

# Social Media Applications In Marketing Communications Of The Marketing Oriented Companies

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ABSTRACT

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**Master's Thesis**

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## **SOCIAL MEDIA APPLICATIONS IN MARKETING COMMUNICATIONS OF THE MARKETING ORIENTED COMPANIES**

### **Research Objective**

The primary objective of the research is both to clarify the advantages of social media applications when used as a marketing communications tool, and examine their effects on specified target group. Another approach is to evaluate how the brand image of the company differs depending on whether social media or traditional communication channels are used as a primary marketing communication method.

### **Research Methods**

By applying a qualitative approach, the empirical part examines the actions and processes of a single Finnish international company that uses considerably social media applications beside of traditional marketing communication. The primary data collection is implemented by arranging theme interviews to randomly selected target group that includes potential customers as well as persons that have never used company's products. Furthermore, to achieve more comprehensive picture of the topic, the secondary data includes articles, figures and reports from the social media field.

### **Primary Results**

As a conclusion I can say that social media is more and more important element in contemporary marketing communication. Even though its current role is mainly supporting other channels, in coming years social media may be considered as a primary channel in many organization. As this study shows, audience, especially younger ones, is already pretty interested in creating content for others to read and conceive social media as very important channel to learn more about the brands and products. Even though the false information, unnecessary critics and negative word-of-mouth were seen as risks for company's image as well as risks for consumers' objective information flow, the positive associations as cheapness, flexible and possibility to fast information sharing were considered as stronger attributes and supports social media as marketing communication channel.

### **Keywords**

Social media, Social networks, Interactive marketing, Online marketing, Automotive industry

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IT'S NOT ABOUT HOW MANY PEOPLE ARE READING YOUR CORPORATE BLOG,  
IT'S ABOUT WHO'S READING IT. - Angela Sinickas

## 1. INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents the background and structure of this paper. In addition the author goes through research problems and targets as well as the methods how the empirical study was implemented. Also the limitations of the research and key word definitions are outlined in this chapter.

### 1.1 Background: Social Media As A New Channel Of Marketing Communication

In recent years there has been an accelerating discussion on the importance of strategic marketing related to organizational strategy making. Due to widely internationalized and technologically developed markets, companies are demanded, probably more than ever before, to have great visibility and better ability to respond quickly to competitors' actions. Also the increasing number of operators has induced a market situation where products have become very similar between the each other. This has been one of the reasons for many organizations to become realizing that focusing only on the physical product is insufficient strategy for being distinguished from the competitors. (Salin 2002, 9) Therefore, concentrating on marketing communication has started to show in companies' strategy making more than before.

According to recent marketing studies this current has been anticipated to become a part of everyday life also in Finland. Organizations have started to be aware of how fast and extensively marketing communication methods have developed during the last decade. Medias have become even more visible and effective transmitters of the marketing communication. Also consumer's expertise on products (and prices) has also increased as a

result of high information flow. Therefore, we can argue that it is not beneficial for modern company to rely only on the traditional sales and marketing processes – to become advanced marketer, companies must find new ways to reach more demanding customers.

Internet and especially social media as a marketing channel are offering potential tools for this reformation. Even though the social medias are rarely direct selling channels they are very effective tools to gain visibility for the company and its products. By using social media applications companies have ability to reach new and relatively large target groups faster than by using traditional marketing channels. Also the audience has already brought out its interest by responding to message.

Despite the growing interest on these self-evident benefits of social media, there is still relatively little evidence on how the target audience receives the message through this channel, how they examine the personal and interactive approach and do these messages have a real influence on their purchase decisions. In this study author focuses on these topics from the perspective of case company.

## 1.2 Research Problem And Sub-Targets

The primary objective of the research is both to clarify the advantages of social media applications when used as a marketing communications tool, and examine their effects on specified target group. Another approach is to evaluate how the image of the company differs depending on whether social media or traditional communication channels are used as a primary marketing communication method.

The main problem of the research can be stated as follows:

How can marketing oriented companies take advantage of social media applications when repositioning their marketing mix (case company Nissan)?

This problem is examined by answering the following sub targets:

1. What is the role of social media in nowadays marketing mix?
2. How Internet has changed the competitive playground of today's business environment?
3. How does the Internet based marketing communication differ from traditional marketing communication?
4. How social media can be defined/How to categorize a social media among the other traditional communication modes?
5. What are the special characteristics of marketing communication in online- based environment?
6. How social media applications are used in Nissan?
7. How Nissan's customers receive online marketing messages?

In the next sub-chapter author goes through the methods how these problems above are examined in this study.

### 1.3 Research Methods

The study consists of theoretical and empirical parts. Referring a current academic discussion on marketing communication and online marketing in particular, theoretical part aims to clarify the role of social media applications in relation with the traditional marketing channels.

By applying a qualitative approach, the empirical part examines the actions and processes of a single Finnish international company that uses considerably social media applications beside of traditional marketing communication. The primary data collection is implemented by arranging theme interviews to randomly selected target group that includes potential customers as well as persons that have never used company's products. Furthermore, to achieve more comprehensive picture of the topic, the secondary data includes articles, figures and reports from the social media field.

My personal contribution in a marketing communication agency offers me a possibility to get a closer perspective to this topic in question.

#### 1.4 Limitations Of The Study

The research focuses on examining the topic only from the perspective of companies operating in Finland. Therefore, international activities are left outside of the context. Also, the study concentrates primarily on analyzing the social media as a communication form leaving the other communication methods outside from the detailed research. The focus is on a company's standpoint leaving out the perspectives of customer behavior study. This study does not cover technical solutions either, but takes purely marketing approach to this topic.

Furthermore, because the emphasis of the study is on online marketing, the accurate business performance results are not tried to measure. Also, by using a single case company as source of empirical information, the study limits the possibility to analyze the topic from the wider scope of industries or operation modes.

#### 1.5 Definitions

**Social media** – an internet-facilitated and consumer-driven movement of networks, content and knowledge.

**Interactive marketing** – the ability to address the customer, remember what the customer says and address the customer again in a way that illustrates that we remember what the customer has told us (Deighton 1996). Interactive marketing processes are facilitated by internet technology.

**Word-of-Mouth** – passing information from person to person. Normally referred as oral discussion but can be also other information sharing e.g. via Internet.

