011) claims that most small-business owners should look at the following progression or hierarchy as they move deeper into social-marketing tactics. This will give profound insights of each stage once companies deploy social media marketing.

Figure 8. The hierarchy of social media marketing from tool viewpoint

- Blogging: This is a foundation of the pyramid. Reading blogs, commenting on blogs and then blogging are the very first steps for each company opening the door for themselves to social media marketing.
- RSS: Using RSS technology is as a tool to help businesses repurpose, republish and create content.
- Social Search: This often tends to be ignored in this discussion, however according to John (2011) it is becoming very significant for small-business owners. The reason is that they can get involved into social-media world and should stimulate as well as manage their reputation in this step.
- Social Bookmarking: Though social bookmarking will take work more than a small business expect, it is worth to invest. Tagging content to and participating are main activities in social bookmarking communities. This would lead small organizations to a great door so that they could accomplish more channels as

well as generate extra search traffic.

- Social Networks: These places are where businesses can branch out to gain advantages of the numbers of potential prospects. However, these networks require businesses spend an amount of time to understand and thrive on ideas as well as contents. Facebook or MySpace might frustrate a small business if they don't build up a good base in the first steps of pyramid.

- Micro: Platform such as Twitter, Thrwirl, Plurk and FriendFeed have become a paramount part of social media marketing as they allow for quick tracking, joining, and engagement. The reason they reside at the top of the pyramid is that without content such as creating on a blog, presence in social networks, the engagement on Micro may not go very efficiency and beneath.

The process for meeting long-term marketing objectives through social media is universal, but the tools needed to meet them are not. (John, 2011) Small businesses therefore should perceive how the basics of each stage in hierarchy work for their organizations. According to John (2011), small business owners also view the tactics in social media marketing less from a tool standpoint and more from an objectives standpoint. The following pyramid can explain it more specific.
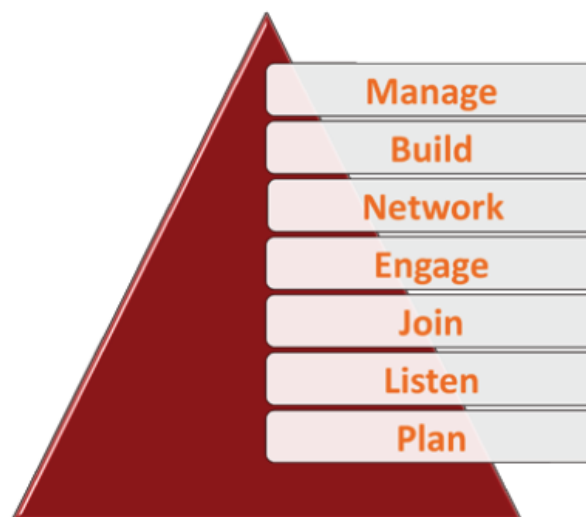

Figure 9. The hierarchy of social media marketing from objective viewpoint

2.6 Measuring Social Media Marketing

The foregoing discussion on objectives, strategies and tactics has helped to establish a small business understanding on what different elements should be taken into account when planning Social media marketing program. In the following part of this chapter, the focus shift from planning the marketing activities to constitute the right measures for these activities. Measuring the Social media marketing will help businesses in steering the activities to the right direction getting the highest value possible from the marketing investments.

The enterprise is definitely paying attention to social media. Social media marketing strategy has entered the business lexicon now, and a lot of companies are taking it very seriously. But there is one crucial question that most companies are working frantically to answer: ***How do they know if Social media marketing is working for them?*** Unfortunately, there is no easy, one-click solution to measuring Social media marketing success.

Weber (2009) points out that there are still problem in what to measure, how to measure and what the measurements mean in social media. Nevertheless knowing what businesses want from their social media strategy to accomplish will help them measure their success. Sterne (2010) affirms that measurements without context or specific business goals are meaningless. Social media Key Performance Indicators (KPIs), metrics that are central to the well-being of the organization, should all be dependent on the individual organization and its goals. (Sterne 2010,5) Obviously, each of goals requires a different measurement approach but each still falls into one of two classic metric categories: qualitative or quantitative. (Hay, 2011: 318). There are many schools of thought on how to establish a framework for ***qualitative measurement*** of social media. Basically, social media marketing relies on the connection between the company and its community, and among its users. For that reason, qualitative measurement mainly researches this aspect of social media marketing. Peter Kim of BeingPeterKim.com evaluates social media success based on user interactions with different social media channels. Attention, participation, authority and influence are four criteria that companies can utilize to scale the user interactions. This approach has been also found in Evans' s study in 2008 when he more specify the users interaction by

suggesting three types of metrics for measuring the impact of conversations in a social media feedback funnel. The content of the social conversations and artifacts themselves is the first point of metrics. The relevance of the conversations defining the degree to which what is being said matters to a company is the second type of metrics. The impact of the conversations explaining the net benefit, the direct measure of the change in desired outcomes following exposure to a socially created and delivered message are is the third type of metrics. (Evans 2008, 295.)
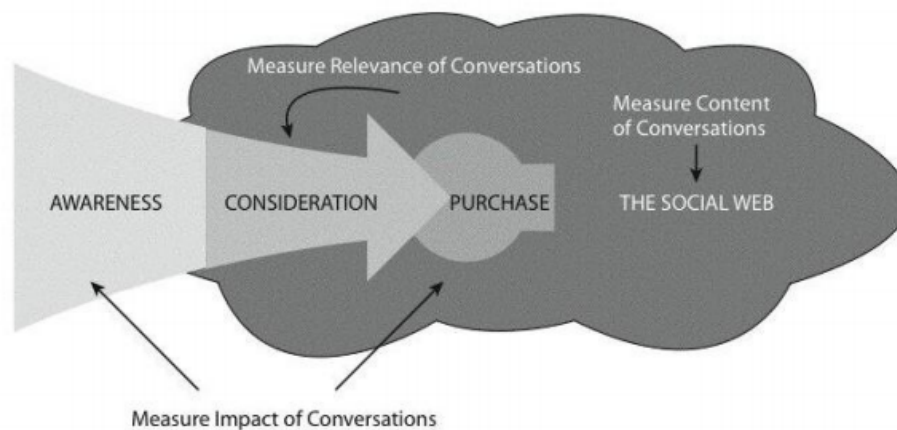
Figure 10. The metrics and Social media Feedback

Content measures aim at qualifying the audience of a company, who is talking and what. An amount of blog posts for a brand, an amount of recommendations and tweets indicating how everything a business does is perceived are these metrics in term of content measures. Meanwhile, the relevance of the conversation is assessed by linking or relating the interests of potential customers with what company has to offer. The relevance metrics aim at qualifying the influence, engagement and loyalty of the customers. The time spent on the site and the level of bounce rates that are able to show the value of opinion and conversations to those who are interested in purchase can be criteria for measuring the influence. The engagement reveals to the interest levels in messages where customers perform how much they are willing to get involved in business's social media. The engagement of a customer can be measured with amount

of pass along, comments, and bookmarks. Loyalty might be measured by analyzing the context and intensity of blog posts, and if the customers recommends and tweets. The impact metrics concentrate on accustoming the audience, loyalty and action level of the customers. By analyzing the demographics of the audience of a company, it is able to clarify whom social media marketing of a company is appealing. The impact of conversation can also be measured by looking into how involved the audience is with the company's brand or product.

Besides, a *quantitative framework* for assessing social media marketing has been also studied. It can be started with analyzing the audience company reaches. Reach refers to the percent of population a company wants to get hold on. It defines how many people have the opportunity to see company's brand in general and the campaign message in particular (Sterne 2010, 4). This also can be measured by the number of links the story has garnered, the number of people tweeting about it, or the number of connections is accumulated since company listed their fan page on Facebook (Weinberg 2009, 304). A basic frame work may start by measuring placement in website search engines, placement in blog search engines, placement of social networking pages in searches, ranking in social bookmarking sites, popularity in crowd-sourcing sites, popularity of shared multimedia within media communities. (Hay, 2011: 320). In some recent researches, the quantitative framework for social media marketing's measurement might include three importantly major metrics. These are Total Online Community Size (sCRM), Monthly Referred Social Traffic to Site (sTraffic), Social Monthly Impressions (sMI). It is highlighted that if the company measure three numbers at least once per month and track their relative movement over time with simple spark-line graph via spreadsheet charts, business owners will be able to regularly observe the benefits of their social media marketing investments.

However, in some studies the boundary between a qualitative and quantitative measurement framework is not clarified. In other words, in order to assess the efficient of social media marketing in organization, company could use both methods. Haven and Vittal (2008) argue that marketing's new key metrics is engagement, which refers as the level of involvement, interaction, intimacy and influence an individual has with a brand over time. Haven and Vittal (2008) suggest in Figure 11 how these four I's of

engagement align with different stages (discovery, evaluation, use and affinity) on people's buying processes. According to him, businesses are able to use these factors as fundamental framework for measuring how productive social media marketing is working for their company.
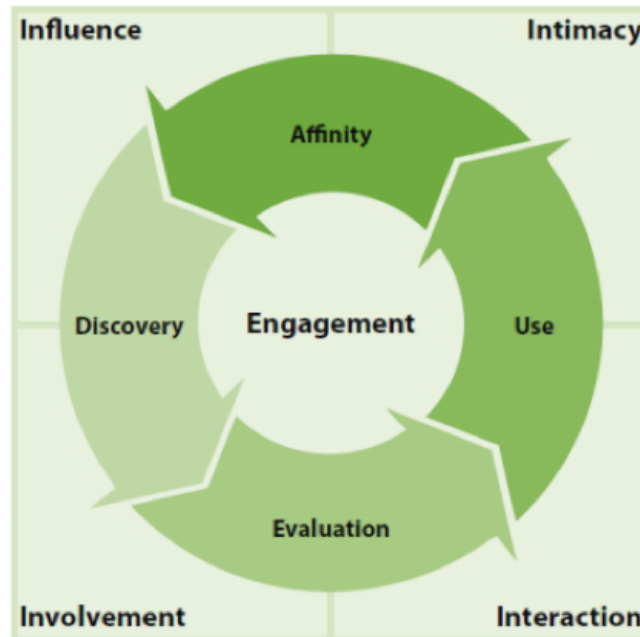
Figure 11. Engagement's Four I's Align with People's Buying Processes

There are three primary ways that a person can notice a brand/ product: observing others with the brand, initiating the discovery on his own, or being encouraged by others. In the first step of buying process, involvement metrics are helpful in measuring activities of a person either during or after discovering a product or service. Involvement metrics contain site visitors, Web site page views, time spent per page and in-store visits (Haven & Vittal 2008, 4) which help the company understand how and when a person discovers a product or service through social media networks. The next phase in a buying process is evaluation. Haven and Vittal (2008) argue that interaction metrics can be used for tracking action following evaluation. In order to evaluate a product or service, customers tend to rely upon three particular indicators; which are determining

credibility, assessing viability, and determining relevance. Interaction metrics measure the specific actions people do in the second step so that they might decide whether or not product is right for them. First-time purchases online or offline, loyalty card registrations, requests for free samples, comments on blogs, user-generated content, and click-through on banner ads are all interaction metrics. By analyzing these metrics the company gain more understanding on how and when prospects evaluate products and supporting their transition into customers. (Haven & Vittal 2008, 4) What a person thinks about product during and after using time can be monitored with intimacy metrics. Intimacy tracking measures people's attraction or distaste toward the brand after a person acquires and uses product/service. Intimacy metrics comprise of satisfaction rates, sentiment in customer service calls, brand affinity, and sentiment in online forums or review. These metrics will help the company to understand the opinions people will develop during and after their use of a product. (Haven & Vittal 2008, 4) Simply, in this step with these metrics, a business is able to realize how its social media works, whether it good or bad at delivering messages between its organization and customers. The last phase in a buying process, when a person develops affinity, can be navigated by influence metrics. Haven and Vittal (2008) suggest a person's feelings manifest themselves in three main ways which are passion level for the brand such as favorable or not, expression of passion through sentiment such as verbal conversation, written text, or produced content, and advocating for, or against, the brand. Metrics for influence include Net promoter scores, friend connections in online communities, fan Websites, content forwarded to friends, word-of-mouth, viral user-generated content, and loyalty. With these metrics, the company would understand the affinity and passion of brand engenders, and would give insights how these can be turned to favor of company. (Haven & 2008, 4) In brief, it can be explained that social media marketing get involved in four steps of the buying process. The metrics (involvement, interaction, intimacy, and influence) may help a business to evaluate the role of social media marketing regards to each phase.

