

## Impact of Social Media Marketing In Business To Business Marketing

Donia Waseem  
Dr. Lubna Ayub Asif

### Abstract

*Communications are profoundly affected with the advent of Internet. With the technological advancements globally, the communications are made multifaceted. Various online platforms are developed where these communications take place. These platforms have made it easier for individuals to communicate with each other. Among these new platforms, the emerging new structure is known as the social media networking. Social Media Networking is basically an online web based service which allows the individuals to create profiles with limited access depending upon the kind of website and the rights enabled by the user itself. Business to business marketing (B2B) is different from the traditional marketing as the industrial components are chosen through a rigorous decision-making process. This research paper explores the relationship between the B2B marketing and social media, and endeavors to identify the key factors in building the corporate brand. A qualitative study was carried out through semi-structured interviews which developed around the social media impact on B2B marketing. An analysis of about forty B2B marketing professionals serving different organizations in the global context was carried out. The interview data were recorded on using the note expansion procedure where word-by-word record and more on the notes were recorded which revealed interesting insights regarding corporate image, corporate reputation, corporate loyalty and corporate name with respect to the corporate brand name in connection with the medium of marketing communication used. The insights developed through this study would be useful in the context of B2B Marketing Professionals in assisting them in developing the marketing communication strategy.*

**Keywords:** Social Media, Business to business Marketing, Corporate Brand

---

Donia Waseem is Candidate for Masters in Management Sciences at SZABIST, Karachi, Pakistan, donya\_waseem@hotmail.com

## 1. Introduction

### 1.1. Background of the study

With the emergence of internet, new technological platforms are made for better understanding and communicating with consumer. The extent of public debate in these areas is ever-widening and is made on the significance of strategic marketing in the organizational strategy. Due to the internationalization and technological advancements, in order respond to the competitors actions more visibility is demanded. Products have become parallel to each other with the increasing scale of competition in the market. It is therefore necessary to differentiate between physical and non-physical aspects. Hence, companies are focusing more on marketing communications in their strategic goals.

The B2B marketing is different from the traditional means of marketing. The customer in B2B marketing is a sophisticated purchaser who goes through a rigorous process to purchase the products or services and doesn't do impulse buying. The traditional ways of marketing and brand management are constantly challenged by the new social media marketing.

As opposed to the conventional marketing, social media platform permits companies to reach new target group more promptly. The target audiences also respond to the messages. As a marketing tool it offers more visibility of the organization even though it is not a direct selling channel. Social media when used as a marketing channel offers room for restructuring. As opposed to the traditional marketing, social media marketing platforms are explored widely as they connect the organizations with the consumers without any disruption from a middleman.

### **1.2. Problem Statement**

The research aims to explain the impact of social media marketing when it is used as a marketing communication tool. Also, it examined the effects of Social Media on Corporate Brand upon the kind of marketing medium used.

### **1.3. Significance of the research**

Social media has become a part of everyone's life and it is something that influences our life daily. Social media plays a vital role in how individuals interact with each other and it's not slowing down its pace. This new medium has started to become a part of an organization marketing communications and has started to bridge a communication gap.

In the business to consumer (B2C) market, social media role is widespread whereas its role in B2B marketing is still imprecise. Companies now buy from people and social media certainly provides more informal, personal touch on to the otherwise formal company.

This paper tries to find out the impact of social media particularly in B2B marketing and tries to find the relation of the corporate brand with the kind of marketing medium being used. Social media and its impact on B2B marketing is fairly a new notion, so the empirical study on this topic is limited. It is necessary to comprehend the B2B marketing professionals' insights on social media and its impact on marketing communication strategy. Hence, exploring this new medium for B2B marketing professionals would be valuable. The outcomes of the research/study are of significant benefit and they are applicable in practice for the B2B marketing personnel who are seeking its impact.



### 1.4. Research Methodology and Methods

The methodology used for this research paper is drawn by post-positivist approach. This approach identifies the objectives and adds empirical element to the mentioned research problem. The research study seeks to find a dialogue on the subject and provides a wider outlook whilst discovers credible solutions. The method I adopted for my research is qualitative research method, namely interviews.

The qualitative research methods are associated with an interpretive approach in which it depends upon a non - numeric meaningful data interpreted through words. As per Mack et al. (2005), Qualitative research methods effectively identify the intangible facts like socioeconomic situations and demographic profile. The part of such factors may not be apparent in the other methods. Following the accepted research ethics, I'm protecting the identification of the respondents who I interviewed for this research and instead of giving their names I have numbered them. Myers (2009) suggest that many research methods like interviews, observations, focus groups, grounded theories, repertory grid technique, diary methods were developed to study business and management trends prevailing in social environment.

#### 1.4.1. Qualitative Methods

In my research study, the reasons for using interviews will also be discussed. The data collected for this research is primary in nature. It is collected with the idea to add personal in-depth introspective opinions, and manifold viewpoints to the study.

#### 1.4.2. Interview

In my research, the research method adopted is interviews. Interviews are the most

common method for data collection in a qualitative research. As defined by Kahn & Cannell (2009), a purposeful discussion between two or more people is known as an interview. According to Collis & Hussey (2009), in an interview research participants respond to the questions in terms of what they do, think or feel. This approach focuses on the interpretive approach where the interviews explore the subject under consideration based on understanding, opinions, attitudes and feelings that are common in people. Hence, the study of human behavior through interviews can be a useful method.

As Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill (2009) suggests that the direct response of the participants is very useful for the researcher to gather valid and reliable data. Collis & Hussey (2009) states that interviews are further divided into various categories i.e., one-to-one, teleconferences, online or visual aid which can be used within individual or groups. With respect to the structures of the interview, these interview typologies are further divided into various categories such as structured interview, semi-structured interview and unstructured interviews. Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill (2009) concedes that when referred to the qualitative research interview as semi-structured and unstructured interviews are non- standardized.