#### 1.6 Outline Of The Study

After the introduction, Chapter 2 goes through in a very general outline the current status of social media applications and service providers and how they are developed in recent years.



Chapter 3 concentrates on defining the former research on marketing mix and communication methods. This chapter presents the basic model of communication that is then used partly in theoretical framework of this study. In chapter 4 the study continues determining how online marketing can be utilized beside the traditional marketing channels and how it can be included in company's sales and marketing strategies. Especially the study concentrates on clarifying the role of social media applications in this context. Therefore the social media solutions are presented as a part of company's communication platform. Primarily the author focuses on reviewing the current academic discussion on comparison of traditional and new social marketing channels. In addition, the studies on behavior of social media audience are opened briefly. A theoretical framework of this paper is also presented in the end of this chapter.

In Chapter 5 the empirical consideration begins. The research methods and reasoning for these are described in this chapter. Chapter 6 collects the results of the research. Also the case company is introduced in Chapter 6. Hereafter, Chapter 7 analyses the functionality of the framework and offers propositions for additional research. In Chapter 8 the study gives operational recommendation for the case company and lastly Chapter 9 concludes the considerations and includes the closing words of the study.

## 2. DEVELOPMENT OF SOCIAL MEDIA AS A MARKETING CHANNEL

The desire to belong to a group and the propensity to feel connected to others are basic human needs. These characteristics are above the geographic boundaries and connect all social, cultural and economic entities. As we have seen, mostly due to technical innovations in recent years, these characteristics have got a new form in the Internet. Communities of likeminded persons, utilizing social networking, have realized tremendous opportunities to communicate and impact interactively with organizations and individuals alike. (Barnes N. D. & Barnes F. R. 2009)

This is the reason that the concept of social media is top of the agenda for many business executives today. Social networking applications are currently more and more utilized by enterprises of all sizes, regardless of for-profit or not-for-profit status. This has started to change the way individuals and organizations relate within a business context. (Barnes N. D. & Barnes F. R. 2009) Decision makers try to identify ways in which firms can make profitable use of these applications because evidently they cannot afford to ignore the impact of social networking upon their organizations' communications and marketing activities. (Barnes N. D. & Barnes F. R. 2009) However, despite this interest, there still seems to be relatively limited understanding of what the term "Social Media" exactly means. (Kaplan & Haenlein 2010)

The development of broadband, high-speed connectivity created a wide spectrum of synchronous and asynchronous communications technologies, allowing social media services to grow. These technologies have made it possible for one person to communicate with hundreds or even thousands of other people globally, also wireless and mobile. (Mangold & Faulds 2009) Realizing these massive opportunities, marketing directors around the world have become considering the social media as a new element within the traditional marketing strategy and communication method pool.

The social media can be seen as hybrid element of the promotion mix because in a traditional sense it enables companies to talk to their customers, while in a nontraditional sense it enables customers to talk directly to one another. The content, timing, and frequency of the social media-based conversations occurring between consumers are outside managers' direct control.

This stands in contrast to the traditional integrated marketing communications paradigm whereby a high degree of control is present. This has led to the situation where managers must learn to shape consumer discussions in a manner that is consistent with the organization's mission and performance goals. (Mangold & Faulds 2009)

In a current academic discussion on strategic marketing the postmodern marketing environment is defined upon the four C's of change, complexity, chaos and contradiction. This new postmodern marketing approach considers individuals more impulsive and commitment avoiding consumers. Where the modern consumer may have been expected to be loyal to a company or a product, the postmodern consumer exercises freedom to move where choice or whim indicate. Within this maelstrom pluralistic matrix, consumption has become a means for individuals to creatively appropriate and construct self-images that allow them to become more desirable and/or likeable in various social contexts. (Simmons 2008)

This has resulted that today customers are taking control of the relationship to organization they are dealing with. They block inbound marketing messages and instead reach out for information when they want it. And when they do seek information, they're more likely to trust external sources, including social media than the company itself. (Raab 2010) This rise of social networking and user-generated content (USG) has forced marketers to wake up to the opportunities that are being created for their brands in the postmodern world. These virtual networks can be organized around various niches of interest or content and are becoming very much a part of every day conversations in postmodern society. (Simmons 2008)

The very success of social tools on the Internet is down to individuals using a service, liking it, recommending it and growing it in the way they want to. They won't be forced into using it, because the nature of the social media is how well they hook people into wanting to come back of their own free will. If organizations try to impose customers' will on it, it will fail. (Chestney 2010) In other words companies have to participate in the conversation where they are happening and put aside ROI-based-thinking for a while. The formulas like gross rating points and frequency, time-tested formulas for building brands that marketers have grown comfortable with processing traditional media can now be calculated again. (Morrissey 2010)

Having went trough that, the advantages and unique characteristics of social media can be stated in short as follows: (Marken 2009)

1. Provides an unfiltered view of consumer perceptions so firms can see what will impact the future of their business
2. Word-of-mouth is having a tremendous control over perception and acceptance
3. User community sites and blogs provide valuable (if studied analytically rather than emotionally) user experience feedback
4. Can generate effective viral campaigns for products
5. Is an arena dominated (by a factor of five) by early adopters (revolutionaries)
6. Will become increasingly significant in influencing companies and products according to the revolutionaries
7. Provides a unique opportunity to connect with contemporaries and customers to gain feedback and learn from it

Currently there are at least four major players in the social networking genre: LinkedIn, MySpace, FaceBook, and Twitter. All four companies were founded in California within the past 10 years and they offer mainly free basic services. (Barnes N. D. & Barnes F. R. 2009)

LinkedIn, at [www.linkedin.com](http://www.linkedin.com), markets itself as a business-focused site that caters to the needs of professionals. Funded by a select group of investors and venture capitalists and supporting over 41 million users in more than 200 countries, it is one of the most well-known business-facing services. FaceBook ([www.facebook.com](http://www.facebook.com)), instead, claims a unique history, harkening back to its early days as a college-related, online campus community. As a privately held company, it relies on a business model based on the sale of advertising space and premium subscriptions. At [www.myspace.com](http://www.myspace.com), MySpace declares itself a "place for friends" and primarily offers social interaction and communication on a global level. Mostly it has become popular as a network of music groups. By sharing music and interactive content MySpace has created a connection between artists and fans. Advertising sales are a major source of revenues. (Barnes N. D. & Barnes F. R. 2009)

Unlike the previous networks a Twitter ([www.twitter.com](http://www.twitter.com)), on the other hand, does not have that clear revenue strategy. Despite this, Twitter offers both business and social users an online or wireless device-based communications experience. Called a microblogging service, Twitter offers short text messages, called tweets, of up to 140 characters in length. Unless

Twitter is used online, users are responsible for the payment of text message services as determined by the individual's wireless carrier. (Barnes N. D. & Barnes F. R. 2009)

In the next two chapters the study goes through the elements of traditional communication model and marketing mix and compares these features to the characteristics of social media applications.