As the social media marketing measurement is still a controversial research topic, there are a variety of methods that researchers can approach. One of common way is to study about ROI (Return on Investment). Most business follow a simple rule when it comes to adopting new technologies or paradigms – If it boosts its business' ROI, it's worth

the investment. Social Media is no exception to this rule. However, it's not easy to evaluate Social Media - ROI. The reason is that there is no single criterion based on which companies can determine the success or failure of their social media marketing. While in financial terms ROI usually relates to revenue and profits, it is different proposition when it comes to social media. Social media return might be the value that a company derive from social media based on its goals. For example: if a business's goal is to drive sales, then its social media ROI is the number of sales that this company can attribute to its social media marketing. As it is noticed the gains from Twitter, Facebook or any other social network may not always measurable in financial terms. They may boost traffic on their business website (quantitative measurement) or simply spread brand awareness or improve their goodwill in the customer community (qualitative measurement). Certainly, one of social media's ROI contributors to boosting ROI is the enormous amount of savings. Well-planned Social media marketing might help a business drastically reduce its advertising and marketing budgets.

The previous discussion on different kinds of measures and what information they prove will contribute the case company in analyzing the social media marketing investments and steering the investments to right decision. These measures also give valuable insights about customers' cycle activities, starting from discovering the brand to the final step reaching the affinity. This will help the company realize the position of Social media marketing in the buying process. By measuring this whole customer journey, the case company not only get best value for invested money in the short term but also possible improve experience in the longer term.

Indeed, being able to evaluate the impact of social media marketing on business, companies will able to fine tune its strategy to engage with ranging audience to help organizations increase their business as well as their brand awareness using the social media platforms.

Table 2. Theoretical framework
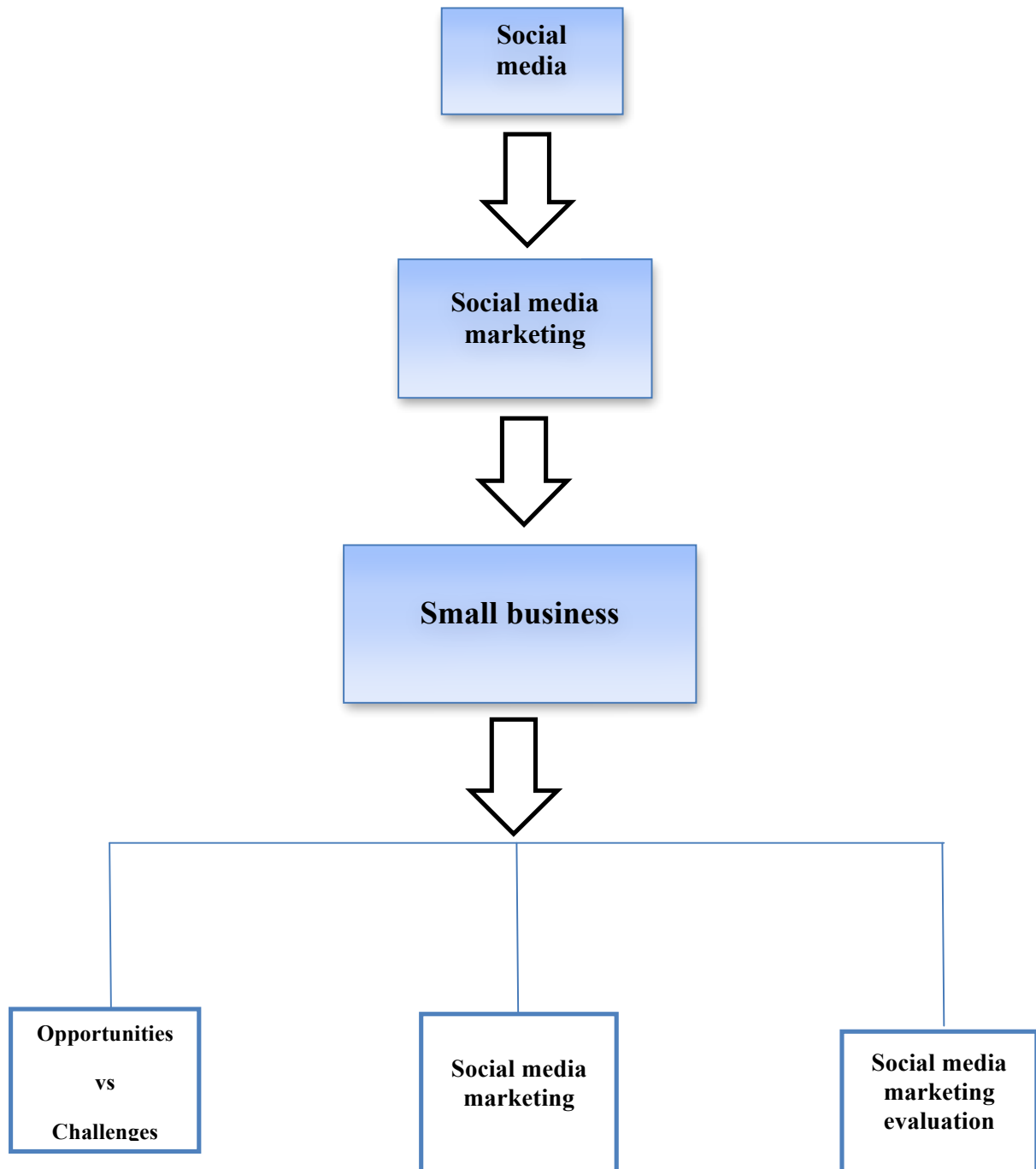
3   METHODOLOGY

In this chapter, the research methods and reason for the choice of methods will be mentioned. The first part discusses the chosen research methods and provides the motivation for this. Both the interviewees of the study as well as the general structure of the interviews will be presented. The collection of data has been divided into primary and secondary data, which both will be explained.

A thesis is all the time, in one way or another, a research conducted by a student who, in this case, becomes a researcher. A research is what "people undertake to find out things in a systematic way, thereby increasing their knowledge" (Sauders, Lewis & Thornhill 2009, 5). This is a very short and easy to understand definition. If the readers want a more comprehensive way of defining, this sentence can be more satisfactory "A focused and systematic enquiry that goes beyond generally available knowledge to acquire specialized and detailed information, providing a basis for analysis and elucidatory comment on the topic of enquiry" (White 2003, 21). Both of these are good explanations and emphasize important aspects of a research.
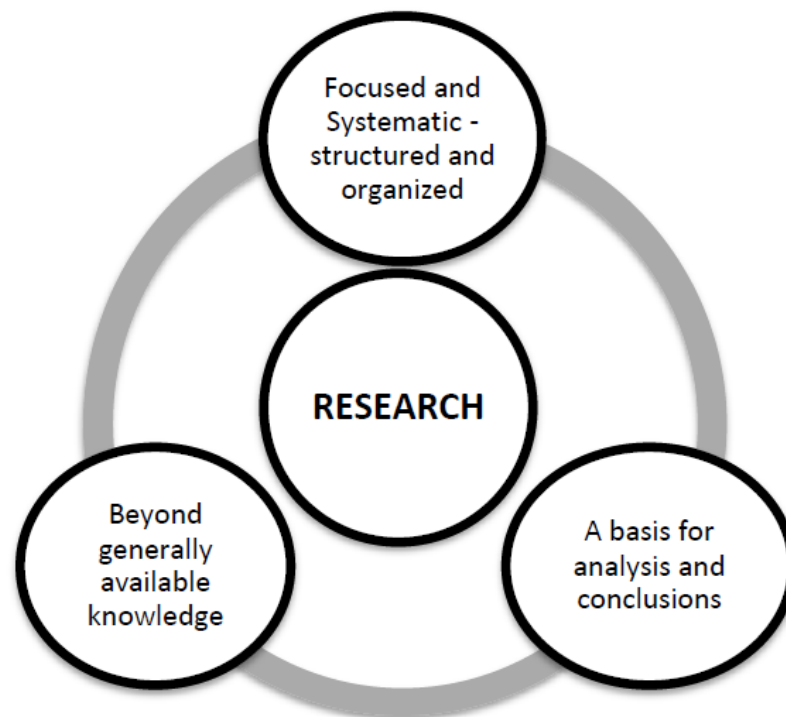

Figure 12. Features of a Research (Adapted from White 2003, 21 and Sauders, Lewis & Thornhill 2009, 6)

In this thesis, the research is believed to contain those significant features.

Focused and systematic: the investigated subject of this thesis has been narrowed down to only small business. Moreover, this thesis is conducted in a structured way step by step: critical literature review, relevant information collection based on literature, organized information grouping for analysis purpose, conclusions bases on analysis and already existing knowledge. Also, the writer understands certain limitations that this research carries.

Beyond existing knowledge: Social media marketing in the researched small business has been given a lot of attention but still, the author thinks that it should be reevaluated and developed. The researcher works on this thesis with a hope to help small businesses in general and two case companies understand more thoroughly how they are operating and give valuable comments and suggestions for their sake.

Analysis and conclusions: The analysis is primarily based on theoretical knowledge and interpretation of the data collected during the research.

A research always begins with defining the research topic and problem. The problem guides the research into the right direction. For this thesis, the problem of "implementation of Social media marketing in a small business, specifically in Dutch market" has been clearly identified since the beginning. A well-designed research plan is the next step, in which the researcher decides what kind of data he is going to use, which method he will apply to collect data and how he will collect them (data collection instruments). In the following sections, the readers will have a closer look into the data and research methods particularly employed in this written work.

3.1 Research Data

Basically, any research supporting evidence can fall into 2 categories: primary or secondary data. As presented earlier in the Introduction, both secondary and primary data have been utilized for the thesis.

3.1.1   Secondary Data

Secondary data are facts and figures collected by someone other than the researcher

himself. These data can be used for purposes different from the researcher. (Ghauri & Gronhaug 2010, 90) Secondary data, in fact, usually help the researcher a lot in the beginning phase of their study, especially when the research problem is not familiar. The literature in the theoretical background section is the very first example of secondary data. Secondary data can be obtained through abundant sources. Some divide the sources into publications (books, journal articles, ect.) and electronic (websites, email, anything from the internet). Others like Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill (2009) gives these categories: documentary (books, reports, newspapers, transcripts, voice recordings, video recordings, etc.), survey-based (any data collected using survey strategy), and multiple source (documentary combined with survey-based combined) secondary data. Another way of classification is: internal and external sources (Ghauri & Gronhaug 2010, 97).

Secondary data are particularly useful to this thesis. In order to broaden the understanding of the case company context, the secondary data is collected from marketing reports and promotional materials form previous social media marketing programs. All marketing related material is gathered with the help of marketing department in these companies. Furthermore, secondary data is collected from different scientific articles, journals, books and Internet sites. This data will assist in clarifying what actions those companies have already been done in social media marketing. Without secondary data, this thesis would never become a reality.

3.1.2 Primary data

Primary data, in contrast with secondary data, is originally collected by the researcher with the aim of directly supporting the research topic at hand. (Ghauri & Gronhaug: 2010, 90). Primary data are superior to secondary ones in a way that they are chosen and collected so that they completely fit the purpose of the research. Nevertheless, it is undeniable that gathering primary evidence takes time, frequently costs more and depends a great deal on the willingness, honestly and ability of the respondents. (Ghauri & Gronhaug: 2010, 99-100)

However the more tough gathering the data is, the more encouraged primary data are still in a student's final thesis because it is a way for the student to practice and apply

what he has learnt in reality. Being capable of conducting a research is indispensable in academic learning.

Besides secondary data, primary data are also used in a thesis of student. Hence, primary data are truly essential to this study. There are several options for collecting primary data, which will be discussed in the next part. Also, which options are employed will be presented.

3.2 Data Collection Methods

The option for collecting data that we mentioned above is technically called research methods. Before getting into further discussion, a distinction between research methodology and research methods should be clarified. While research methodology plays a role as the "philosophical basis" for the research – what approach is used, research methods are practical techniques adopted to gather research information. (White: 2003, 20)

Basically qualitative and quantitative are the two primary alternatives for any researcher to conduct his/her research. Which method is more suitable and more effectively reflect the whole target population really depends on the research problem that he/she has. Qualitative methods are often used for exploratory purposes (hypothesis-generating) while quantitative ones are to test hypotheses. Qualitative research results in non-quantification data. Quantitative research, on the other hand, gives numerical analysis of the issues.

As it can be seen the aim of this thesis is to do a research for two companies in Netherland. The used methodology in this study is qualitative, with a focus on two case companies. The qualitative method is used to gain understating of the actual practices inside the company and social media marketing activities. The approach in this study is exploratory. The reason for choosing case study as a study method in this research is the desire to examine complex and special subject in detail. Case studies are particular useful where one needs to understand one particular problem or situation in great depth, and where one can identify cases rich in information (Noor: 2008). As a method it is

applicable to real business situations and it focuses on investigating a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context (Soy: 1997).