#### **1.4.3. Research Design**

Now, the research design will be discussed to transform the research questions into a research study. The research begins with the research sample which covers the sample size and research participants. It further elaborates the details of the structure. Lastly, the data analysis method is discussed.

Convenience and Snowball sampling technique is used as a sampling strategy as the population in study was hidden or hard-to-reach and also due to the time constraints.

#### 1.4.4. Target Population And Sample

I collected data from total forty incumbents from B2B companies. The participants consisted of thirty five male and five female young urban B2B working marketing professionals as our target research participants. The age ranged between 25 – 35 years with minimum masters level education working in the middle management of a B2B company. The data was collected during February-April 2012 in Karachi.

The sample size is small but appropriate considering the nature of study which concerns urban and educated internet literate segment of the society. Also, the data is manageable within the time boundaries of the project.

#### 1.4.5. Data Collection

Different structures are used for interviews. The technique discussed is the structured in-depth face-to-face interview because it is one of the techniques used in this study. In in-depth interviews the researcher gets in touch with the research participants with the help of structured questions upon which the questions are explored. In this method, I attempt to comprehend the participant's reactions and behaviors when answering the marketing communication mediums. Therefore, the qualitative approach is a justified method in this study. Depending upon the flow of conversation, each interview is kept between twenty to thirty minutes.

### 2. Literature Review

During the last two decades, the communication environment has changed significantly. According to Mangold & Faulds (2009), the expansion of broadband and high-speed connectivity has created enormous communication technologies. These technologies have made it easier for a person to communicate with other people globally. As the



Center for Media Research (2004) illustrates, Internet has outpaced all other traditional media. Lewis (2010) agrees that these transformations have influenced the theory and practice of all areas of communication.

According to Barnes, Dupre and Fredrick (2009), human beings' basic need to feel connected to others and aspires to belong to a group. Geographic boundaries, social, cultural and economic elements come after when these basic needs are fulfilled. With the technological innovation in recent years these needs have been the same yet they've taken a new medium in the world of internet. Groups of likeminded people form an online community and socially interact with each other on an online platform of social networking and organizations alike. With the technological advancements and fierce competition in the industries, companies find it difficult to distinguish itself from its competitor. Therefore, the necessity for marketing communication has grown in companies' strategy.

Bulmer & DiMauro (2009) concedes that the distinctive feature of a successful business is to convince the consumers to purchase the products or services and to capture the intention of the target audience. Traditionally, it was attained by references, advertising, or promotions. However, with the commencement of the new technologies and the increase in usage of internet, organizations are utilizing social media to conduct business.

### **2.1. Internet & Social Media**

Social Media and Internet when combined offers enormous room for reformation and creativity. Though social media doesn't offers direct selling yet it offers organizations to gain more visibility through effective tools. The target audiences respond to the messages much faster than the conventional marketing and hence the communication becomes multifaceted.

The term social network sites or social media are the two terms often used interchangeably.

As per Mangold and Faulds (2009), social media comprises a wide range of online forums which includes blogs, chat rooms, company sponsored discussion forums/boards, emails, products/services rating websites, moblogs (i.e. websites containing digital images, audio or visual aids) and last but not the least the social networking websites).

According to Constantinides & Fountain (2007) Kaplan & Haenlein (2010) the most vital forms can be divided into the below mentioned categories:

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

According to Boyd & Ellison (2007), social network is an online web based service that allows users to create a profile with a view to restricted access of the profile depending upon the privacy rights enabled by the user. The nature of the information shared among the connections may vary from site to site.

According to Dailey (2009), Social Media is an online content constructed by using a structured and extremely publishable and accessible technology. Significantly, it seems to discover a drastic shift in how people share the information and content. The social media industry is initiating new tools as the technology advances around the globe. The prominent being LinkedIn, Face Book and Twitter etc.

The supply and consumption of online content are the two roles of members Social Networks. This results in engaging and then influencing the consumers to large extent. If the message received by the influencer is valuable, it becomes viral. Gladwell (2000) finds that viral are ideas, products, messages and behaviors spread just like viruses do. This is extremely useful for marketers as the information to the user is referred to them by a trusted friend in their network and not pushed at them.



There is an increasing debate on the importance of strategic marketing with respect to the organizational strategy. As the markets are internationalized technologically, it's difficult to respond to the customer demands and greater visibility is demanded to distinguish from competition.

## **2.2. Social Media**

Blackshaw & Nazzaro (2004) argues that the strategies and tools for communication have transformed drastically with the evolution of social media. The new media structure defines that new online sources of information are created, circulated, initiated and used by consumers on educating each other about products, brands, personalities, services and issues.

Matthews (2010) states that the social media marketing permit organizations to communicate with stakeholder. These stakeholders permit them to shift from a single mode of corporate communication to a multi-way dialogue between the consumer and the organization. From the old notion of consumer selling to the new one of consumer engaging, the organizational rules of marketing communication has been revolutionized by social media, social media has changed the rules of marketing communications of organizations.

From the notion of selling to a consumer to the new practice of engaging the consumer, social media has changed the rules of marketing communications of organizations. As Kotler (2006) states a brand is assurance, a promise. Everything we see, hear, feel, think, read, etc about a product, service or business, it's the synopsis of perception. Scott (2007) states that social media has changed the rules for strategic communications. Fritsch (2009) presented that branding has become more important with the proliferation of media choices.

According to Television Bureau of Advertising, Inc. (2009), the umbrella term which

Blackshaw & Nazzaro (2004) argues that the strategies and tools for communication have transformed drastically with the evolution of social media. The new media structure defines that new online sources of information are created, circulated, initiated and used by consumers on educating each other about products, brands, personalities, services and issues.