### 3. TRADITIONAL MARKETING COMMUNICATION MODELS

#### 3.1 Marketing Communication Description

According to Rossiter and Bellman marketing communications (marcoms) are defined as *“marketer-originated messages, placed in various media, their purpose being to sell the brand by showing it, saying things about it, or both, in a manner that establishes the marketer’s desired position for the brand in the minds of target customers.”* For delivering this message to the target audience marketers have various methods and channels to choose from.

Traditionally two major forms of marcoms have been advertising and promotions. The third is PR and the fourth is personal selling, but these are usually managed separately from advertising and promotions. (Rossiter & Bellman 2005) Very often people conceive advertising being only marketing communication channel but as said advertising is only part of the communication mix. In literature this mix is called Integrated Marketing Communication (IMC).

The key idea behind IMC, is simply that advertising has various strengths and weaknesses but alone is not effective enough in order to get best results. Therefore it’s vital that companies combine the different elements of marketing communication in an integrated and consistent way. These different elements of the communications mix have to be used in a way that the strengths of one are used to offset the weakness of another. (Batra, Myers & Aaker 1996) However, according to Rossiter and Bellman, despite these multiple channel and media options available companies use just one primary medium and perhaps one or two secondary media. Anyway this media and channel selection depends on the target audience and target audience selection depends on the sales objective of the campaign – and this is all a responsibility of marketing communications planning.

Marcoms planning and decision making take place in the context of an overall marketing program. Obviously, marketing communication is a supporting tool for organizations to achieve their core objectives. Therefore the most appropriate way to improve the sales of a brand may not involve marketing communication at all, but may involve for example more

extensive distribution, better relationships with the trade, a lower price, or simply better product quality. (Batra, Myers & Aaker 1996)

### 3.2 Effects of Marketing Communication

Rossiter and Bellman introduces a six step marcoms planning approach that includes a following phases: brand positioning, campaign objectives, creative strategy, promotion strategy, media strategy and campaign management. (Rossiter & Bellman 2005) By careful and extensive planning on each of these steps organizations try to achieve as strong effects on target audience as possible. In the next few paragraphs we go through what are these effects and how are they categorized.

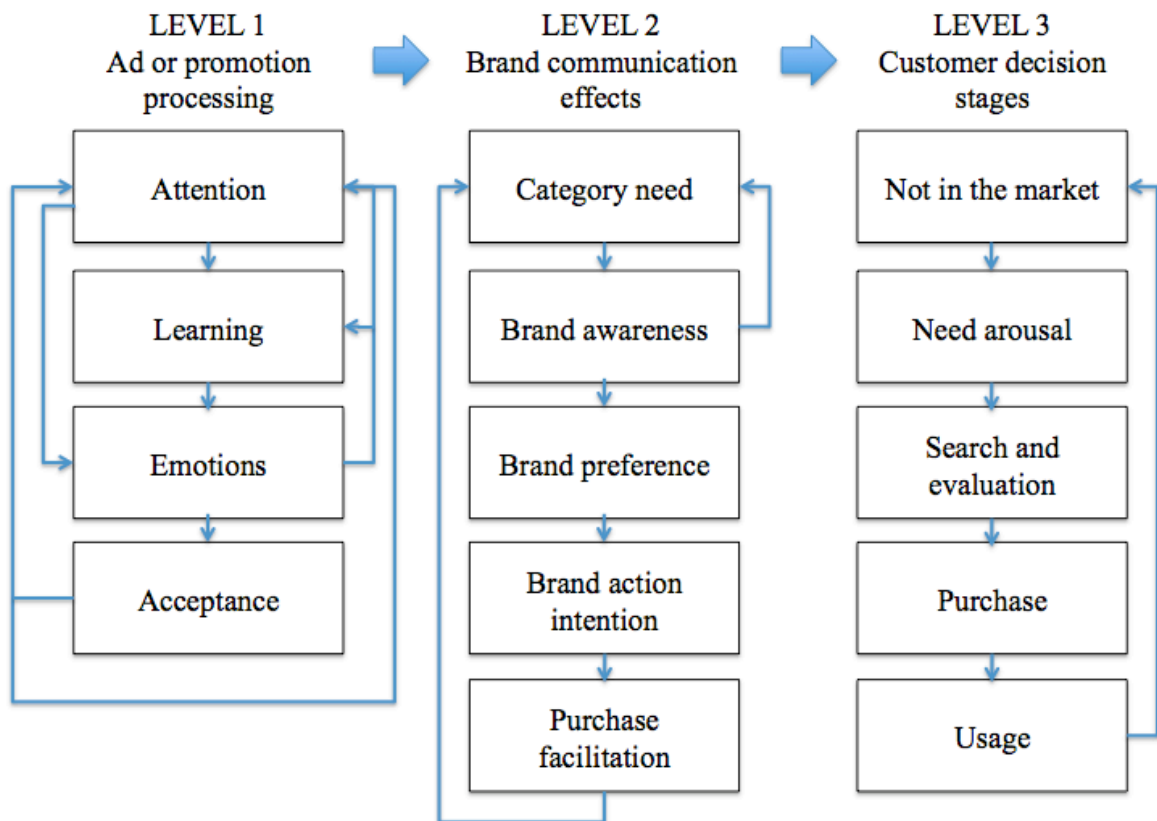


Figure 2-1. Three simultaneous levels of marcoms effects.

According to Rossiter's and Bellman's Marcoms Influence Process, marketing communications have effects on three different stages: ad or promotion processing, brand communications effects and customer decision process. (Figure 2-1)

As the marketer (of any given product or service at any given time) is trying to reach and have an effect on the potential customer he/she knows that the customer is in one of the customer decision stages. The customer is either not in the market at present for the product or service category, or is experiencing need arousal, or is searching and evaluating brand-item alternatives, or purchasing, or using the product or service. (Rossiter & Bellman 2005) Then marcoms naturally have different effects on the different levels. Obviously the approach has to be different if the customer is comparing alternatives than the situation where customer already has or has tried this particular product or service.