The real-life context is distinct from laboratory experiments, which isolate the phenomena from their context (Eisenhardt & Grabner: 2007, 25). According to Naumes (2006) case study provides the basis for analysis of the decision-making process under variety of conditions and then opportunity to practice the findings. This study brings out two cases with expectations that will enable broader exploration of research questions and theoretical elaboration. The purpose with multiple case studies is to provide a holistic picture and an insight in concrete about the subject.

In addition, this thesis uses qualitative methods. The use of qualitative methods in management research has increased in response to the failure of quantitative techniques to address new theory development (Fillis: 2006, 200). According to Cassell (2006) qualitative methods have a long history and tradition within business and management research, and have a well-established pedigree. Moreover, qualitative research can make to the field, suggesting that utilizing qualitative techniques can provide rich insights in to the issues that interest both management practitioners and researchers. (Cassell 2006, 290-291) This type of content analysis tends to be more subjective and less explicit about the process by which interpretation of the target material occurs. The emphasis is on meaning rather on quantification. (Brewerton & Millward: 2001. 151)

A number of qualitative techniques have been developed from time to time, representative of which are interviews, focus groups, and observations. Interview, more specifically in-depth interview (IDI), is the technique that collects information for this study. As defined by the business dictionary, and in-depth or face-to-face interview is conducted usually on one to one basis, and IDI is designed to reveal the underlying motives of the interviewee's attitudes, behavior, and perceptions" (Business Dictionary 2010). Face-to-face interviews allow much interaction between the interviewer and interviewee. In this type of interview, the researcher often has prepared a pre-determined set of questions before hand but flexibility is a must, which means the researcher will adapt the questions to the practical situation. Like other qualitative methods, the interview aims at giving a complete detailed description, gaining understanding and providing insights into the research problem. Saunders, Lewis and

Thornhill (2009, 324) concludes that an interview is the most suitable approach if (i) the number of questions is large, (ii) the questions are complex and open-ended, and (iii) the order and logic of questioning need to be varied. (Going to mention about the questions for thesis later in this part)

Qualitative techniques are extremely useful for exploratory research – a research that has an unfamiliar problem – because they help to establish hypotheses for analysis purpose (Ghauri & Gronhaug: 219, 106). However, it doesn't mean a descriptive and causal research cannot empty these techniques. This thesis is an exam an example of descriptive and causal research. The research problem is fully understood and a thesis's aim it to describe social media marketing in small businesses as well as to comment on the measurable tools for social media marketing. Nevertheless, qualitative research method here in this case still proves to be of great assistance in several ways:

- Gathering: details of social media marketing in small business: what social media and social media marketing
- Discovering: how social media marketing works for small business
- Understanding: how social media marketing can be measured in an organization
- Detecting: how social media marketing has been implemented within a small company, specifically in Dutch market.

3.3 Data analysis

The ultimate goal of analyzing data is to treat the evidence fairly, to produce compelling analytical conclusions and to rule out alternative interpretations (Yin, 1994:103). Data analysis involves turning a series of recorded observations into descriptive statements (Yin, 1994). Since the collected data in this thesis is qualitative, the analysis is particularly different from statistical analysis, as the data as such does not exist in quantitative form. When analyzing the interviews, it most likely not to be possible to give numerical descriptions to answers. Analysis of the data will be based on systematic combining. The data have been gathered from interviews, marketing reports, Internet pages, and other sources. Systematic combining is defined that the researchers is constantly going back and forth between theory and empirical observations. This activity expands researcher's understanding of both theory and empirical phenomena.

As the theory is compared with data from interviews, the theory is being investigated through the empirical observation and vice versa (Dubois & Gadde: 2002, 555). The systematic combining is described in Figure 13 (Dubois & Gadde: 2002, 555).
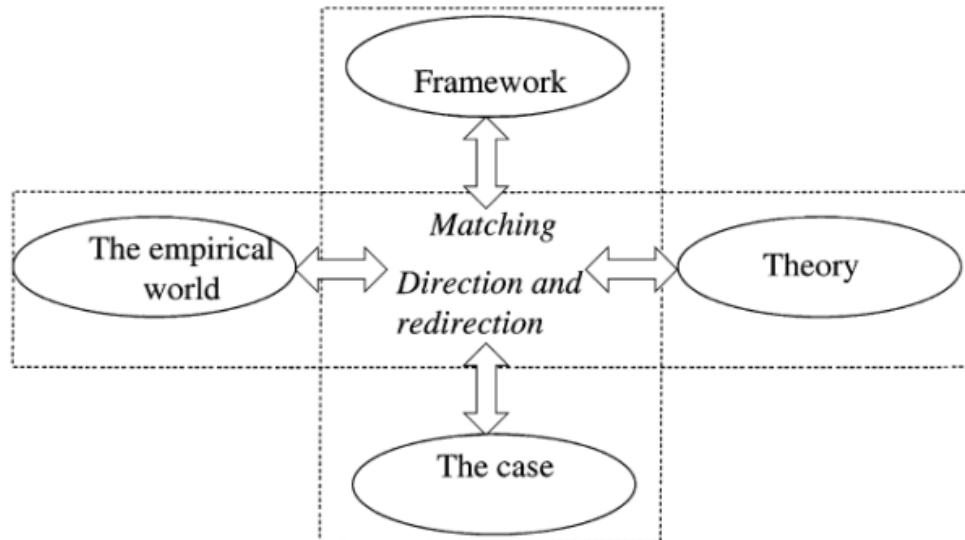
Figure 13. Systematic combining

3.4 Reliability and validity

During research time, methodology and measurements should be scientific. In order to guarantee the result, the study has to be critically evaluated. Using reliability and validity are common methods to assess the thesis's quality.

Reliability refers to the stability and consistency of the result derived from case study, that is, the probability that the same results could be obtained if the measures used from the research were replicated by another investigator (Yin, 1994: 36). Reliability generally refers to the extent to which if someone else undertakes the same study on different occasions, the final results do not change. According to Denscombe (2000), the researchers have to feel confident that their measurement are not affected by a research instrument that gives one result on the first occasion it is used, and a different one the next occasion when there has been no real change in the items being measured. Hence, a good level of reliability in a research is considered as consistency in which another investigator is going to reach the same findings as the previous study if he/she

apply the same case study and follow the same procedures. Reliability includes reliability of measurements, accuracy of type and consistency. Reliability of measurement concerns the accuracy of the measurement system. It means that the same results are obtained if we keep measuring the same thing. Accuracy of type is about the reliability of the instrument used to collect the data. This means that if we measure the same thing with other instruments, the same results are obtained, except if the instrument used provides a unique view of the problem. Finally, consistency represents the role of each question of the test. It is reached when each question asked includes a small version of the whole measuring program. (Shank 2006: 110)

The reliability of measurement has been optimized by realizing qualitative interviews. Two in-depth and concrete interviews have been done with directors and marketing managers in Oester company. As a consequence, the accuracy of measurement system will be assured once conducting measuring the same thing and attaining the same results. Semi-structured interview is a perfectly accurate instrument for the qualitative research taken place. Each question has been mindfully designed and attested regarding to the research questions and the whole set of questions so that the consistency would be maintained. Furthermore, all of the interviews were conducted by the writer to ensure all questions are asked and perceived in the same way. In addition, according to Saunders et al. (2007: 149-150), there are four threats to reliability: 1) subject or participant error, 2) subject or participant bias, 3) observer error and 4) observer bias. In order to exclude those mistakes, the work of this thesis started with a remarkable literature study. The literature review was collected from many articles of reputable journals and textbooks from several authors, which lead to that this thesis, covered the areas on practices as well as knowledge sharing. This would suggest that the bias from reading only one author and reading only about on topic be held at a minimum level. Besides, since this research used semi-structure questionnaire, there would be errors constituted from interviewer and respondent. The respondent flaws possibly originate from the fact that interviewees sometimes are unwilling to give truthful answers. In order to minimize this kind of errors, the questions were constructed really carefully in term of the use of language, the wording, and phrasing of sentences so that it can avoid ambiguous or emotional charged formulations. In addition, the questionnaire for this thesis was discussed with the researcher's supervisor and the chosen wording and

language were simple, and direct without difficultly technical terms.

Validity concerns how well the questionnaires are able to measure what it is aimed to assess. It refers to the extent whether the research findings represent the reality and are true. The main types of validity are: *construct internal* and *external validity* (Yin, 1994: 33). Creating correct operational measures for the concepts being studied is the major purpose of construct validity. Consequently, three tactics mentioned by Yin (1994: 34) in order to develop the construct validity are: use of multiple source of evidence, establishing chain of evidence and have the draft case study report reviewed by key informants. The steps undertaken to assure construct validity in this thesis have followed all the above steps (e.g. multiple sources of evidence include: face-to-face interviews, company reports, publications, and company websites).

External validity deals with the problem of knowing whether a study's findings can be generalized (Yin, 1994: 35-36). It means whether the researcher can make a wider conclusion, not particular relied on the basis of the research and analysis or not. In term of this thesis, the following works could ensure a high external validity. The researchers put lots of efforts on creating the semi-structured questionnaire (wording, language, and paraphrasing), choosing interviewees and selecting a suitable format for the interviewees' frame reference. The interpretation of empirical data was furthered through reference to the literature on themes emerging from the interview. That could reflect how a conceptual framework effects on the interpretations of empirical findings.

4   EMPIRICAL FINDINGS

4.1 Case background: Oestercompany (Oestercompagnie)

Founded in 2001 in Rotterdam, Netherlands, the Oestercompagny developed a unique concept in which oysters are served "on the spot" at parties. Instead of inviting guests to go to and get their own oysters at an oyster bar at a party, oysters are being served by Oysterman and Oystergirls walking around. Owner and founder Matijn Wijn started this concept by going to party after party by himself. Due to the huge success, this concept became widely popular. In 2011, more than 65 part-time employees are currently employed, and although this concept has been copied by others, the Oestercompany is a far length market leader in the Netherlands as well as in Belgium.

This company brings oysters to parties, (wedding) receptions, fairs, business events, and they work even on funerals. At parties Oysterman and Oystergirls mingle among guests, while they shuck oysters "on the spot". They entertain guests by telling anecdotes and by sharing their knowledge of oysters. Equipped with a leather apron, and a matching belt with buckets full of oysters, the Oestercompany has developed a recognizable formula at parties in the Netherlands and Belgium.

In 2005, since Matijn Wijn had established another business, his wife Juliette de Wilde replaced him as the Ostercompany's director. Till now, Ostercompany has recruited three employees working in the office, being responsible for Human resource, Finance, and Foods and nearly 65 part-time staff working as Osterman and Ostergirls. Ostercompany's director is in charge of general management; and in specific she has operated mainly company's marketing activities.

Since the beginning of April 2011, the manager of Ostercompany decided to employ marketing through Social media. Ostercompany immediately go "social" in every platform such as Facebook, LinkedIn, Google+, Blog, Foursquare, Hyva and Twitter. She is majorly responsible for all activities in Social media marketing. However, in the end of November, 2011 after eight months doing Social media marketing she was wondering to shut down those activities or at least stop using them for a while. During

this process, in the beginning of December, Juliette asked Angelique van der Made – a professional marketing consultant to help her finding the answer for this situation. After 1 month having discussion with Angelique, Juliette made decision in which she does not close activities in Social media, in contrast she will mainly focus on Blog, Twitter, Facebook and LinkedIn and more importantly instead of in charge of Social media marketing, Angelique now has responsible for this task in Ostercompany.

This purpose of this study was to examine the extent to which Social media practices are been utilized in marketing in a small business. The research question aims to answer, which advantages and disadvantages of Social media marketing affect on this organization, how Social media marketing is deployed and measured. Table 2 is used as the framework of this study in analyzing how Social media marketing is established and then works in a small company.

In order to study about Ostercompany case, the researcher conducted two interviews in the beginning of January: the first one is with Juliette de Wilde – director of Ostercompany and the second one is with Angelique van der Made – marketing consultant of Ostercompany. Due to some changes that were explained shortly above about Social media marketing in Ostercompany, the form of questions for two interviewees is different.