Matthews (2010) states that the social media marketing permit organizations to communicate with stakeholder. These stakeholders permit them to shift from a single mode of corporate communication to a multi-way dialogue between the consumer and the organization. From the old notion of consumer selling to the new one of consumer engaging, the organizational rules of marketing communication has been revolutionized by social media, social media has changed the rules of marketing communications of organizations.

From the notion of selling to a consumer to the new practice of engaging the consumer, social media has changed the rules of marketing communications of organizations. As Kotler (2006) states a brand is assurance, a promise. Everything we see, hear, feel, think, read, etc about a product, service or business, it's the synopsis of perception. Scott (2007) states that social media has changed the rules for strategic communications. Fritsch (2009) presented that branding has become more important with the proliferation of media choices.

According to Television Bureau of Advertising, Inc. (2009), the umbrella term which defines the social media marketing is the integration of the traditionally separate corporate departments such as sales, marketing, customer services and public relations. This media includes the online technologies, practices used to generate online content, opinions experiences, insight and perspectives. The following are a few examples:

- Social Networks (E.g. Facebook, Myspace)
- Micro-Blogging (E.g. Twitter)
- Video Sharing (E.g. Youtube)
- Photo Sharing (E.g. Flickr)

- Wikis (E.g. Wikipedia)
- Blogs (Blogger, Wordpress)
- Virtual Worlds (E.g. Secondlife)
- Videoconferencing Instant Message Chats
- Social Event/Calendar Systems (E.g. Eventful)
- Social Bookmarking Sites (E.g. Delicious, Digg, Stumble Upon)
- Gaming Sites
- Internets
- Podcasts
- News Aggregation Sites etc

According to Mangold & Faulds (2009), one aspect of social media is parallel with the traditional media communication tools. This allows companies to use social media platforms such as blogs, facebook and MySpace groups. Most of such online forums are either sponsored by organizations or individuals.

The second unique aspect of social media is to bridge the communication gap between the customers and organizations. Gillin (2007) points that Conventional marketing insight held the view that if it's a dissatisfied customer, he/she will inform ten people but with the beginning of new revolutionize era in social media marketing the same dissatisfied customer can inform 10 million consumers at one click.

The unrestricted ability of the consumers over these platforms to communicate restricts the control companies have over the content and information being shared. Vollmer and Precourt (2008) in their book 'Always On' affirms that the consumers have a greater access and command over information and media with the advent of these new online platforms. According to Veron-Jackson & Cullinane (2008), these new platforms are changing the control of the marketers in the way these messages are received. As Li & Bernoff (2008) states that the marketing communication strategies must include an element of social media.



### 2.3. Paradigms: Traditional vs. New Communications

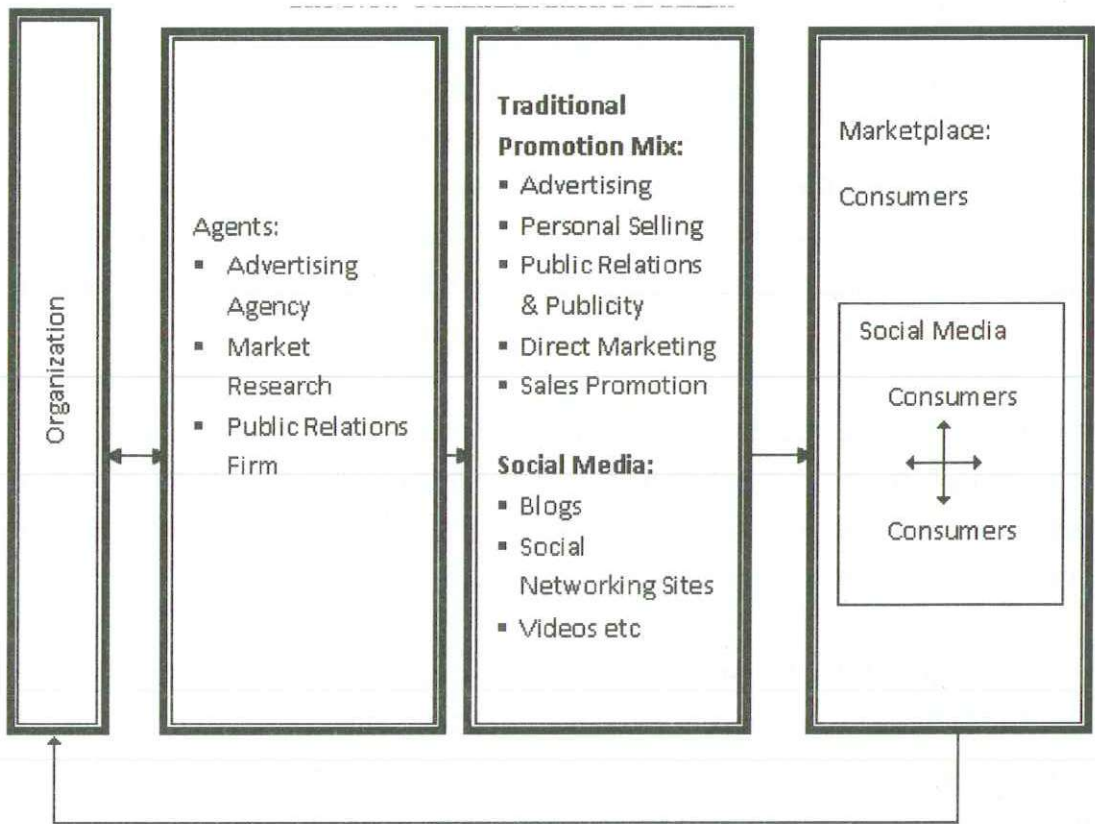
The traditional communication processes have a higher degree of control over the communication process as opposed to the new communication processes. In the traditional communication process, the communication elements are specified in association with the outsourced agencies like advertising agency, market research consultants and public relation firms. This however has eroded the control over the timings, frequency and content. The information about the products and services spreads through the traditional promotional mix. As Li & Bernhoff (2008) agrees that this has effected all aspects of consumer behavior with more power being given to the consumers unlike traditional marketing.