Brand communication effects have also to be taken into consideration in marcoms process. By implementing marketing communications company can achieve a several effects related to its brand and then strengthen the position in the markets. First is **brand awareness** – this is necessary in order that the brand can be considered for purchase – the brand either has to be recognized as an item of that category (Brand recognition) or recalled as an item when the category need arises (Brand recall) in the decision process. Good brand awareness can lead to the increased **brand preference**, which in turn mean favourable attitude toward the brand and relatively, preference for it over other brands.

Marketing communications have also an effect on **brand action intention** and **purchase facilitation** that basically means help in brand selection and self introduction to act in purchase phase. In addition, brand communications may have an effect on **category need** where company tries to create a need among the customers in some particular product or service category.

In a final level in Rossiter's and Bellman's Marcoms Influence Process there is introduced four effects in advertising and or promotion process. **Attention** precedes the other three responses – repeated attention responses, either actual or imagined, are necessary for the prospective customer to fully process an ad or offer. When the attention is created with marketing communications, **learning** or **emotional** response may occur. The recipient who is processing an ad or promotion may learn about the brand and/or have an emotional response



towards it which alone may be sufficient for **acceptance** or later preference of it. Acceptance, technically, is a combination of Learning and Emotion. Therefore acceptance is the result of learned Benefit Beliefs subjectively perceived as “true” of the brand, which are positively emotionally weighted. (Rossiter & Bellman 2005)

Ad exposure process (key element of the framework of this study) is tightly related to this level of Marcoms Influence Process and will be introduced more closely in Chapter 4.

### 3.3 Marketing Communication and Brand Equity

Marcoms activities share a common factor – that is, they try to sell the brand. Another common factor is that they do this by communicating about the brand, even when confronting the customer directly with the brand as in packaging and point-of-sale. Then according to Rossiter and Bellman the sales objective recognizing that all marcoms campaigns should also have a brand equity objective. Brand equity, in the sense of “brand value”, has emerged as the most popular bottom-line measure of marketing – including marcoms – effectiveness. Brand equity applies to the corporate brand and brand-items. (Rossiter & Bellman 2005)

A brand can have high equity, or value as a tradeable asset for many reasons. According to David Aaker, brands have equity because they have high awareness, many loyal consumers, a high reputation for perceived quality, proprietary brand asset such as access to scarce distribution channels or to patents, or the kind of brand associations (such as personality associations). (Batra, Myers & Aaker 1996)

Consumers prefer high equity brands because they find it easier to interpret what benefits the brand offers, feel more confident on it, and get more satisfaction from using it. Because of such consumer preference, the brand can charge a higher price, command more loyalty, and run more efficient marketing programs. The brand can therefore command a higher asset value. (Batra, Myers & Aaker 1996) In the next paragraphs few important brand image characteristics related and effecting to marketing communication are introduced. Naturally brands have many different characteristics that have an effect on brand equity. However in

this paper I introduce only those that are relevant for this study (same that presented in theoretical framework).

In addition to communicating information, marcoms can generate **feelings** such as for example warmth, happiness, and fear. Such feelings can become associated with the brand and can influence attitudes and behaviour toward the brand in different ways. Communication that put people in positive moods can increase the number of positive thoughts about the brand and reduce the number of negative associations. This transformational marketing communication transforms the use experience by associating feelings with it. It makes the experience richer, warmer, more exciting, and/or more enjoyable. In addition research has shown that a positive attitude toward the communication itself can affect the brand over and above any communication effect. (Batra, Myers & Aaker 1996)

Such as people have individual personalities, brands too can develop **personality-like associations** if the communication for these brands identifies and develops a consistent image that is reinforced over time. Through such a personality, brands can be seen for example as young or old, masculine or feminine, aggressive or introverted and in a variety of different ways. Just as with people, the brands we know can come to symbolize certain important life values and certain associated emotional characteristics. (Batra, Myers & Aaker 1996)

Batra, Myers and Aaker continue that brand personalities matter because consumers are attracted to brands that possess personalities with which they themselves identify, or seek. Consumers often use their choice of brands to tell themselves, and other people they care about, what kinds of individuals they really are (or want to be seen as).

Again, according to Batra, Myers and Aaker, marketing communication can take advantage of **reference group effects** by associating the brand with certain social or reference groups. This group influence can be either informational or normative. Informational influence refers to situation in which consumers who don't know much about the product seek information from friends, salespeople, or other interest group. Normative influence refers to situations in which consumers identify with a group to enhance self-image and ego, or comply with a group's norms to gain rewards or avoid punishments. The important point about reference group effects is that the individual does not have to be a member of the group for influence to occur. (see connection with social media) (Batra, Myers & Aaker 1996)

Word-of-mouth is one of the main informational influence processes in which a potential consumer relies on the opinion of others to decide on trying and/or adopting the product. Usually these processes are built on opinion leadership the certain individuals, called opinion leaders, serve to influence the attitudes and behaviors (such as buying or not not buying) of others around them. (Batra, Myers & Aaker 1996) This is the key element in social media applications that we discuss more closely in next chapter.

#### 4. APPLYING SOCIAL MEDIA SOLUTIONS IN MARKETING ORIENTED COMPANIES

This chapter introduces the social networks and social media in more detail. First the author goes through the reasons and background why is the social media so important part of contemporary marketing communication. The chapter continues on defining the opportunities and threats that companies can face when applying the social media solutions. Also in this chapter the traditional marketing communication methods are compared to new social network-based marketing. The chapter ends presenting the methodological framework of this study.