4.2 Findings

This section presents the findings of this study. The purpose of this study was to examine the extent to which Marketing through social media has been utilized in a small business. The research question of this study was: to how a small company deploys Social media marketing, which opportunities and challenging of Social media marketing impact on this organization and how they can evaluate the performance of Social media marketing.
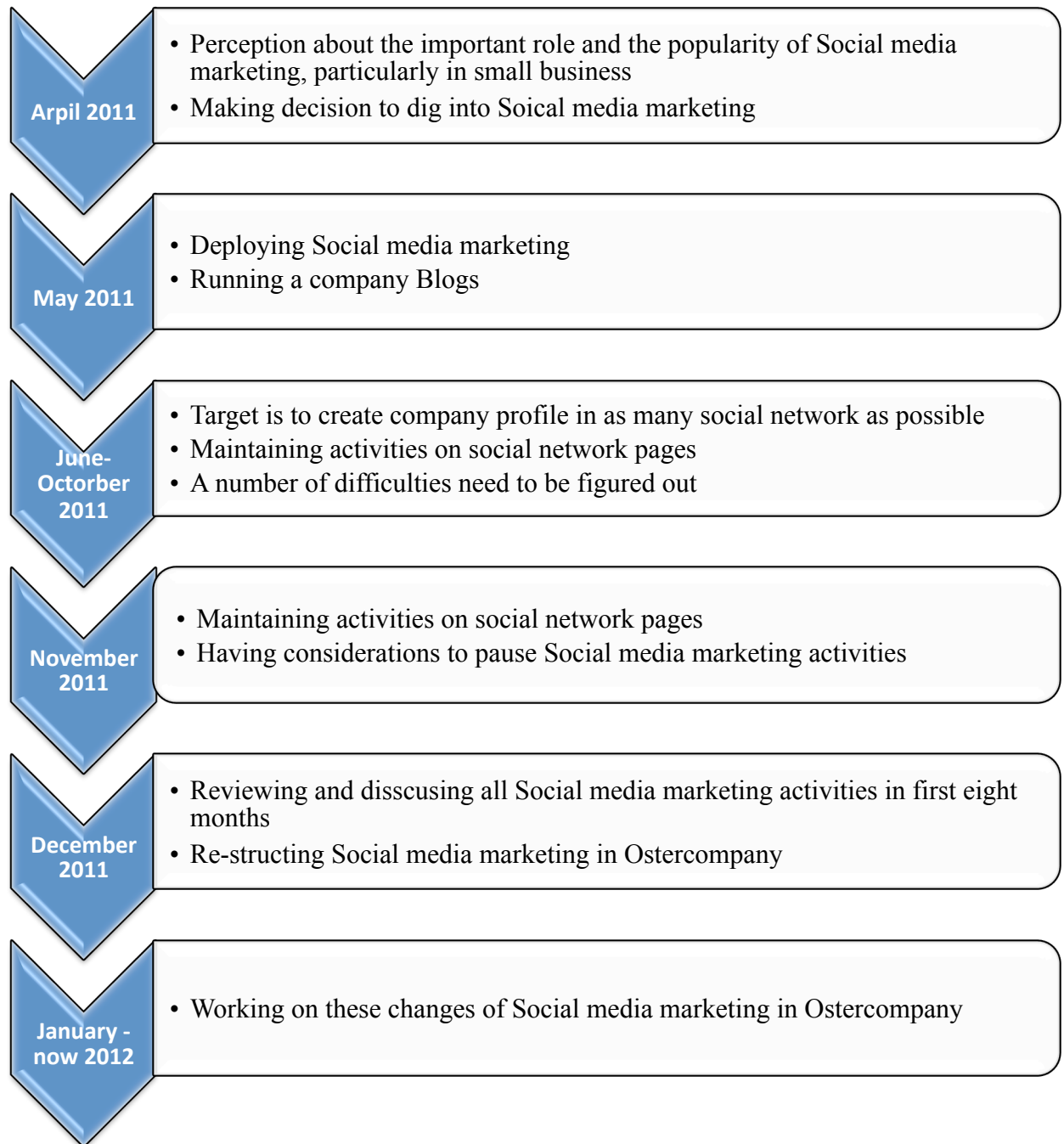
The findings of this Master's thesis are based on two interviews with two professionals from a Dutch company involved in Social media marketing. The results obtained portray the perception of the two professionals on the role of Social media marketing for

the organization they work for, how Social media marketing have been deployed, and also the perception on Social media in general.

The discussion of the findings of this study is divided into two parts. The first part will be based on a period of time that the company has been using Social media marketing. It means researcher is going to visualize the execution of Ostercompany in Social media marketing relying on a chronological order. The use of timeline or sequence of events will be presented so that the whole picture of using Social media marketing in Ostercompany could be clarified. In the next part, a complementary framework based on practical findings will be created as well as introduced in order to demonstrate these important factors respect with employing Social media marketing in Ostercompany. The complementary framework is taken into account as a supporter for the stage of defining goals and building strategy for Social media marketing that is pointed out in the theoretical framework (Table 2). In addition, the findings which argues how Social media marketing has been utilized in Ostercompany, the benefits and difficulties of Social media marketing have been concerned by the director, how Social media marketing performs, and finally the changes that a marketing consultant brings to Social media marketing in Ostercompany will be both discussed and analyzed dependent on the facets of two frameworks. The second part will start with the analysis based on the first framework (Table 2) so that the readers could have an overall view about Social media marketing at Ostercompany and understand why they failed in the first period of doing Social media marketing. After that, this thesis is going to clarify the advantages and disadvantages that Social media marketing might provide for Ostercompany. Then the second part will continue by the explanation of creating a supplementary framework and applying the criteria in this framework to analyze Social media marketing activities in the two periods. Briefly, in this part of empirical findings researcher expects not only to explain the activities of Social media marketing in doing business of Ostercompany but also to give a profound analysis about this in order to encourage the readers having an insight comprehension about the existence or position of Social media marketing in a small business as Ostercompany.

4.2.1   A timeline of Social media marketing at Ostercompany

In order to capture a overall picture about Social media marketing at Ostercompany according to chronology, a visual illustration of timeline is going be presented in the following. This is a good way to remake the critical incidents and event of Ostercompany during Social media marketing activities. The timeline firstly is demonstrated through a table and then is explained adequately.

Table 3: Ostercompany - Social media marketing's timeline.

April 2011	• Perception about the important role and the popularity of Social media marketing, particularly in small business • Making decision to dig into Soical media marketing
May 2011	• Deploying Social media marketing • Running a company Blogs
June-Octorber 2011	• Target is to create company profile in as many social network as possible • Maintaining activities on social network pages • A number of difficulties need to be figured out
November 2011	• Maintaining activities on social network pages • Having considerations to pause Social media marketing activities
December 2011	• Reviewing and disscusing all Social media marketing activities in first eight months • Re-structing Social media marketing in Ostercompany
January - now 2012	• Working on these changes of Social media marketing in Ostercompany

There is no denying that Social media websites have made huge strides on the web. It seems a booming topic for every business owners who want to keep up their marketing savvy.

> *Everybody talks about Social media. If you've not been living under a rock for the past couple of years, you must probably heard about the sites, such as Facebook, Myspace, Youtube, LinkedIn, Blogs, and so many others platforms in every corners of business. Our competitors also seemly invested lots of time and money in Social media marketing. As a director and marketing planner, I must confess that I could not let my company behind this trend. (Juliette de Wilde – director of Ostercompany)*

The immense number of people who participate in Social media platforms has led to increased investment in the growing field of Social media marketing. Ostercompany is not exceptional.

> *I see there are lots of people available on Social media networks and our customers as well as prospects might be one of them. Thus, it would be easy to get connection with them when I do marketing through social media. Besides, I have some friends who are also small entrepreneur and really successful in Social media marketing. They did find a source of new customers, increase their brand name awareness in market and finally push up their sale revenue. That's why Ostercompany cannot stand out this game. (Juliette de Wilde – director of Ostercompany)*

As a small business owner, Juliette understands how important for a small company nowadays to do marketing through social media. It's the fact that social media platforms allow a small business to build relationship with people quickly and stay connected to people and their brands faster than ever before. While utilizing social media sites, the company can get closer to their customers and prospects and subsequently create new

opportunities in business. Additionally, Social media marketing could give s small business "a bang" on social networks, it's able to raise company's SEO, online reputation, company's image and reinforce company's customer service. In short, Juliette knows basically which advantages Social media marketing can provide for a small business. If she could apply it effectively for Ostercompany, there would be so many great developments coming out later for her company.

It led to the result that the company decided to start Social media marketing in the end of April in 2011. Juliette is mainly responsible for Social media marketing, but she also gets support from two other people in company while implementing this. In May 2011, Ostercompany started running a company Blogs on their website. However, after one month they nearly got no response from their customers and had no connection with them through Blogs. In this case, the manager of Ostercompany realized that they didn't get any immediate changes from doing Blogs within one month, so she thought about having access to another social media platforms. Since June 2011, Ostercompany eventually went to Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, Google+, Foursquare, and Hyva. They wanted to establish Social media marketing by creating company profile on almost social network pages. As the result, they needed one more month to set their profile up in each social media platforms as well as to understand how it works. After June 2011, Ostercompany relatively had enough social media tools in their hands in order to execute Social media marketing activities; nevertheless four months coming were "a night-mare" with their manager. Till November 2011, the expected advantages from Social media marketing are nearly blank to Ostercompany. Moreover, Juliette considered disconnecting temporarily the activities in Social media marketing of Ostercompany after November 2011 due to a number of difficulties.

...no improvement in the forth month. I tried to keep all of social media platforms "alive" though it was like a mess. I always have many important things to do with my business rather than writing a blog or posting a word on social media platforms. I feel like our social media networks did not get any attention from customers, followers, and prospects. I know the advantages that Social media marketing can provide for a small business, but I have to confess

that how to make it work for a company is really challenging. (Juliette de Wilde – director of Ostercompany)

Although there were a lot of difficulties that Ostercompany must withstand in term of doing Social media marketing, fortunately Juliette did not shut down these activities eventually. In contrast, in December 2011 she and Angelique van der Made – a professional marketing consultant had many discussions regards of an array of Social media marketing activities executed by Ostercompany. Furthermore, as a marketing consultant Angelique brought out a number of mistakes that Ostercompany had done during the process of implementing Social media marketing. Understanding why Ostercompany did fail in Social media marketing in the first eight months of implementing is such an important aspect that would definitely guide Angelique on the way to fix it out.

Most small businesses nowadays know it's important to utilize Social media marketing, but their owners don't equip themselves enough knowledge what it really means. That is the reason why small businesses often make critical, costly mistakes when setting up their social media marketing strategy. Ostercompany is not the exception. It looks like a boat without monitor. (Angelique van der Made – a professional marketing consultant)

In the last month of 2011, Angelique re-constructed and planned new strategy for Social media marketing in Ostercompany. She has outlined many changes that Ostercompany has to deploy if they still want to do marketing through social media. Consequently from January 2012 to now, Angelique is in charge of Social media marketing at Ostercompany and she has been executing these changes to help this company gaining the potential benefits offered by Social media marketing.

In short, thanks to the timeline above, the movement of operating in Social media marketing at Ostercompany has been visualized and is much easier to approach. This

might be divided into two parts: the first eight months (from April to December) and the coming period (from January till now). In the first period implementing Social media marketing, Ostercompany had to encounter with many difficulties. The manager was standing on the fence between continuing and giving up "this game". She realized that Social media marketing must take a certain amount of effort to raise community's awareness about company in social media networks. She needs much more time and human resources. Social media marketing will take a long-term investment if organization wants to achieve its outstanding benefits. However for a small business it can create a chicken and egg argument. They won't invest in Social media marketing until they see results, but they won't get good results until they increase their investment in Social media marketing. The second period will be started with the changes made by a marketing consultant: goals, strategy, and tactics have been planned clearly and consistently. She found out the mistakes in the first period, the advantages that Ostercompany should pursue, and re-execute Social media marketing activities at Ostercompany. Indeed, this timeline enables the readers visualize a general view about Social media marketing execution process at Ostercompany. The milestones highlighted in the timeline marked the stage of formation, growth or evolution respect with Social media marketing at Ostercompany. Doubtlessly, it has concluded shortly as well as successfully Social media marketing proceeding in Ostercompany.

4.2.2   Social media marketing at Ostercompany: a complementary framework

As it can be seen, in the chapter about literature review of this thesis, the researcher proposed a theoretical framework that would help her to analyze the empirical section. Regarding to this framework, the findings could be analyzed in an extensive view. It means that the process of implementing Social media marketing in Ostercompany could be viewed as similar as the framework. They firstly tried to understand what social media, social media marketing are; which opportunities and challenges that Ostercompany are going to confront with. The next step is that they put their business into Social media marketing by creating an array of objectives, planning Social media

marketing strategy as well as tactics. The last stage of this process is to evaluate Social media marketing performance in Ostercompany. Actually, the findings in December 2011 could probably show these above stages really clear once the marketing consultant got involved into Social media marketing activities at Ostercompany. Nevertheless, one thing should be underlined that in the first period Ostercompany did not really follow the facets mentioned in the framework. Consequently, after having a careful consideration and thanks to the theoretical framework, the researcher has perceived gradually that the utter reason leading to Ostercompany fail in Social media marketing in the first eight months is that the manager did not have an overall picture about Social media marketing before digging into this.