Mangold & Faulds (2009) suggests that the managers in new communication paradigm should carefully analyze the nature of discussion carried out by users of online social media. The impact of the interaction among consumer in social media is illustrated by Vollmer & Precourt (2008) who states that consumers require more control over their usage of media due to the on-demand and instant access to information at their ease. As Lempert (2006); Vollmer & Precourt (2008) suggests that to make purchasing decisions, consumers are engaging more frequently to several other types of social media. According to Foux (2006), social media as compared to the traditional media is considered as a more trustworthy source.

These trends have severely decreased the effectiveness and realism of the traditional communications. The new communication requires crucial changes in the management attitude and assumptions about the communication strategy. First, information regarding the products and services are being communicated among consumers via the social media platform. Second, the information being shared influences the consumer behavior from the first stage that is the information acquisition to post-purchase expression of

satisfaction and dissatisfaction. Third, they're reducing their reliance on advertising as a source of information to guide their purchase behavior. Finally, managers traditionally had high level of control over the communication.

The New Communication Paradigm



Source: Mangold W. G., Faulds D. J. (2009)

Marketing communication involves identifying the target market/audience and bridging the communication gap. The new approach focuses on bridging the gap over the different stages in the buying and post buying cycle. These stages are pre-selling, selling,

consumption and post-consumption stages. It's necessary for a marketer to effectively communicate and understand the stages of the decision making process as per the needs of the customer. Organizations now seek to answer not only "How we can reach our customers?" but also "How can our customer reach us?"

## 2.4. Business to Business Marketing

According to Nielsen (2009), business-to-business (B2B) marketing is also experiencing an enormous transformation. The customers spend less than 25% of their time on the traditional media platforms and hence they no longer deliver the return of investment (ROI) which they previously did. 133 plus 10 Million plus users generate 1,500 new "tweets" every second, 1 Million Blogs indexed since 2002 and Also, in the first quarter of 2009, the demographic of 35 plus aged users has grown to 12 Million users.

As Kotler (2006) states that in B2B, branding is not relevant as things here are different. Many managers think that the phenomenon of branding is only limited to the consumer products and markets. They justify this by the fact that commodity business or specialty market knows a lot about the competitors' products.

In the context of B2B, brand is considered to be different. The brand idea is only considered relevant in business to consumer marketing. This is due to the fact that the B2B marketing is different from the traditional marketing as the high-tech or industrial components are chosen through a rigorous decision-making process of particular department and it generally involves the technically sound individuals. Therefore, soft-facts like the customers' brand loyalty, reputation, commitment and image are not of interest in the corporate world. This however is argued by the Patrick Krane, VP of Marketing & Advertising, LinkedIn says that 38% of all online media is consists of social platforms so we as B2B marketers need to be there.



The corporate brand differs from a product brand due to the effort shifts from the product to the corporation. According to Kotler (2006), a corporate brand benefits from the positive associations with its parent brand. Addressing a corporate visually, it serves as a kind of umbrella and assembles the corporate vision, positioning, values, personality, image among the other dimensions.

Consumer behavior affected by corporate branding can be clarified by classifying the effects of the corporate name, loyalty, recognition and reputation. These four variables provide a greater insight over the consumer product evaluation. All of these corporate branding dimensions have an important influence on consumers.

As Kowalczyk and Pawlish (2002) suggest that the consumer product evaluation is measured by the extent to which the corporate brand is known and its familiarity/recognition is known as corporate name. As Barich and Kotler (1991) suggest that an overall impression about an organization which is made on the mind of the consumers is known as a corporate image. Also, Balmer (1998) suggests what an organization does and how it acts with respect to its key attributes refers to the organization's concept of corporate reputation. The fourth concept refers to the degree of which the consumers are loyal to the organizations.

### 3. Data Analysis and Findings

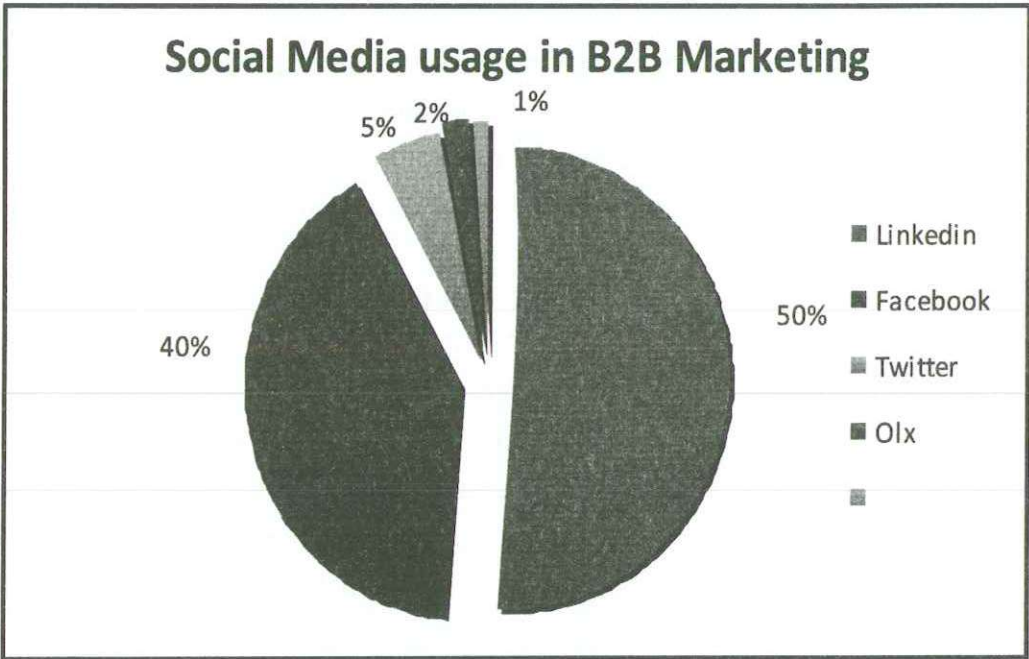
I would now like to discuss the responses (findings) of the research participants based on the in-depth interview. The categories are derived from the terms used by the research participant based on their responses.