##### 4.1 Why Social Media Has Become An Essential Part Of Communication Strategies

In literature social networks have been described as "an internet-facilitated and consumer-driven movement of networks, content and knowledge" built on web-based media tools that enable individuals to connect online. Social media, the platform for social networks, are not just new technology - but enablers of a fundamental marketing strategy shift in how organizations and customers relate to each other. (Angel & Sexsmith 2009) By social media, also called consumer-generated media, we can consider blogs and micro-blogs (like Twitter and others), videos, review boards, online forums and other social channels. (Baker 2009) Social networking sites can offer a unified communications platform where users have the capability of interacting with others on a simultaneous basis. (Barnes N. D. & Barnes F. R. 2009) Conventional channels of marketing are gradually being dissolved or assimilated into a global network fuelled by the Internet. (Ranchhod 2004)

The current consensus on development of communications is based on a shared vision of contemporary market and technological developments. (Marsden & Tambini 2005) These directions have made it favorable for online-based communication to grow. At the same time as consumers' behaviours have changed towards more demanding and impulsive, companies have to start thinking new ways to communicate their offerings. Therefore mainstream corporate communication is moving away from one-way sales messages handed down to mass audiences by hierarchical organizations having exclusive ownership of information. (Angel & Sexsmith 2009) Little by little this has started to become apparent for today's marketers - social networkers want to talk about consumer brands and engage to company's

communication. As consumers, they feel encouraged to be more open, live more spontaneously, and hold more immediate notions of trust and value. (Angel & Sexsmith 2009)

Therefore a new, vital source of data about consumers comes directly from consumers themselves. This data is the actual thoughts and comments of consumers, expressed in social media. As most of the current and potential customers are online, they are engaged with social or consumer-generated media. They are discussing the brands and products they love and the brands and products they hate. They have influence and power to affect the company and its product sales. Winning companies are developing strategies and tactics to listen to, learn from, analyze, understand and engage with this powerful new channel. (Baker 2009)

Getting into corporate social networking often starts with a series of market-oriented questions. How well do we understand our customers' needs? How good are our insights into the way our customers regard and connect with our brand? How and when can we engage our customers and enlist them as collaborators? How innovative, differentiated, and resilient is our brand in these commoditized and competitive times? How can our employees guide us through this maze? (Angel & Sexsmith 2009)

Many managers today are uncertain about what social networking really means, how it fits their business strategy, and most importantly, how they can define its practical value to the business. According to the January 2009 Gauge survey, less than 20 percent of CEOs and marketing decision makers say that social networking is likely to attract customers who are aware of their brand but normally don't buy it. This suggests a lack of understanding of the powerful market and cultural changes that new media has brought about. The decision makers need to understand social networking to help the rest of the organization access the best information on it. (Angel & Sexsmith 2009)

In the new online environment, people in charge of communications have to understand the idea that there is no local market or territory any more. We work and live in a global market and information community where we must have open and continual conversation with our consumers and partners as a group and individually. There is no clear cut ROI but we can say that the dangers of ignoring these communities are obvious. The companies that ignore the effects of social networks are missing a golden opportunity to get personal inputs on the person's image of the company, why the individual bought the product/service, what they

like/dislike and what they feel should be improved. (Marken 2008)

#### 4.2 Opportunities And Threats Of Social Media Applications

As any new strategic marketing element social networks share also some opportunities and threats for the organizations that still remain unexamined. In the next paragraphs we go through in general level what are these pros and cons that are often related to social networks.

Opportunities:

*Two-way discussion between company and consumer:*

The key questions that many marketers share nowadays are obvious: Is anyone out there talking about my product/service? What are they saying? Are they happy, not happy or indifferent? Who are they? What sites/communities do they frequent? Are they influential? (Baker 2009)

Finding the answers for these questions might be tricky when company is using the traditional marketing channels to boost their sales. Now, however, social media has brought a notable solution for these dilemmas. Study after study show that consumers today go online to research a subject, product, solution before they buy. Thus the impact of consumer-to-consumer communications has been greatly magnified in the marketplace. (Mangold & Faulds 2009) The first thing the prospective customer searches out is user reviews followed by comparison charts and expert reviews. Conventional news media may make the consumer aware of the product/service but people make their buying decisions from peer recommendations. Not from the manufacturer's web site or literature, not from the retail clerk, not from the expert's recommendations. Therefore the user reviews are great opportunities for companies for getting reliable and extensive feedback on their brands and products. (Marken 2008) In other words this process is built through word-of-mouth. It's the way social media works and companies have to respect that. (Chestney 2010)

*Fast, flexible and effective way to reach big audiences:*

Increasingly, environmental changes as well as developed customer behaviors demand rapid and flexible responses from companies leading to a fusion of planning and implementation of new activities. (Ranchhod 2004) As the activities happen online the “call of actions” and the reactions followed by them are immediate and relatively easy to monitor. Also the word-of-mouth-effect is much stronger as when using traditional marketing channels. If implemented correctly the possibility to reach big audiences is also remarkable.

In addition, as the the social media is flexible and easily adaptable marketers can listen and learn from the people commenting the company’s brand or product. Whether the feedback is positive or negative you have opportunities with both audiences. (Baker 2009)

*Possibility to research and develop new products effectively:*

Innovation is a prerequisite for business survival and potentially the discipline that will be most heavily impacted by social media. Even though it is still early to say, recent developments suggest that social media-assisted product development with communities of users will increasingly generate new, viable business solutions and uses. Social media could well be the salvation of organizations whose product and service development has been impeded by declining R&D spending. (Angel & Sexsmith 2009)

*Personal contact to customers:*

Marketers spend a lot of time in thinking the following issues: what are the perceived characteristics of my brand? What are the perceived characteristics of my competitors' brands? What are the opportunities to improve brand perception?

Very often companies are lacking a direct two-way contact to their potential customers. The feedback and the perceived image from customer side remain unclear in many organizations. This is because of the effect that traditional marketing channels have on customers is hardly measurable. A good social media solution will show the company the terms and concepts that are most associated with brand and product as well as with competitors' brands and products. (Baker 2009)

Threats:

*Hard to measure and interpret*

In the early stages, social marketers often just want insights and do not actually care much about metrics. Currently as the networks are getting more and more valuable as a marketing channel they pay more attention to performance measurement. So far, this has tended to mean traditional volume metrics, for example, traffic driven to the website, community traffic hit rates, opening rates, click-throughs, time spent on-line, responds vs. non-responds, postings, and comments rates. These are useful, but by themselves they can foster a 'more is better' mindset. In contrast, successful social networking depends more on qualitative metrics for desirable signs of the tone, quality and customer benefit of the interaction. (Angel & Sexsmith 2009) Unfortunately, most of the measures typically conducted focus on activity and not on outcomes. For example, which is more important to know: the total number of people who visited a particular blog, or finding out that just one of those readers was a reporter who ended up writing a major article affecting your organization, based on information first learned through the blog? (Sinickas 2007)

Sinickas (2007) mentions a few measuring methods that are valid when evaluation social networks:

1. Services or software that reports how often company name appears in blogs, discussion threads and chat rooms.
2. Other measures for blogs include counting the number of people commenting on a blog as an indication of engagement with the blog, the blogger, the topic of the blog or the organization hosting the blog.
3. Just as you can measure how many visitors you have to specific pages of your website, you can also quantify how many people are subscribing to RSS feeds for your site. You could also count how many people link through directly to various pages on your website by following links embedded in the RSS feed, and compare this with the number of people getting to those ulterior pages from your homepage or from common search engines.