As it can be seen, in the first eight months Ostercompany approached Social media marketing without having background knowledge, doing any research about market and planning. They bumped into Social media marketing because it's a "hot trend" for every business. Or simply, they wanted to give them a try in a new filed of marketing and see how it might work for their organization. Although Juliette could clarify the advantages offered by Social media marketing for her company, she forgot that it's also a double-edged sword. Social media marketing might hurt small business or not bring them benefits if the doer doesn't equip enough knowledge about what they are going to jump into.

I was overloaded with other works during that time. However, I didn't want to postpone Ostercompany going to "social". Though I knew there was no preparation for doing marketing through social media yet, I still decided let do it somehow. (Juliette de Wilde – director of Ostercompany)

After eight months of doing Social media marketing, the director of Ostercompany realized that Social media marketing is not as simply as it has been thought. It is very challenging for a small business owner.

After eight months doing Social media marketing, I could see that our company did not gain any benefits at all from this. (Juliette de Wilde – director of Ostercompany)

I know Social media can help small business as our company create buzz about our products and services and build strategic relationships at no cost. However, it is not easy to gain those advantages as you heard about it or read about it on many means of communications. I should affirm that I had made mistake in the process of deploying Social media marketing. I did not understand how these tools could really work for my company so that I can apply the most effective social media strategies to promote my business. (Juliette de Wilde – director of Ostercompany)

Indeed, not knowing "how" to make an overview about Social media in marketing is a huge problem for Ostercompany. They bumped into Social media marketing by simply having presence on as many social media platforms as they could; actually they did not know how to deploy necessary Social media marketing activities for Ostercompany; and there were no goals, strategy and tactics had been found in the first period. When a company cannot fully follow the stages mentioned in the framework (Table 2 – what social media and Social media marketing are, which opportunities and challenges should be concerned once doing marketing through social media, which goals in Social media marketing that a company expects, and how to establish Social media strategy and tactics) they would probably find out the Social media marketing is hard to achieve success.

Most small businesses nowadays know it's important to utilize Social media marketing, but their owners don't equip themselves enough knowledge what it really means. They couldn't create a wide picture about the development of Social media in their organization. That is the reason why small businesses often make critical, costly mistakes when setting up their social media marketing

strategy. Ostercompany is not the exception. It looks like a boat without monitor. (Angelique van der Made – a professional marketing consultant)

Moreover, relying on these factors in the framework (Table 2) and after the interview with Angelique – professional marketing consultant, the writer could sum up and specify these reasons causing the failure of Ostercompany in the first eight months of doing Social media marketing.

Ostercompany did not have a plan before going to "social". In another way of expressing, they did not visualize which steps that they should proceed from. There was no strategy, target or tactics for Social media marketing going further has been found within eight months. It should be underlined that even though many social media applications are free and admittedly simple to set up a company' profile, they still cost small business time and human resource – and those factors equals money, especially to a small business once a person has tend to in charge of so many tasks. Because of the first mistakes, it leads to the second mistake that Ostercompany's owner jumped into all aspects of the social space at once. It is the fact that Ostercompany in the beginning deployed immediately almost Social media platforms. Consequently, this situation made her get overwhelmed very quickly, and then get lost in the midst of Social media marketing.

One really interesting aspect I have found in Social media marketing is that similarly once you do traditional marketing; you also must choose which channels are good and suitable to your company and your targets. There are a bunch of Social media platforms that you can utilize; however, they do not mean that you must be available on all of those channels and every channel will bring benefits to your company. It's much better when you might get involved in one or two platforms but your company can have a blast on this. (Angelique van der Made – a professional marketing consultant)

Moreover, in a small business, time and resources are limited, so it's paramount to measure every aspect of its business to be sure it's worth the investment. Social media marketing is no exception. However, Ostercompany could not operate this because they had not set any targets for their Social media marketing. As the result, the director did not evaluate how Social media marketing performed within eight months in her organization. The next false is that the director from Ostercompany did not really put time in Social media marketing. Building an online presence definitely takes time. If a small business is truly interested in expanding its network online, the owner should be prepared to put in the time. In term of Social media marketing, it's significantly essential that a person who is responsible for this consistently interact online.

...even you only have time to do it 10 minutes per day but keep on doing it day by day, it would be much better than doing it spontaneously. Once you know you cannot find an enough amount of time for Social media marketing, it is best not to start (Angelique van der Made – a professional marketing consultant).

Furthermore, since Juliette couldn't concentrate on doing Social media marketing due to taking care of many businesses in Ostercompany. She decided to recruit a student who would do it as a part-time job and proposed other staff (the one who is in charge of finance) also did it sometimes. Although she has major responsibility for Social media marketing, they would share jobs in Social media marketing. However, it should be emphasized that intern doesn't have experience in running Social media marketing program and the later one doesn't have time, knowledge and passion enough to execute this. The director admitted that she could not have the resources to arrange Social media marketing productively as well as effectively. This is the next false that was found in Ostercompany's Social media marketing. Social media marketing can make a big impact on small business if only a person who is in charge of this has a certain level of interest, passion and time to make it successful.

In order to achieve success in social media marketing, passion is probably required. I am pretty sure that if you are not passionate about interaction online, your social media marketing efforts will never work. The owner must consider having one of his/her employees operate the program if he or she lacks of time to make it work. (Angelique van der Made – a professional marketing consultant)

In December 2011, Angelique did point out the main reasons leading to mistakes in the process of doing Social media marketing at Ostercompany. Since she already understand about social media and Social media marketing in small businesses, she jumped to the stage of clarifying the opportunities and challenges offered by Social media marketing for Ostercompany. This stage is acutely seen in the theoretical framework (Table 2).

As a matter of fact, Social media marketing could bring lots of benefit to a small business. However, it does not mean that a company can accommodate all of these advantages. They have to take into account, which ones suit for them. It is important to underline those proper profits that a small business can dig into. As the result, Ostercompany also needs to locate which opportunities and demanding Social media marketing might institute in their organization.

Accessing to tremendously potential customers is the first and most crucial advantage that Ostercompany must take into consider carefully. As a company doing business food & beverage, Ostercompany can possibly approaches a number of prospective customers who are already using social networking sites to get related information or other activities. Particularly, in a small business when cash is at a premium it's economical for them to have this kind of access to people spending time on social networks.

...rather than strictly focusing on paid advertising, word-of-mouth referrals, and in-store promotions, I believe that Ostercomapny can now directly find customers that may be interested in their products, based on profiles, active

discussions, keywords or expressed interest. Regardless of what the customers need happen to be, they can be easily recognized on Social media platforms. (Angelique van der Made – a professional marketing consultant)

The second one is to increase Ostercompany online presence. Undoubtedly, Social media marketing is able to assist small businesses to communicate, educate and share information with their prospects and existing customers. Ostercompany can use Social media marketing to build up relationship through constant channels with their target audience easily. It's a great way to find and connect with more of their target market. Here, Ostercompany can gain much exposure by spreading their content, navigating themselves to multiple channels. As a consequent, if a larger audience participating in Ostercompany's posts or sharing their content have tend to learn more about company will click to company's website for gaining information. It means more traffic to their website or more increasing online presence to company. More importantly, it should be noticed that when Ostercompany's visibility have grown up it would pull their SEO (Search engine optimization) increasing quickly. Once Ostercompany become more visible to both current and potential customers, it also means their brand promotion is also achieved. With this benefit, Ostercompany could strengthen their branding as well.

Besides, Ostercompany should take into account the benefits in which Social media marketing can contribute value for their customers and prospects. Once the company is available for its customers through Social media platforms, they could supply interesting and worthy value for their customers quickly and immediately. As the result, the intangible values Ostercompany and their customers' relationship could be enhanced and probably turning potential customers to loyal customers. Moreover, it is the fact that Social media marketing gives customers a chance to be more proactive. Customers now can utilize a bunch of tools providing by Social media platforms such as review sites, video sharing sites or comments to speak out their opinions, exchange information and building up relations among them. Therefore, since consumers are more likely to trust peers rather than companies, Social media marketing could be a powerful asset for company to release their press or messages as well as spread their products or services to lots of customers. Social media marketing would help Ostercompany engage with

their customers and build a good reputation for their business. As it can be seen, when their customers trust into them, they are willing to buy more from Ostercompany, and more than that they could refer it to their friends. Though Social media marketing does not sell things – it stimulates small business sell by increasing and improving relationships. Customers do not only like or listen to Ostercompany but also endorse this organization.

Understanding these advantages that Ostercompany could gain from Social media marketing is important but it's not enough. As a coin has both sides, Social media marketing also brings challenges to the small companies. In order to have a successful social media marketing plan to work, small business owners need to be properly educated and have knowledge which difficulties their companies are going to encounter. Angelique emphasized that there are certain risks and challenges when using Social media marketing and there is no doubt that an increasing of directors are concerned about managing and mitigating these risks. In the case of Ostercompany, she pointed out some challenges once this company launches Social media marketing.

One of the first common challenge or frustration that a small business is now having with Social media marketing is how to turn followers into customers. Having a profile on a social media's platform and then gaining some followers are the easiest steps that small organizations are able to carry out. However, as it is known the last goal of any marketing plan is always to push company's revenue and with Social media marketing every small companies want to reach it as well. Obviously, the way to achieve this purpose is how a small business is capable of gaining a number of new customers as well as maintaining the current ones by applying social media activities in marketing.

In addition, changing the way of communication is definitely a challenge to small organizations. Social media marketing basically is about communicating with their target audience. It's not only how a company spreads their messages to customers as well as potential audiences but also how a company can keep their conversations on tracks. It is probably the most challengeable task in Social media marketing that Ostercompany has to overcome, as they need to initiate two-way conversations with customers and develop relationship with customers through communication and interaction. In other words, the company needs to produce content, share it online and

react with their audience in an effective way. Undeniably, it's essentially crucial for a small organization know how to produce content that is relevant to their target audience.

Providing useful content to social spaces, keeping up with the ongoing publishing demands, and knowing how to manage conversations around these content within a community of interest is an array of difficulties that small businesses have to face in general and Ostercompany does in specific (Angelique van der Made – a professional marketing consultant).

Last at not least, it's the fact that thanks to Social media marketing, small business can create its online communities quickly. Through Social media platforms, their clients tend to give opinions, feedbacks, and comments about the company's products and services or even suggest new ideas about products and services for small business. As the result, small business needs to collect information from their customers' activities. The challenge here is that how companies could utilize their customers' opinions and make them more valuable because this is a potential way to increase company's brand awareness as well as reinforce customers' loyalty.

Defining the advantages Ostercompany can gain from as well as challenges Ostercompany must cope with Social media marketing is definitely necessary step before this company wants to approach Social media marketing. The reason is that this could ease for company once they outline their Social media marketing strategy as well as setting specific targets and which are the next stage are seen in the theoretical framework (Table 2).

Opportunities and challenges are clearly analyzed because it would help me a lot when I take the next step in doing Social media marketing. Thanks to understanding these advantages and disadvantages that Ostercompany might have, I begin to brainstorm Social media marketing strategy for this company (Angelique van der Made – a professional marketing consultant).

A Social media marketing strategy is road map that helps company launch their Social media marketing successfully. Without planning a strategy there is probably no way for a company to reach the competitive advantages that Social media marketing could bring out to them.

> *...don't get distracted from the importance of strategy by the slew of new social media tools or don't get lured into spending money on resources just because "everyone is doing this". Strategy is vitally required because it will let a business know where they're going and what they're going to achieve (Angelique van der Made – a professional marketing consultant).*

Setting goals that Ostercompany hope to achieve from their social media effort is the first criteria in order to build a Social media marketing strategy. When the company determines their goals, they can begin establishing a brand presence, social footprint, gathering resources and venturing into Social media marketing.

As it can be seen in the theoretical framework (Table 2), once the doer understands about social media, Social media marketing in their business, she/her would know how to define the goals that their organization should pursue in Social media marketing. Besides, the threats and opportunities analyzed also enable them to set the goals that companies aim for and might be achieved.

In term of Ostercompany case, as Angelique has already equipped adequate knowledge and useful information about Social media marketing, she begins setting three main goals that the company will definitely pursue once they execute Social media marketing. They include: increasing brand awareness, reputation management and customers' engagement. Ostercompany has existed in market for more than eleven years and their products have been mainly created for high-income consumers; as they get involved in Social media marketing, it's right time for them to enhance their brand awareness, spread their reputation as well as improve their relationships with customers.