#### **What is the most frequently used social media for business to business marketing?**

The data collected for this research questions shows that 50% of the respondents answered

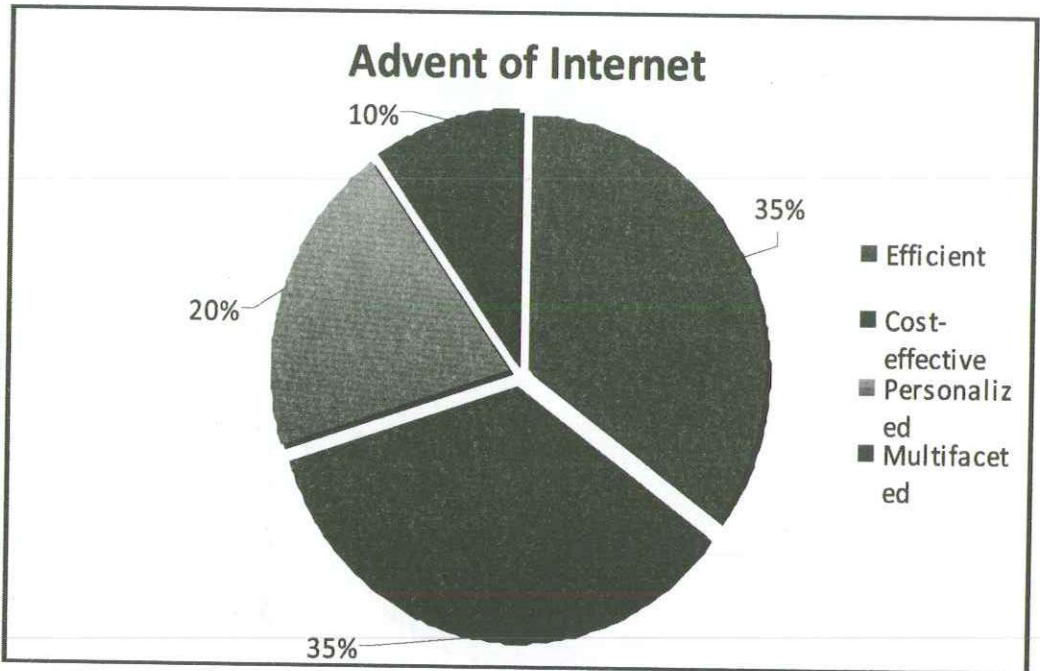
with LinkedIn followed by 40% Facebook, 05% twitter, 02% olx, 01% online forums, 01% business trading websites etc.

In the following survey, I have analyzed some parts of the research findings graphically.



**How has the advent of internet affected the marketing communication?**

Most of the respondents replied that Internet has drastically revolutionized the marketing communications. The world communication is minimized to the size of the laptop. The communication process has become efficient, multi-way and cost effective. It's a new platform for marketing where different marketing tools are being employed. More information / details are available and hence competition has become strong. Also, one may reach the targeted audience with a new channel in shortest possible time.



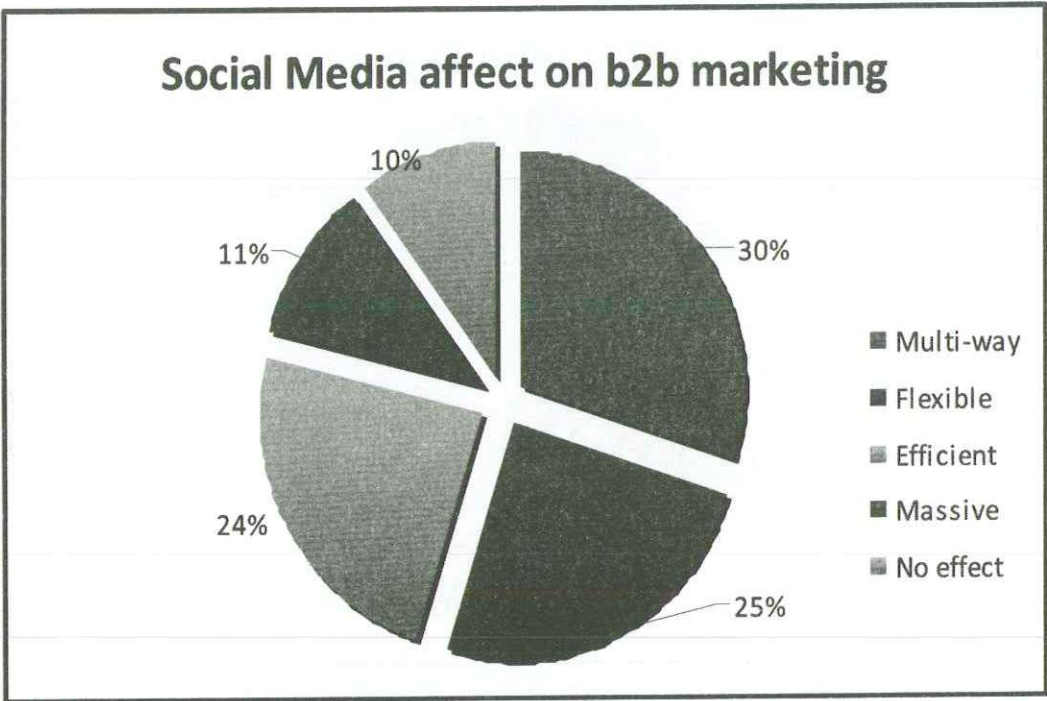
**How has the social media marketing affected business to business marketing?**