Social media is getting more scientific in measuring consumer activity and behavior, even



when customers' conversion "moments" may register at a subliminal level only. Computing power and event-driven tracking models can allow deeper insights than ever about how consumers, unwittingly, are ruling the roost. Senior decision makers can no longer avoid facing the challenge of knowing how to use the data to judge the depth and characteristics of interactions and brand perceptions. (Angel & Sexsmith 2009)

*Content controlling (complicated trademark and user right issues)*

As the idea of social media is to build up conversations and spread it by word-of-mouth effect, it is also challenging for the companies to control what people are actually writing about them. The basic principle debars marketers manipulating or censoring the content that refers their own brand or product. Whether this be in positive or negative tone. Marketer must take a risk that sometimes social media can even turn against to the company in question.

In addition, copyright and trademark or logo-related issues cannot be ignored. (Barnes N. D. & Barnes F. R. 2009) While everyone can produce content on social media applications companies must guard their proprietary information and prevent violation of usage rights executed by unauthorized party.

*New channel vs. marketing management (strategy planning and implementation)*

As in any new strategy renewing process, much emphasis is placed on strategy formulation but little thought is given to implementation issue. (Ranchhod 2004) Social media must be integrated closely to other marketing channels and then support the whole marketing strategy. The best results can be achieved when integration has been done properly in mutual understanding with all related parties. For example the brand perceptions can not be inconsistent between the different communication channels.

*Rapidly changing consumer behavior and expectations*

In current business environment the consumer's behaviors and expectations are changing – partly due to the internet and social media. This can be opportunity for contemporary marketing organizations or a big challenge that must be overcome by adjusting the marketing strategy.

According to Ranchhod (2004) in current world more personal one-to-one relationships are required in order to face the heated competition and satisfy more demanding customers. The one-to-one relationship means that a customer is known to the company and interacts with the company, so that the company is able to flex and change to meet the customer's needs. The enterprise can then have a unified and more close view of even a single customer. (Ranchhod 2004)

Nevertheless social media can offer a tools that at every given opportunity the organisation can "tailor" and refit its behaviour to suit the customer so that in the end the customer is less likely to invest time in building such a relationship with a competitor. (Ranchhod 2004)

#### 4.3 Traditional Marketing Communications Vs. Social Media Channels – A Tool Of Interactive Approach

Online media, including social media, accounts for about one-third of consumers' time of accessing media, according to Forrester Research, but receives less than one-sixth of all advertising expenditures, according to PricewaterhouseCoopers and Wilkofsky Gruen Associates. Therefore it's a safe bet that marketing systems will increasingly need to support online advertising. (Raab 04/2010)

Social networking really isn't anything new. It has just taken its individual and collective voice in online environment. In the brave new communications world, less importance is being placed on the basic public relations and communication tools, the news/press release etc., and greater attention on relationships. As the social media is usually personal discussions it differs from traditional media where the message does not have an interactive element. In social networks, professional and avocation site members come together because of a common interest. They are also superior avenues for reaching influential decision makers and consumers. (Marken 2008)

Angel and Sexsmith (2009) point out that social networking's foundation is individual customer relationships. They mention that social media is firstly about finding influencers in categories. These influencers are then invited to contribute and dialogue on the customer

experience or brand and other customers are invited to join in. In traditional media this kind of individual and interactive relationships cannot be made.

According to Angel and Sexsmith (2009) behavioral modeling of how consumers share different needs and results and interact with products has long been an element in traditional customer relationship management, though it has tended to be impersonal when it comes to individual customers. With social networking tools like Facebook, behavior modeling can not only help track individual consumers but can itself become part of the relationship process; for example, a customer who recommends another directly can be rewarded explicitly for opting in. (Angel & Sexsmith 2009)

Unlike the traditional marketing channels a good social media marketing solution will show a marketer the terms and concepts that are most associated with his brand and product as well as with competitors' brands and products. It helps marketers to formulate and control their brand assets and perceptions more clearly against competitors. Compared to traditional communication methods social media impact will be noticed first in consumer-generated media channels. Long before the new sales are actualized, customers will be expressing themselves online. This early feedback can be used to modify and fine-tune company's marketing strategy and tactics. (Baker 2009)

Company can't get directly to social media using the approach of traditional marketing. Social media is more open, more grassroots and more organic than traditional marketing. The research, planning, implementation strategies and tactics are new and different. If the company can become comfortable being less in control than before, it can make great results with social media marketing. (Baker 2009)

However, as already been discussed in earlier chapters, advertising results have never been anything truly measurable. Advertisers in traditional mass media had only the unclear notions of who was seeing their messages. Most measurements relied on consumer samples such as panels or surveys or on statistical correlations captured in marketing mix models. Despite formidably complex statistical techniques, these methods are inherently imprecise measures of marketing impact. The flood of data provided by online advertising seems to offer an escape from the uncertainty of traditional media measurements. Unfortunately, it won't work. The key assumptions of outbound campaigns - that marketers control who receives their

messages, what those messages contain and how customers can reply - are not true in the online (social network) advertising world. In online advertising, consumers decide where to direct their attention. Marketers can access an audience with presumed interests and attributes but cannot target specific individuals in advance. (Raab 04/2010)

In addition, today's marketers will want much more information. Traditional marketing databases hold basic profile information (address, demographics, etc.), transaction history (purchases and possibly other interactions such as payments and service requests) and promotions sent. Future marketers will want to see a consolidated timeline of every web page view, every social media comment and every location the customer has visited. They'll also import more external data, such as competitive advertising that customers were exposed to, relationships within social networks and behaviors of similar individuals who are tracked in research panels. In other words, marketers must adjust to changes in their communication channels. Online channels offer a tantalizing glimpse of endlessly detailed consumer data - if marketers can penetrate technical and legal barriers to identifying who is doing what. (Raab 2010)