With many different kinds of social media platform used, they are able to reach out these goals.
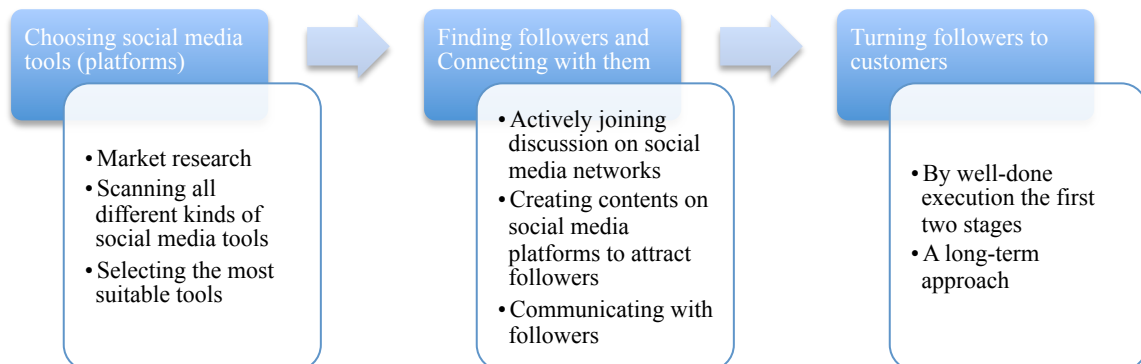
I set these three goals for Ostercompany because I see that they have enough ability as well as resources to get them. Moreover, following these goals will leverage Ostercompany's position in the market and reinforce their competitive advantages to their competitors (Angelique van der Made – a professional marketing consultant).

Furthermore, since each social media platform benefits business in various aspects, it should be noticed that within each social media platform, targets are created dissimilarly. This is a detailed aspect that all Social media marketing doers need to take into account. In another way, it means that Ostercompany will set different targets for Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn and Blogs. Additionally, in case of Ostercompany it would be better to set up the concrete short-term targets for each social media platforms. For example in the interview with the marketing consultant, on the way settling these targets, she would consider to answer those questions within two moths how many fans on Facebook page they want to get more or how many deals they want to achieve through Twitter, or how many events they want to organize on LinkedIn or how many articles they want to share on Blogs. In point of fact, these short-term targets can help business owners ease overwhelming feeling with many social media platforms at the same time and control them more effectively. Plus, using short-term targets for each social media platforms and reaching them, business will have a sustainable foundation that they can already use to expand as well as achieve their long-term goals in Social media marketing.

It's undeniable to confirm that after the opportunities and challenges are defined and targets are determined, Social media marketing strategy could be established. Nonetheless, in order to understand how Angelique create Social media marketing strategy for Ostercompany, the researcher realized that it would be deficient if Social media marketing at Ostercompany were only showed in a big picture. There are actually

many important activities in the process of Social media marketing's implementation that are not mentioned in the first framework. As the result, the following part will present a complementary framework that is able to enhance the researcher's analysis especially in detail aspects about Social media marketing at Ostercompany. The categories of criteria respect with Social media marketing at Ostercompany will be examined in the second framework. Besides, basing on this framework, this study desires to give some comparisons in term of implementing Social media marketing between the first and second period; from that the readers are able to know deeply how these changes that Angelique is going to make in the second period could bring out a better result to Ostercompany.

Table 4: Social media marketing at Ostercompany – a complementary framework

Choosing social media tools (platforms)	Finding followers and Connecting with them	Turning followers to customers
• Market research • Scanning all different kinds of social media tools • Selecting the most suitable tools	• Actively joining discussion on social media networks • Creating contents on social media platforms to attract followers • Communicating with followers	• By well-done execution the first two stages • A long-term approach

> ➤ ***Step 1: Choosing social media tools (platforms)***

As it has been shown in the Table 4, there are three main factors mentioned in the first step: market research, scanning all different kinds of social media tools and selecting the most suitable. Compared with the two periods of Social media marketing at Social media, the research could deliver some analysis following:

In the first period, Juliette went to as many social media platforms as she could. There was no market research or having selection to have the most appropriate tools. In reality, she did not care which one is either good for her business or nor. Till the third month, Ostercompany had presence with seven social media platforms: Blogs, Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, Hyva, Google+ and Foursquare. As the result, she was running out of time and human resources to control them and make them work for her company marketing activities effectively.

On the contrary, in order to build up an efficient Social media marketing strategy Angelique has done this step really carefully. Choosing the suitable social media platforms are definitely important since the Social media marketing activities will take place on them.

Doing some market research is the first thing Angelique did in order to know where to start and which social sites Ostercompany should penetrate and concentrate.

I reckon that it's crucial for businesses especially small businesses to analyze how Social media marketing can help them. They need to observe how people use to social media and how their competitors are leveraging it. Analyze what a company needs from social media marketing and how various social networks like Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn and others can fulfill these needs. Doing homework is definitely important step before a small business wants to execute Social media marketing. (Angelique van der Made – a professional marketing consultant)

During the first eight months Ostercompany jumped on to Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, and Googleplus without even analyzing what they need from these social networks. They claim that their competitors are using Social media marketing so they have no other choice but to adopt Social media marketing. Sooner than later, this company is caught off-guard and their Social media marketing ambitions reach a tame end. Ostercompany should be aware that Social media marketing make a much easier way to

find out what people are saying about a company, who company should be talking to, what they are interested in, and what company should be talking to them about, consequently before doing Social media marketing company needs to tap into online conversations to answer the questions who is talking about Ostercompany? What they are saying about Ostercompany, Ostercompany's competitors? What are Ostercompany's competitors doing in Social media marketing? Where these conversations take place? Once this information is collected, Ostercompany can allocate its resources wisely. The information could be analyzed the mention of company's brand, find out what customers shared and wanted in a particular conversation, get the ratio of positive to negative mentions, discover who talks about this company and on what social media platforms, find fans and detractors, and finally identity threats and opportunities. The process of research will figure out where a business' s target audience is, exam the success and failures of competitors' Social media marketing, create a realistic timelines to make their own Social media marketing and establish a method for track how it works. As a consequence, when a small business spends time doing these researches, they are able to create a solid Social media marketing strategy that will enable them to reach their goals. Moreover, during the time of doing market research, Angelique stressed out that Ostercompany also evidently scanned through almost social media tools that could help them choosing the most applicable platforms in which they could do their marketing activities on.

In deed, once Social media marketing's goals for Ostercompany has been actuated, the next important question is how they can get it. Businesses need to come up with an action plan or strategy with realistic targets as well as feasible time/cost estimates. Doing market research and in-depth analysis a variety of social media tools obviously help Ostercompany appoint where their target audience is and which social media platforms they should use in order to achieve their goals. As same as traditional marketing choosing between different channels such as radio, TV, news or banners, in Social media marketing it's also essential to pick up the right platforms in which company is capable of promoting their products, approaching their customers, as well as enhance their brand name.

Instead of spreading company's profile in almost every social media platforms in first eight months, Ostercompany will concentrate on: Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter and Blogs – the most trafficked social media sites – where the company can meet their target audiences. They contemporary stop activities on Google+, Youtube, and Foursquare and these social media platforms will be taken into account later.

Each social media platform has its own functions and strengths that company should pay attention in order to exploit them efficiently and effectively. In reality, Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn or Blogs can support businesses in a variety of purposes. As a result, business owner has to determine which social media platforms will be suitable with goals that have been appointed (Angelique van der Made – a professional marketing consultant).

Table 5: Social media platforms for marketing activities at Ostercompany

Social media platforms	The first period (April – December2011)	The second period (January – now 2012)
Facebook	Two pages: Ostercompany and Ostergirl fan page	Maintaining Ostercompany fan page and Shutting down Ostergirl fan page
LinkedIn	Ostercompany prolie	Keep and Develop
Google+	Ostercompany profile	Shut down
Blogs	Ostercompany at website	Opening a separately new Ostercompany's blog
Foursquare	Ostercompany profile	Shut down
Hyves (Dutch social network)	Ostercompany profile	Shut down
Twitter	Ostercompany profile	Keep and Develop
Sum up	**7 platforms**	**4 platforms**

Within the first eight months, Ostercompany did maintain two Facebook pages. One is company's Facebook Fan page and another is Ostercompany girl page. However, both of them did not work effectively. After doing homework about their competitors and evaluating their Facebook presence, they decide to keep company's Facebook Fan page and deleted another account. As it is understand, a business fan page on Facebook lets company create a page where customers or fans of its business can register as a "fan" – this is definitely a precise way to expand the presence of a small firm because company's updates will always flow to their fan's pages. This function matches with Ostercompany's goals for Social media marketing. That's the reason to explain Angelique made a decision to keep Ostercompany's Facebook Fan page.

Twitter has grown tremendously over the past year. For small businesses, it offers an incredible marketing platform. There are many advantages that a small business can exploit from Twitter. However, in case of Ostercomapny, they mainly employ those benefits: participating in Industry conversation, customer potential, brand awareness, customer relationship, and online reputation management. Twitter is a great tool that allows business participate in the conversation directly with users, listen to their customers or prospects' discussion, engage with their target audiences, understand what their competitors are doing and keeping their brand in top of followers' mind. Ostercompany can leverage Twitter as an effective listening and communication tool and use the power of Twitter to gather and share information about products, new promotions or company's stories.

Although business owners nowadays tend to pay much more attention focused on social networks than company blogs, blogs still continue to offer great value for small businesses, especially in Ostercompany's case. Regards to the first eight months doing Social media marketing, Ostercompany did their best for blogging compared to another social media platforms. They have kept writing and posting blogs every week to tell their customers or prospects or visitors what company has done and company is going to do. Articles that a business post regularly on their blog about any product, service may transmit lots of necessary information to their visitors. Through blogs, companies could promote the content that they want to express to their visitors. With blogging company can certainly find another way to approach more prospects as well as create a

string with customers. Consequently, it should be emphasized that blogs is a good tool for Ostercompany to build creditability, enhance online reputation, and enforce a business brand establishment. More importantly, Ostercompany will be separated Blogs and their website. It means, they will create a totally new Blogs for company. The reason is that Blogs are company's website work for different purposes and as long as they stay on the same page they cannot maximize their functions and benefits.

LinkedIn is a business oriented social net work for professionals where at least a small business can reserve their business name or create a profile that others can no longer use it. LinkedIn could offer businesses opportunity to demonstrate company's expertise by participating in discussions related to business's industry or reacting with other Linked In memebers. Besides, LinkedIn provides a dedicated section for a business to promote their products and services. In this space, company can provide detailed information about their offerings and links to their website for more information. To better get company's audiences, LinkedIn allows business to create custom campaign based on industry, title, location and other segments. Indeed, LinkedIn is a place not only for attracting new talent (a recruiting tool) but also for establishing connections and build relationships. For Ostercompany, LinkedIn could provide them the following advantages: establishing credibility, online reputation management and connecting with prospects.

> ***Step2: Finding followers and Connecting with them***

After selecting the most suitable platforms, the following step is to find the way so that a company could get their followers and subsequently have connection with them. This step is probably considered as the most paramount one. The reason is that Social media marketing never works for an organization if they cannot use it to communicate with their clients, potential customers or simply the community in which they have common discussions with the company. Carrying on Social media marketing does not only mean "going" to social media platforms but also utilizing them in order to attain the company's goals. Regards to the second step, the researcher delineates three major

facets that will stimulate the business firm executing much more effectively and efficiently. These criteria include: Actively joining discussion on social media networks, Creating contents on social media platforms to attract followers, and Communicating with followers. Besides, this step is also able to give a precise demonstration for the failure of Ostercompany's Social media marketing in the first period.

Ostercompany actually started their activities for Social media marketing firstly on Blogs. Nevertheless, in stead of creating their own page for company's Blogs, they did it on their website. It thus happens sometimes once the content of Blogs and the information on website are identical. Mainly, Blogs gives information about company's products or services, inform new marketing campaign and other company's activities for customers. It is kept updated once to two times per week. However, after one month they nearly got no response from their customers and had no connection with them through Blogs. Though it was not the good start for Social media marketing, Juliette didn't consider it since she was already busy for another businesses. She thought that she just needs keep writing Blogs and perhaps the next few months, the result would come out better.

I simply posted articles on Blogs twice per week. However, sometimes when I need to handle too much things, I skipped it or let other people do it for me. As a director for small company, I had lots of work more important than writing a Blogs. I remember for the 1st month, we just had two or three comments on our Blogs from our customers. Nevertheless, I and even other two people were extremely busy and we all forgot about this. Actually, I have to admit that I didn't have time for Social media marketing since I must deal with loads of work in my company but I tried to maintain our Blogs alive. (Juliette de Wilde – director of Ostercompany)

However, it stayed the same as the first month. There was no better result coming out with Ostercompany's Blogs. One thing should be highlighted that the content of Blogs

were just company's products, activities and it was quite similar to company's website. Plus, the doers did not reply to any readers' comment though in fact there were not so many. As it can be seen there was no reaction with followers has been found on Ostercompany's Blogs.