The respondents replied by saying that with social media marketing have effected business in positive way. The marketing communications have become more multi-way, flexible, rapid, efficient, cost effective and massive.

Social media marketing effectiveness also depends upon the industry we are operating in. Different tools like advertising and key account management have become easier and the niche audience is targeted easily. Moreover, a few respondents replied that small businesses are gaining more advantage from social media marketing.

There's also a diverse point of view which comprised of four members and said that it did not have a strong effect. The competition and risk in social media marketing is stronger.

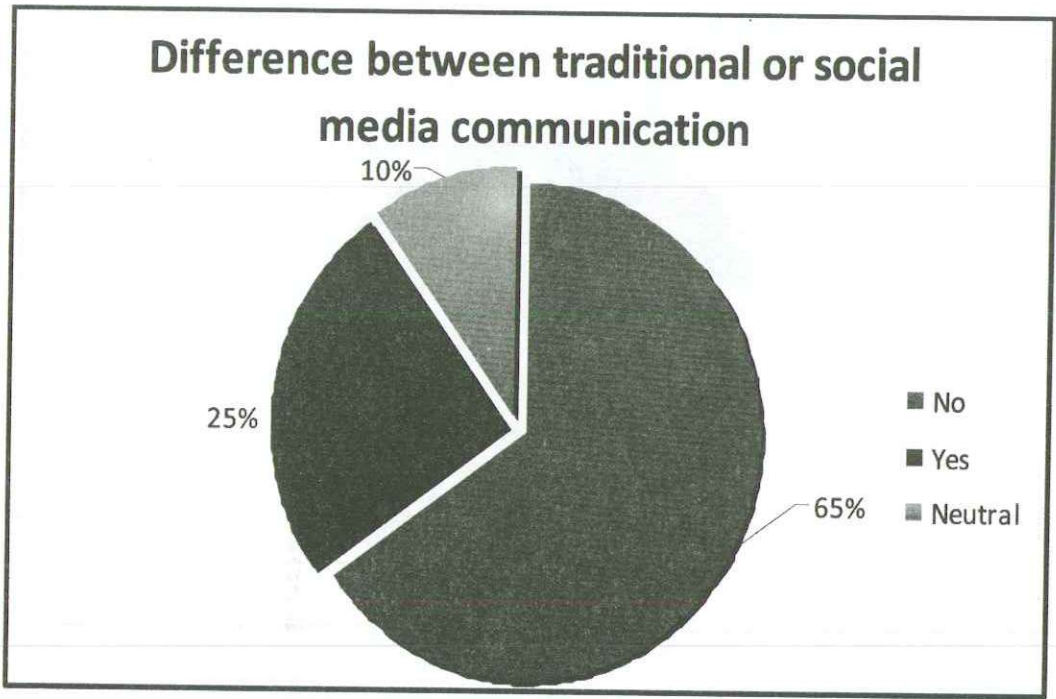




**How according to you the social media marketing communication differs from the traditional marketing?**

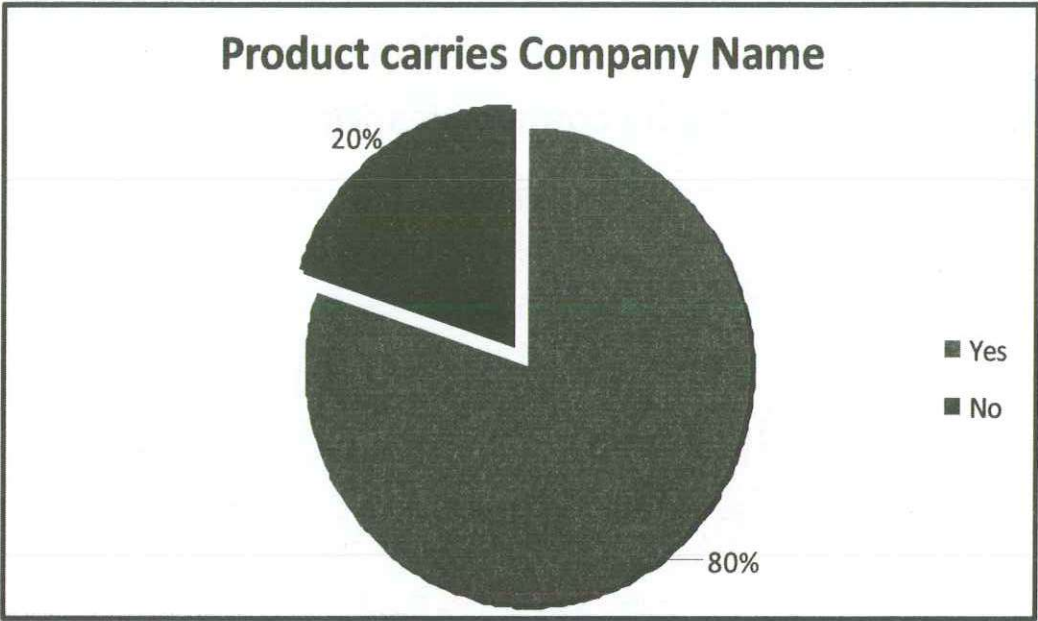
The data shows that the social media marketing is more interactive, cost effective and personalized from the traditional marketing communications. The information available through this platform is more; the response however is difficult to measure. It's more creative and the Audio Visual effects make it more users friendly. Yet, mass still relates to traditional marketing as internet facility is not available to many in developing and underdeveloped countries. One of the respondents replied by saying:

A30: *"It's more informative then traditional marketing, marketers have to make it more attractive to get the attention of the customers and not only that they have to provide the whole detail of the product, so consumers get every information on by just click. Also, customers do all the research about the product online from different perspective."*



**Do you think the corporate brand differs if social media or traditional communication channels are used as a primary marketing communication method?**

The analysis suggests that 65% of the respondents replied by saying that the corporate brand does not differs if social media or traditional communication channels are used as a primary marketing communication method. Whereas 25% of the respondents replied by saying that the corporate brand does differs. The market reach and audience differs. Also, it vastly depends upon the workforce and the industry.



**Do you think that the product carries the name of the company?**

Majority (80%) of the respondents replied by saying that it significantly does whilst 20% replied that there’s no significant difference between the two. Brand name will also be affected. Two respondents replied by saying:

A11: *“Corporate branding is always there! We brand our company only. The company logo is used or printed to differentiate the company’s products and services.”*

A35: *“Cisco, EFU Life, NORTEL etc use their brands as products. And people do business with them keeping in mind the reputation of the company.”*



**Do you think that corporate name has a direct effect on consumers' product evaluation?**

Majority of the respondents mentioned that it surely has a direct effect on consumers' product evaluation. Few respondents replied it doesn't have a direct impact on consumers' product evaluation and that prices are focused other than the corporate name itself. One of the respondents replied by giving an example as:

A16: *"Octara is a brand name of Tranzum but people do business with Octara keeping in mind the reputation of Tranzum."*

**What effects does the corporate name have on the corporate image?**

A corporate name defines norms of the company and gives direction to the internal and external stakeholders. It changes the perception and image. It gives a sense of reliability and confidence in the product.

A corporate name is aligned with the corporate image and it comes with a target market. The standing of the company is important when it comes to the product evaluation. The effects are both positive and negative depends how one develops. The quotes of two respondents are mentioned below:

A022: *"For me they're synonymous!"*

A01: *"Well, it matters A LOT! A good corporate name will definitely reflect on its image with the clients and the market."*

**What effects does the corporate reputation have on the corporate image?**

Majority of them replied that they both have a direct impact on each other. Good corporate reputation gives high reliability and confidence. It may also give leverage to

the corporate image and vice versa. It can be either negative or positive depends how well it is managed. This is also one reason why companies do Corporate Social Responsibility i.e. CSR activities. The quotes of three respondents are mentioned below:

A10: *"It's equally important, if we apply for a new business based on quality, profits etc then the base of a new business will be the corporate reputation."*

A11: *"Good reputation consists of different parts such as brand reputation, organizational reputation and stakeholder reputation. And each of these factors has their own reputation framework and together they make corporate reputation which acts as a lynchpin for all of the factors. This then forms the image which comes in the shape of trustworthiness and credibility."*

A05: *"Good reputation, good word of mouth definitely enhances the corporate image. New products that the corporate comes out with will automatically have a level of trust with the clients for its quality."*

### **Do you think that the corporate image effects on the corporate commitment/loyalty?**

Majority of them replied by mentioning that both effects the corporate commitment/loyalty. It has a direct effect no matter how is good the product, the reputation of the company is very important for the image. One has to fulfill the commitments in order to maintain the image. Two respondents replied about it by saying,

A02: *"People who are brand loyal will stay!"*

A1: *"Image depends directly upon the loyalty, structure, products carried, systems on procedures, reputations etc."*

### 3.1. Reliability and Validity

This research study has strong elements of validity and reliability for several reasons:

- a) The sample reflects a wide array of respondents who come from diverse backgrounds, academics and professional achievements and consist of both urban men and women.
- b) The research findings are also reliable because the same format of semi-structured questionnaire was addressed to all respondents.
- c) The questionnaire was designed in a way to collect most natural responses from individuals hence the data collected from interviews are considered to be valid and reliable.

### 4. Conclusion

To begin with the understanding of the marketing, social media is considered to be the most prominent technique used in organizations today. The literature shows that there is no doubt that social media is playing an important role in the marketing and selling of the business. Further the research was narrowed towards B2B, as it has proved to be the key driver to deliver rate of investment to a business.

After reviewing the present literature, I wanted to clarify the patterns of social media marketing and its impact as a marketing communication tool. Also, how does Social Media influence the Corporate Brands upon the kind of marketing medium used. In total ten research questions were designed to get detail knowledge on the above mentioned objective.

I collected data from total forty employees from B2B marketing companies. These research participants comprise of three thirty five male participants and five female participants. Moreover, the sample size was kept small so that the data is manageable



**Measurable Services**

The social media marketing is difficult to measure but it's not impossible as there are certain software tools available. It is therefore necessary for companies to gauge the brand corporate visibility and engagement with respect to the corporate loyalty, commitment, image and reputation.

**Key Personnel**

As the B2B companies are focused more on Key Personnel therefore it is necessary that the niches are targeted. As the corporate brand doesn't differ upon the communication medium it bridges a gap between the B2B Company and a targeted niche. Hence, devising strategies that support the niches would be beneficial.

**Prioritize**

Creating long term strategies in social media can be risky as the environment is dynamic. Therefore, it is necessary to first prioritize the marketing goals and then devise the ones that have greater chance of producing desired results for the business.