How can social media be used to gain awareness with target consumers then? It's not the tools that are important but rather understanding what people want and where the audience is. We have to see these networks as yet another tool in our PR chest - one that allows for 2-way communication, which is key to reaching and being effective in talking with our audience today. The fundamental is that social networking is about brand and awareness. Customers will consider information if it is both useful and believable but react badly to sales-push messages that violate social networking's intrinsic qualities of socialization and trust. (Angel & Sexsmith 2009)

Advertising agencies, consultants, and internet marketing firms have helped popularize social networks by making advertising more dynamic and entertaining to appeal to audience and for promotional campaigns that spread brand messages. Almost all well-known and big consumer marketers have been running internet promotional campaigns. (Angel & Sexsmith 2009)

#### 4.4 Framework Model – Social Media Applications In Marketing Oriented Companies And How It Is Received Among The Target Audience

The previous theoretical consideration is reflected and combined to the empirical part of this study by adapting the following framework models. In this chapter we go through the elements of this model one by one.

Basically this framework presents company’s marketing communication process starting from marketing planning/strategy and concluding to consumers’ purchase decision. This all will lead to an image and perception that consumer creates on the company, brand and/or the product in question.

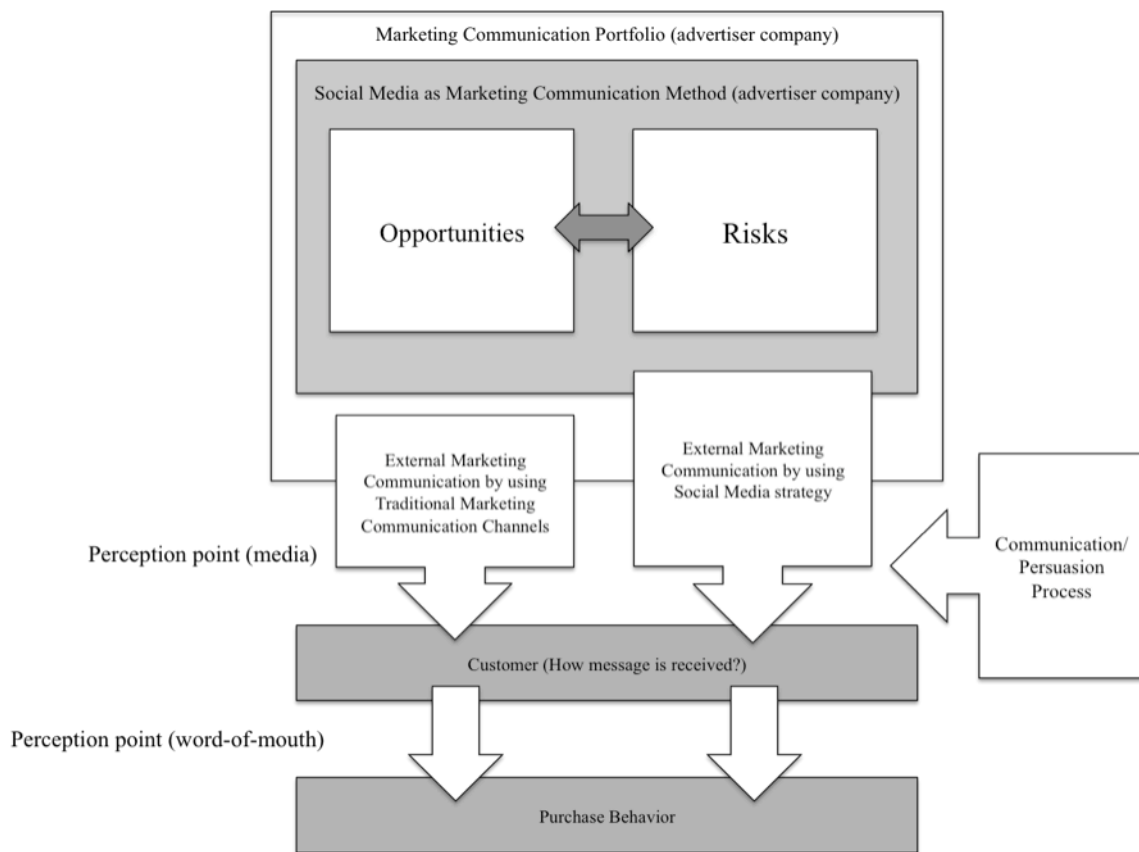


Figure 4-1. Framework Model: Marketing Communication System

The process starts from the marketing communication portfolio (white large rectangle), which includes all the communication modes that are set in organization’s marketing strategy. In other words this means all the external communication that company uses in their marketing.

Inside the communication portfolio one communication method is presented more closely. This is a social media applications used as a marketing channel (grey large box). Risks and opportunities that have earlier been presented in this paper have correlation between each other and therefore have an influence on marketing strategy and selection of proper communication methods.

The arrows pointing down from communication portfolio express the communication through the different channels – the left side arrow represents the traditional marketing modes (introduced in chapter 2) while the right arrow is the communication through social media. This is also the first point where consumers create their perceptions towards the company and/or product in question. This paper examines this particular phase through the communication persuasion model introduced in figure 4-2.