On the contrary, since the second period begins (January – now), Ostercompany's Blogs stands independently. It means that the Blogs is no longer on Ostercompany's website. Instead of writing about company's new products or services, this Blogs is kept updated once to two times per week by telling the story about Ostercompany. For instance, they write about the parties that they have been served, the people that they have meet, the way of new products have been invented, or simply sharing a daily activity of Oster's girls or boys for readers. Consequently, this content has caught the readers' eyes and they have started commenting on Ostercompany's blog. There much more reactions between the company's blogs and readers have occurred. As the result, till now Ostercompany's Blogs has have more than 80 subscribers. We could see apparently that's the way Angelique brings Ostercompany closer to the followers and get in touch with them.

In reality, Social media marketing is about a two-way flow of conversation. Customers are no longer willing to be passive bystanders; they are now taking an active part in the conversation with businesses. As the result, it is not enough for a company just to push out their content. They are expected to engage with customers, followers and prospects. Listening what customers saying about company's products or services, being proactive in conversations with them and then supporting them if they have any request are the ways to implement Social media marketing. Moreover, in Social media marketing the explosion of consumer-generated content has made it even more important for a company to keep interaction as well as facilitate them through conversations happening on social media platforms. Produce inspiring, educational and interesting content is so compelling that every people want to share it, this is the foundation of a business' Social media marketing.

The researcher is going to take some more examples from Ostercompany's Facebook Fanpage, Twitter and LlinkedIn so that these criteria in the step 2 will be clarified respect with two different periods.

Regarding to Facebook Fanpage, in the first eight months, Ostercompany only got approximately 40 people. Things were not be updated frequently. They posted only some pictures from the parties and some status informing about the next event held by Ostercompany. There was no effort found for having connection with their fans. In reverse, the next period Ostercompany did change the way to post their news. Instead of loading some photos on Facebook without saying anything, Ostercompany now does add captions and ask their fan about this. For example: there is a picture of Ostergirl in new uniform posted and one question was added "Please, let us know what you think about our girls in new look?" Obviously, with a opening question it's easy for Ostercompany have attention from their customers. Besides, Ostercompany creates some short competitions on Facebook for followers or give them a topic to discuss. Moreover, in each party the managers did ask their staff being active to introduce about company's Social media sties for their attendants. Consequently, they might gain a number of new followers. During the time, Ostercompany gets more fans and more importantly, they gets much more reactions from their followers. Definitely, we could see how relationship between company and followers has been built up.

In term of Twitter, in one hand, within the first period as similar as in Facebook all status on Twitter of Ostercompany was focused only on company's product and service. They even did not think of the person who going to read it. In the other hand, Angelique firstly goes to get some new followings who also own kind of business as Ostercompany because this is the way to push Ostercompany in a group in which people also talk about oyster, foods or new cuisine. After that, Ostercompany gets involved with some groups by having discussion with them. This also means that they probably could have connection with their potential consumers. Actually, actively and dynamically participating with activities from these communities on Twitter is accurately effective way for Ostercompany to gain more followers as well as spread out their image on social media networks. Consequently, it's how the company increases the growth of followers and tightens the relationship between their organization and customers.

Respect with LinkedIn, instead of putting on a company's profile and running away from this as in the first period, from January 2012, Ostercompany themselves positively

participate in variety of Foods-beverage business groups on LinkedIn. They join to listen, discuss and share information together. For example: they give the readers the experiences of managing a small business or how to keep competitive advantages on Foods-beverage market, etc… As the result, they do follow to many businesses and at the same time receive a number of advantageous responses. When Ostercompany attentively tries to make connection with others, then the followers will find the way to come to them.

Table 6: Comparison between two periods for doing Social media marketing at Ostercompany

Social media platforms	The first period (April – December2011)	The second period (January – now 2012)
Facebook	36 fans	352 fans
LinkedIn	Followers: 10 Following: 12	Followers: 50 Following: 70
Twitter	Followers: 33 Following: 15	Followers: 223 Following: 50
Blogs	Subscribers: 0	Subscribers: 62

Indeed, Social media marketing for businesses is not simple to create an account or profile on Facebook or Twitter. It only works when companies know how to use it in order to interact with their customers, prospects, or followers. The answer for this question depends on the content that a company will create to share with their social media networks' members. It's fact that in social media platforms, people are creating reading, saving, tagging and sharing quality content which plays a key role to engage users. Therefore, qualifying content to utilize in each social media platforms should be considered attentively and seriously in Social media marketing strategy. As a matter of fact if a company don't produce the kind of content that can bring values to their members, it won't be re-published or shared by their customers, prospects or followers.

It's critically important to post a quality content that can elicit response from social media platforms' members. Certainly, quality content could offer social media networks' members necessary information about company's products or services, and company's promotion campaigns or could raise the discussion about company's products or services among customers. Quality content makes conversations not only among members but also members and business. Once businesses have a content strategy based on solid research, bright ideas will naturally flow about what to create and how to deliver this worthy content.

> *...too many businesses keep in their mind that as long as they have an account on social media sites, people will find them ultimately. However, no one will join their social media networks, or wants to stay, if they cannot receive a source of quality content in their social media updates or posts. Hence, Ostercompany should focus on sending quality updates and develop valuable content to their customers, prospects, and followers (Angelique van der Made – a professional marketing consultant).*

➢ ***Step 3: Turning followers to customers***

As a company could complete the first and second step, the third step will follow easily. However, as it is mentioned in one of the criteria of the third stage, turning followers to customers requires patience from the managers. They will reach this stage in a long-term approach and strong-tie relationship with their followers.

It is the fact that Social media marketing is about building relationships between companies and their customers, prospects and followers. This definitely requires constant connections over a long period time. A business can't expect to gain valuable insight, increase brand awareness or build relationships people who will help them promote their content in a matter of days. Doing Social media marketing will take time

and small businesses should stick with it for a long period so that they might see how it works eventually.

One more thing should be emphasized during the time of executing Social media marketing is that activities on social media platforms are changing all the time and really fast-moving. In order to purse it as a long-term target, it's much better for a business doing Social media marketing frequently then it is to put an hour in once a week. In the first eight month, Ostercompany did it spontaneously and not in a continuous process. That was one of the reasons why their Social marketing media couldn't be worked out. Now they must take into account that they must be consistent when they do Social media marketing. Participating like once time per month or week as before cannot lead them to achieve what they desire from Social media marketing. Hence, creating a schedule to remember when or what business should begin of this post on every social media platforms thus is critically important. Not only will this help a business stay committed with their Social media marketing but creating a social media schedule also improves the efficiency of Social media marketing activities. And evidently, with the rhythm of updated content, company's followers could entirely change to customers.

In the nutshell, the complementary framework has been employed properly and functionally so that the readers could understand Social media marketing strategy at Ostercompany in the second period and see how different it is compared to the first one.

Back to the theoretical framework (Table 2), as it is observed plainly after having long-term goals, short-term targets, and strategic contents, Social media marketing will need to define metrics in order to measure Social media marketing performance. In another way of expression, it means to evaluate whether Social media marketing strategy works for business firms or not. The reason is that if companies cannot measure it, they wouldn't know how to manage it. Furthermore, unless businesses see value addition from Social media marketing, they are not going to put time and money to approach this. Therefore, it's crucial for companies to evaluate the impact of their efforts in Social media marketing. As long as Social media marketing can boost business' ROI (return of

investment), it's worthwhile to invest. In term of measuring Social media marketing, businesses can look at the transactions, new customers, sales, revenues, average order size and funnel goal completions as the key performance indicators.

> *I have to admit that it's a really challenging task to measure Social media marketing ROI since there are no rules or guidelines for this. However, if a business has clear and concise goals for Social media marketing, clarifies their targets in each social media platforms, measuring ROI of Social media marketing is much easier (Angelique van der Made – a professional marketing consultant).*

In addition, it should be noticed that in order to calculate ROI, businesses have to know where they're standing now, as it's to know where they want to get. For instance, from a Social media marketing perspective, a baseline may involve the numbers of Fans on Company's Facebook Fan Page, the numbers of Followers on Twitters or LinkedIn, the numbers of posts retweeted or shared, etc… As the result, after implementing Social media marketing, they will be able to make a comparison to see how their business has changed.

As the evaluation of Social media marketing's success depends on which goals company is trying to achieve, ROI measurement might be divided into two ways: qualitative and quantitative. Qualitative measurement is based on the connection between the company and its community, and among its users. While in financial terms, ROI usually relates to revenue and profits, it's a different proposition when it comes to Social media marketing. The achievement from social media platforms may not always be assessed by financial term. Regarding to qualitative measurement, it might answer these questions: is a business being a part of its industry's conversation, did a business build key relationships with their customers or followers, did a business engage and support their followers? Qualitative evaluation helps companies see how their brand awareness is spread through social media platforms or simply assesses the improvement of their goodwill in the customer community. Meanwhile, quantitative methods will

depend on website analytics, social mentions, SEO ranking, link clicks, and newsletter or email subscribers. In this method, business owners could realize how Social media marketing may help boost traffic on their business website or enhance their business SEO. With quantitative measurement, these concrete short-term targets in each social media platform are easily measurable and for long-term goals business owners are able to determine their position within social media networking. Most social media applications have some type of analytics associated with their platforms that could be used as quantitative measurement as well.

> *I will use both of methods: qualitative and quantitative to measure ROI's Social media marketing for Ostercompany because it can show me clearly how Social media marketing is working and which targets or goals company has reached (Angelique van der Made – a professional marketing consultant).*

Talking about the first eight months, we could easily recognize that Ostercompany did not evaluate Social media marketing's performance. They had no concern about ROI Social media marketing or even firm didn't feel they could adequately assess the return they get from their investment in Social media marketing. Since they did not set specific goals for Social media marketing, there would be no way to monitor this.

> *I did not think about how to measure Social media marketing performance during the time Ostercompany launched it. I suppose it would have some tools or metrics but I don't know. (Juliette de Wilde – director of Ostercompany)*

However, as it is stated above, in the second period Angelique has been taken it into account. Although during the interview Angelique emphasized this stage so many times, unfortunately the research could not study deeper to find out how it's actually going and

has been acquired with Ostercompany in the second period. This information is confidential.

In brief, there is a lot of modification in Social media marketing of Ostercompany after eight months of execution. Seemly, these changes are driving Social media marketing of Ostercompany in a right way in which social media channels online will market Ostercompany's products and services, which surely help them in creation of strong brand name, increasing customers' awareness and the amount of sale.

5 DISCUSSION AND CONCULSION

In this session, the discussion of findings firstly is presented. The following part is the limitations of the study. Next, the practical implications of the study will be mentioned. Future research suggestions will end the fifth chapter.

5.1 Discussion of Findings

This part presents a comparison between the conceptual framework of the study based on a combination of existing theories and concepts on the topic and the findings of the study. The relations between the original research questions, the theoretical framework and what this study has discovered are discussed.

The purpose of this study is to examine the extent to which Social media marketing is utilized in a small business. Using theoretical concepts are drawn from social media and Social media marketing, this thesis demonstrates how a small business employs Social media marketing that are sought in the case study of Ostercompany. Moreover, in the process of analysis case study, the writer also finds out that the challenges and opportunities offered by Social media marketing are concerned deliberately by a small business. Further more, measuring Social media marketing's performance is taken into account in the implementing process.

Both literature review and case study show that Social media marketing nowadays has created a buzz in every business corner. From small businesses' perspective, entrepreneurs are no longer to turn their back with this "hot trend".

They all perceive that Social media marketing can be a phenomenal marketing channel for small businesses. In a short way of expression, Social media marketing helps companies build a network of customers and potential customers, stay in touch with those who are interested in their products and services. Thanks to social media platforms, small businesses and their followers have created two-way of communication and build a relationship. Consequently, business owners is able to see that Social media marketing ultimately build up their company's bottom line by forming of additional sales, increasing brand awareness, and managing company reputation. Indeed, Wilson (2010) argues that social media marketing is a promotional activity whereby a business

targets customers or prospects through social media sites in an effort to increase sales, strengthen brand loyalty, or achieve other business goals.

Businesses make effort in Social media marketing; it will lead them become more visible to their targeted audience. In another way, Social media marketing will enhance company in the search engine.

However, as mentioned in theoretical part and attained in the case study, small business owners should be aware that acquiring success in Social media marketing is a challenging mission. Social media marketing doesn't mean creating a company prolife on all social media platforms and leaving them without taking care. Social media marketing will ask for a huge effort from a small business if they want to gain its superiorities.