**4.2. Limitations**

Like all research projects, this research also has its share of strengths and limitations. No researcher can claim that his/her project is error free and comprehensive, the same is true for this research. In the following paragraph, I have discussed some limitations of this research. The purposive sampling decreased the generalization ability of the findings. The research study focuses on the viewpoint of the B2B organization and leaves the customer behavior perception, business performance results and technical viewpoint aside. Hence, an extensive research study on the customer behavior would be rational.

Also, by utilizing limited company's personnel for empirical information, the analysis of the topic was limited from the wider scope of industries or operation modes.

**References**

- Barnes, Dupre, N., Frederick, R. 2009, Equipping your organization for the social networking game *Information Management Journal*, Vol. 43, No. 6, pp. 15-13.
- Blackshaw, P., & Nazzaro, M. 2004, Word-of-mouth in the age of the Webfortified consumer, whitepaper, viewed 05 March 2012, <<http://www.nielsenbuzzmetrics.com/whitepapers>>.
- Lewis B.K, 2010, Social Media and Strategic Communication: Attitudes and. *Public Relations Journal*, Vol. 4, No. 3, pp. 23.
- Boone, L. E. & Kurtz D. L., 2008, *Contemporary Marketing*, 13th edn. Mason, Ohio: South-Western.
- Bulmer, D. & DiMauro, V. 2009, The new symbiosis of professional networks: Social media's impact on business and decision-making, *Journal of New Communications Research*, Vol. 4, No. 94, 93-99.
- Collis, J., & Hussey, R. 2009, *Business Research: A Practical Guide for Undergraduate & Postgraduate Students*, 3rd edn. Palgrave Macmillan, London.
- Constantinides, E., & Fountain, S. 2007, Web 2.0: Conceptual foundations and marketing issues. *Journal of Direct, Data and Digital Marketing Practice*, Vol. 9, No. 3, 231-244.
- Foux, G. 2006, Consumer-generated media: Get your customers involved. *Brand Strategy*, Vol. 1, No.1, pp. 38-39.

Kotler, P. & Pfoertsch, W. 2006, *To Brand or Not to Brand*, B2B Brand Management. 1st edn. Springer, Berlin.

Lempert, P. 2006, 'Caught in the Web', *Progressive Grocer*, Vol. 85, No. 12, pp. 18.

Mack, N., Woodsong, C., Macqueen, K. M., Guest, G., & Namey, E. 2005, *Qualitative Research Methods: A Data Collector's Field Guide*, Family Health International, North Carolina.

Gladwell M, 2000, *The Tipping Point: How Little Things Can Make a Big Difference*. 1st ed. Little Brown, New York.

Mangold W. G., Faulds D. J. 2009, Social media: The new hybrid element of the Business Horizons. Vol. 5, No. 2, pp.357—365.

Mangold, W, Faulds, G, David, J. 2009, Social media: The new hybrid element of the promotion mix *Business Horizons*. Greenwich, Vol. 52, No. 4, pp 18.

Matthews, L. 2010, 'Social Media and the Evolution of Corporate Communications', *The Elon Journal of Undergraduate Research in Communications*. Vol. 1, No. 1, pp. 23.

Myers, M. D. 2009, *Qualitative Research in Business & Management*, SAGE, Los Angeles.

Sidhu, N. 2009, *Social Media for B2B Marketing*, viewed 11 October 2011, <[www.B2Bento.com](http://www.B2Bento.com)>.



Nicole B. Ellison, Danah M. Boyd 2007, Social Network Sites: Definition, History, and Scholarship, viewed 01 March 2012, <<http://jcmc.indiana.edu/vol13/issue1/boyd.ellison.html>>.

Raab, D. M. 2010, 'Marketing Systems for Online Media; if a single common problem threatens the outbound campaign systems; it's the need to handle unstructured data', Information Management, Vol. 20, pp. 21.

Rashtchy, F., Kessler, A. M., Bieber, P. J., Shindler, N. H., & Tzeng, J. C. 2007, The user revolution: The new advertising ecosystem and the rise of the Internet as a mass medium., MN: Piper Jaffray Investment Research, Minneapolis.

Red Bridge 2008, Social Network Marketing: The Basics, viewed 25 February 2012, <[www.labroots.com/Social\\_Networking\\_the\\_Basics.pdf](http://www.labroots.com/Social_Networking_the_Basics.pdf)>.

Saunders, M., Lewis, P., & Thornhill, A. 2009, Research Methods for Business Students, Pearson, Harlow.

Scott, D.M. 2007, 'The New Rules of Marketing & PR'. Hoboken: John Wiley & Sons, Inc.

Singh, T., Veron-Jackson, L., & Cullinane, J. 2008. 'Blogging: A new play in your marketing game plan', Business Horizons, Vol. 51, No. 4, pp 281-292.

Television Bureau of Advertising, Inc. 2009, Multiplatform Glossary. viewed 25 February 2012, <<http://www.tvb.org/multiplatform/Multiplatform>>.

## Appendix

### Questionnaire

- 1) What is the most frequently used social media for business to business marketing?
- 2) How has the advent of internet effected the marketing communication?
- 3) How has the social media marketing affected business to business marketing?
- 4) How according to you the social media marketing communication differs from the traditional marketing?
- 5) Do you think the corporate brand differs if social media or traditional communication channels are used as a primary marketing communication method?
- 6) Do you think that the product carries the name of the company?
- 7) Do you think that corporate name has a direct effect on consumers' product evaluation?
- 8) What effects does the corporate name have on the corporate image?
- 9) What effects does the corporate reputation have on the corporate image?
- 10) Do you think that the corporate image effects on the corporate commitment/loyalty?