More over, from Ostercompany's case, we are able to see that business owner of this company made a hasty decision to approach Social media marketing. She was strongly affected by the hotness of Social media marketing on market as well as those activities of Ostercompany's competitors in most of Social media platform. However, as it is emphasized in many previous researches, without planning a good preparation, it might be difficult for small businesses to achieve success in Social media marketing. It's the fact that there are quite many small businesses, which tend to catch up Social media marketing by implementing quickly on many social media platforms. They seemly forget that a blindly jumping into Social media marketing is a terrible mistake that can create major setbacks. This can be seen clearly in Ostercompany case study, as they did not achieve expected advantages from Social media marketing within the first eight months. Spending time to acknowledge about Social media marketing is such a critically important step that small business owners need to fulfill before they want to execute this. Businesses make effort in Social media marketing; it will lead them become more visible to their targeted audience.

In reality, Social media marketing includes a variety of social media platforms that easily make a small business get lost into this. Those platforms and their tools can constitute as an amaze that overwhelms small business's enterprisers. As the result, in order to make it a successful one, small business owners need to equip themselves

enough knowledge about Social media marketing, containing the concept of social media, marketing through social media platforms, comprehensive strategy and a measuring method for the company's performance.

These findings in case study matches with the theoretical framework in which a small business should learn about social media and then bring it into marketing. Regarding to social edit marketing, entrepreneurs will take into account the opportunities and challenges that they have to confront, think about a proper strategy and evaluate its progression.

With a small business, social media is an ideal place in which company can have two way of communication with their customers, prospects and followers. They see that in a social network they can share information to customers, listen to customers and discuss to customers. This point of view was also found by Kaplan and Haelein (2009) when they stated that Social media is an array of activities, practices, and behaviors among communities of people who gather online to share information, knowledge, and opinions using conversational media. Relying on these functions from social media, doing marketing through is entirely possible. In term of social media, even though it has been studied and divided into many categories small businesses tend to concentrate on some most popular platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, etc… They normally have access to these platforms at fist. Nevertheless, business owners should take into consideration that different industries are probably adopting in different social media platforms, they need to start using social media platforms in which they could reach more customers and prospects. Facebook, Twitter, or LinkedIn are highly used by people but there are so many another social media sites that might be specialize for their own business field. In point of fact, a business often experiences in several social media platforms. Ostercompany could be a particular example once the company is available on five social networks: Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, Foursquare, and Blogs. Since social media have unaccountable platforms, Harris (2009) supposes that it's easily understandable why a business has launched marketing through several social media sites.

In addition, in many previous studies about Social media marketing, researchers underline that while many businesses have started using Social media marketing in their

efforts to reach its advantages many still have not positioned it as their top priority. Business owners are able to know whether their organizations need applying for Social media marketing or not if they take time to learn about Social media marketing. In Ostercompany's research, it's evident to realize how important for spending time on gaining knowledge about Social media marketing. Companies should observe which social media platforms their customers or prospects usually make their activities, which topics they would like to share, discuss or comment, and how their competitors utilize this successfully or fall. As the result, after doing those researches, small businesses will see where they are and their competitors in several social media sites, which contents their customers, potential customers or followers talk about. Business owners can have in their mind a picture about social media, before giving it a shot into marketing.

John (2011) claims that small business owners cannot afford to touch Social media marketing without strategy. In the first period, Ostercompany didn't make a strategy for Social media marketing. Consequently, Social media marketing didn't work as Ostercompany 's director had expected. After the first period, the marketing consultant of Ostercompany comes up with Social media marketing strategy. As it can be seen, in term of this, Ostercompany determines their goals in Social media marketing and their targets in each social media platforms. This way of approach is like with the perspective from Weinberg (2009) when he states that the strategy in Social media marketing is that company's social media goals and objectives and how they tie into overall company goals, how to take part into social media sites, and how to build as well as strengthen relationships between companies and users. Though the tactics of Social media marketing couldn't be explored specifically in case study due to some confidential reasons, there are some crucial factors taken into account. They are content, time, interaction and human resources. In order to launch Social media marketing those factors play an important role with a small business. Content is a fundamental in Social media marketing; this is simply understood as a bridge that connects customers, prospects, followers and customers within social media platforms. Interaction is a new way of communication in which companies should be highly active their social community. Moreover, as it can be seen from case study, Social media marketing needs an amount of time to carry out. Social media marketing should be kept in daily time or even in hours because the conversations in social network have been created

continuously. Besides, business owners have to select who is responsible for Social media marketing. Since it can provide a huge of benefits, person who is in charge of this is able to understand how to achieve worthy opportunities in Social media marketing.

The next finding should be discussed is measuring Social media marketing. In case study, Ostercompany struggled with evaluating Social media marketing performance in the first period because there were no goals and targets established. Sterne (2010) affirms that measurements without context or specific business goals are meaningless. That's the reason why in the second period, Ostercompany is capable of determining the methods to measure their Social media marketing performance. Qualitative and quantitative measurements are also mentioned in the case study. The different kinds of measures and what information they prove contributes the company in analyzing the social media marketing investments and steering the investments to right decision. These measures also give valuable insights about the relationship between company and their network community, company brand awareness, online presence and in a long-term investment it could show the additional sales in business.

Small businesses need to be major commitment for which social media platforms utilized. Doing it right means business owners have to create a strategy in which businesses know about their goals and targets settled for their social media networks. When the organizations already establish goals and targets for their Social media marketing, their performance's evaluation will be created much easier. Today, social media marketing is becoming a must for businesses everywhere, so take the time to learn how to best utilize this method of marketing and a small business will soon see the benefits attached.

5.2 Limitations

The study includes the social media marketing in small businesses and therefore excludes corporations or multinational companies. Besides, there are many platforms used in Social media marketing and the measurement is probably different from each other. However, the study only mentions a general measurable tool.

In addition, Social media marketing is still growing up and revolutionizing. As the result, this research might not able to cover all of Social media characteristics or discuss

enough the role of Social Media as well as how it has been employed in small businesses. Moreover, there are limited amount of research available about Social media marketing because it is quite new as a study topic.

As mentioned above, since Social Media comprises of a variety of platforms or tools or social Webs, the research will not discuss specifically each of them such as how to utilize Facebook or YouTube in Social media marketing for small businesses. Instead of this, the research only focuses on how to synthesize effective Social media marketing for small-sized companies.

Another limitation to the research is that the primary information was collected from the case company with interview questions written in English, which was not the mother tongue for interviewees. A potential problem related to interviews done with secondary language is that it might conduct a risk of misinterpretation. The interviewee probably misunderstands the content or tone of the interview question. However, interviewees have already used English in working as well as daily life for a long time; they can show excellent level of English skills.

In term of empirical part, one more limitation should be listed is the specification of research findings. Since the number of interviewees is low, the results of this study are not statistically generalized and might only apply in this particular case study. The findings explored from this thesis bring the readers insights particularly into how Oester Company can use Social media in Marketing. The approaches for Oester Company might not be relevant for other companies.

5.3 Practical Implications

This study enables better understand how a small business can deploy Social media in Marketing, how they can measure it, and what benefits and pitfalls Social media marketing can bring into this company. The empirical findings confirm previous findings, theories and concepts concerning the benefits and disadvantages of Social media marketing, how it is disposed and evaluated in an organization. It was interesting to see how the empirical findings correspond to the literature and the conceptual framework of analysis.

Evaluating the practical implications of this study for business practitioners may prove challenging, due to that each organization is a unique entity, with different traits, needs and goals. Nevertheless, it should be highlighted perhaps the most valuable contribution of this study is that Social media marketing for a small business is not as simple as it seems. There are many tasks that small organizations must do before they go to social network. Actually, a small business owner breaking into social media could face a scary and daunting assignment if they do not equip enough knowledge themselves about Social media marketing: objectives, strategies, targets and tactics. An important advice for small business building Social media marketing is that the managers must determine what they desire to achieve from Social media marketing efforts. Once strategic goals, objectives, and targets are defined, it's time for a small business to begin establishing itself into Social media marketing. Moreover, in order to evaluate Social media marketing, these steps mentioned above are essentially necessary.

Besides, it is highly recommend for business companies when approaching Social media that though in reality Social media marketing can do remarkable things for small businesses, it's not a must-have for all of them. Small companies still can gain their goals in marketing without entering in Social media. Being frustrated due to the booming of Social media marketing and then deciding to get involved it without a plan is not a clever and effective way for a small-sized organization. Learning, understanding and building a road map before proceeding Social media marketing might be the successful key for a small business.

5.4 Implications for Future Research

The present study at least suggests four directions for further research. Firstly, this Master's thesis researched how social media is implemented generally in small business marketing. It therefore would be also interesting to study how social media can be used in a specific small business: business-to-consumer or business-to-business, and if there are any similarities or differences in comparison between two categories.

One of the key words that emerged in the discussions in this study was target. Hence, how deeply a small company can make an array of concrete targets for Social media marketing, and what roles of this aspect play in Social media marketing measurable

scales certainly could be a promising area for further studies. Additionally, as mentioned in empirical discussion, small businesses nowadays struggle with selecting which kind of Social media channel to pursue so that they could maximize its advantages in marketing. Therefore, investigating more how small companies could find for themselves one or more accurately suitable kind of social media channel such as Facebook, Twitter, Linkedin or Google+ would also be a potential topic. Plus, further research could find answers to the question how small business owners are able to manage their Social media channels or activities in marketing effectively. This would be a considerable topic indeed to research further. Finally, regards to a small business, it's likely that Social media marketing may consume lots of time and energy; as a result a future research is needed in order to help entrepreneurs answer the question whether they themselves should do Social media marketing or use outsourcing.

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7 APPENDICIES

Appendix 1:

Interview form for Ostercompany's director

Background information

- What are the title and the current role of you in the company?

- How long have you been active in the company?

- In which industry is the company active?

Social Media and Social Media Marketing

1. What do you think about Social Media and Social Media Marketing?

2. What kinds of Social Media does your company use in marketing today?

    a. If several kinds of Social Media are used, which is the most important one?

    b. What is the main reason for selecting these kinds of Social Media for marketing purposes?

3. For how long has your company done marketing through Social Media?

4. What is the main reason for your use of Social Media in your company's marketing plan?

5. Has the increase in the use of Social Media changed the way in which your company does marketing?

    a. If yes, how?

6. Does marketing through Social Media differ from marketing through traditional media in your company?

    a. If yes, how?

7. What opportunities do you see in using social media marketing?

8. What challenges do you see in using social media marketing?

Objectives, tools and strategies for Social Media Marketing

9. For what purposes does your company use Social media marketing?

10. Do you set goals for your Social media marketing activities?

    a. If yes, how and which goals?

11. What strategies do you use in your Social media marketing?

12. How your company has launched Social media marketing?

13. Do you find Social media marketing as a cost effective way to market?

    a. If yes, how?

    b. If no, why?

14. Do you address to a specific audience when you market your products on different Social media platforms?

    a. If yes, which audience and where?

    b. If no, why?

Measuring Social media activities

15. Does your company measure the effective of Social media marketing?

    a. If yes, how? (Comes to question 18)
    b. If no, why?

16. Which factors that your company use to measure Social media marketing?

17. If several kinds of measures are used, which is the most important one and why?

18. What are challenges you see in measuring Social media marketing?

19. What are advantages you see in measuring Social media marketing?

Appendix 2:

Interview form for Ostercompany's marketing consultant

Background information

- What are the title and the current role of you in the company?

- How long have you been active in the company?

Social Media and Social Media Marketing in general

1. What do think the use of Social Media and Social Media Marketing in small business?

2. What opportunities do you see in using social media marketing?

3. What challenges do you see in using social media marketing?

Social Media and Social Media Marketing in Ostercompany

4. What do you think about the use of Social media marketing in Ostercompany? Do you think they did utilize Social media marketing effectively?

5. Which is your opinion about whether Ostercompany should continue doing Social media marketing or not?

   a. If yes, what are the reasons?

Objectives, tools and strategies for Social media marketing

6. From your perspectives what purposes Ostercompany should use Social media marketing? Or Which advantages do you think Ostercompany could gain from utilizing Social media marketing

7. Do you set goals for Social media marketing activities in Ostercompany?

   b. If yes, how and which goals?

8. What strategies do you use in your Social media marketing?

9. How you will re-launch Social media marketing in Ostercompany?

10. How will you remain Social media marketing in Ostercompany?

11. How many Social media platforms will be utilized in Social media marketing?

12. Will you address to a specific audience when you market Ostercompany's products on different Social media platforms?

    c. If yes, which audience and where?

    d. If no, why?

Measuring Social media marketing activities

13. How could you measure the effectiveness of Social media marketing for Ostercompany?

14. Which factors that you could use to measure Social media marketing for Ostercompany?

15. If several kinds of measures are used, which is the most important one and why?

16. What are the advantages you see in measuring Social media marketing generally and specifically in Ostercompany?

17. What are the challenges you see in measuring Social media marketing generally and specifically in Ostercompany?