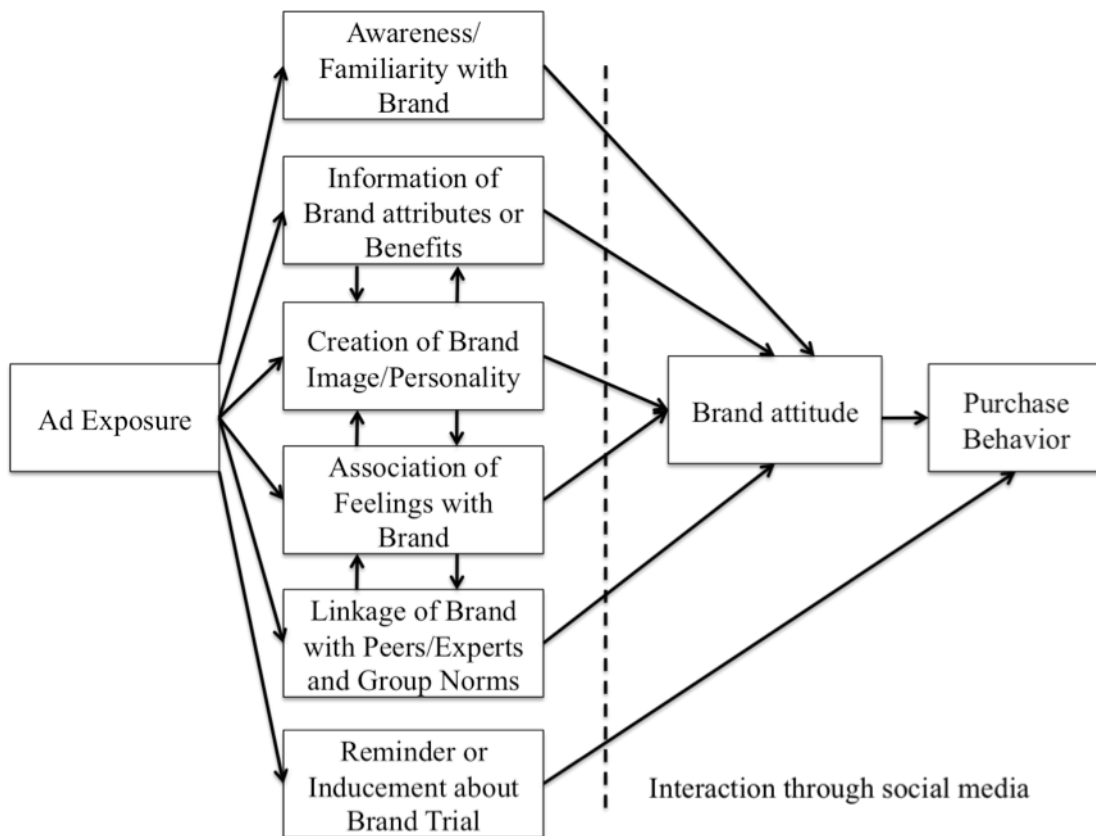


Figure 4-2. A model of communication/persuasion process

The persuasion process begins with ad exposure. This exposure can firstly create awareness about the brand, leading to a feeling of familiarity with it. Secondly, it gives information

about the brand's benefit and the attributes. Third, advertisements can also generate feelings in an audience that they begin to associate with the brand. Fourth, through the choice of the spokesperson and various visual or text elements, the advertisement can lead to the creation of an image for the brand, often called "brand personality." In addition to these, the advertisement can create the impression that the brand is favoured by the consumer's peers, or experts-individuals and groups the consumer like to identify. This is often how products and brands are presented as being fashionable. These five effects can create favourable liking, or attitude, toward the brand, which in turn should lead to purchasing action.

After the customers has received and reacted to this marketing communication they start to evaluate possible purchase and rationalities behind it. This phase is then another perception point (see figure 4-1.) During this phase the word-of-mouth communication is very likely when people are talking with each other and comparing their experiences of this particular product or service. Nowadays social media has an essential role in this point as the consumers are discussing increasingly online.

Marketing communication process finishes in customer purchase behavior and possible purchase decision. In the next chapter we will evaluate this process with empirical data and reflect it to company's marketing and branding strategy. We will also clarify if the social media as a communication channel has a positive effect on company's target to gain competitive advantage.

The model is also important at the planning stage to develop a good understanding of where advertising fits into the total pool of information and communication sources to which a consumer is exposed.

## 5. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study follows the qualitative approach evaluating target group's attitudes and behaviour towards the marketing through social media applications. Instead of quantitative analysis, the study focuses on gathering qualitative information by theme interviews as well as monitoring the behaviour of the target group. This chapter clarifies the methods how the empirical part has been implemented.

Empirical research follows tightly the objective of answering the research problem: *How can marketing oriented companies take advantage of social media applications when reforming and positioning their marketing mix?* The base of this question has set on the comparison of traditional and new marketing communication forms, mainly targeting on defining how people receive the marketing messages through these different channels. This can primarily be answered by going into the current literature of this topic. Empirical study is then carried out on the base of theoretical framework stated by following current academic discussion.

The focus of this study is, thus, monitor how the target group receives the marketing communication messages when using traditional channels versus social media applications. The tested persons are asked to evaluate their opinions, attitudes and reactions when they receive the same marketing messages from different channels. One, beforehand chosen, marketing campaign that consists of many communications channels is used as a sample material for target group.

### 5.1 Research Approach

When implementing an empirical research, the researcher must decide whether to use quantitative or qualitative study approach. Normally the research problem already defines which approach should be used in this particular study. In qualitative approach, the study does not attempt to draw statistical generalizations but merely describe some event, understand some actions or give theoretically interesting interpretation of some phenomenon. In this study we try to understand and picture target audience's reactions and behaviours when



receiving marketing communication messages from social media. Therefore the qualitative approach is justified method in this study.

In addition, participating is an essential part of the qualitative study. Also in this study tested persons are participating to analysing marketing materials in order to gather their opinions and perspectives on topics in question.

The chosen approach is also recommended when studying relatively small target groups. This allows the researcher to focus on the research subjects more extensively - thus the base of the data analysis is not the quantity but quality. Also in this study the author aims to get as much information as possible out of the small target group of 10 people. As usually in qualitative research this paper studies samples rather than numerical takes.

## 5.2 Selection Of Target Group & Theme Interview Questions

A target group of 9 persons was selected from different age groups, living areas, professions and education in order to get varying opinions and experiences from examined topic. Also the group of interviewees consisted of both men and women. The criteria was to pick normal consumer's that have a different knowledge and experiences on social media and marketing communication overall. Demographic specifications are presented in a table below.

Theme interview questions are also listed here. Questions are mainly the same for all interviewees but they can be asked in different order. Interviewees remain anonymous. The complete interview structure, including background questions, can be found in appendix.

The interview structure consists of seven different sections. All questions are asked twice – first after observation of print advertisement and second time after social media. The analysis begins with the general information about the first impression and image of the advertisement and continues to questions about communication/persuasion process (introduced in theoretical framework in Chapter 4.). As in the study framework we start with asking about awareness and familiarity with the brand and continue through the process finalizing with brand inducement questions. For social media part I have added a few additional questions regarding the interaction process.

### First impression:

1. What catches Your interest in the ad/website?
2. How well You recognise what product/service is being advertised?
3. Is the message clear? Is all necessary information communicated?
4. Did You read text content partly or fully?
5. What would You like to know more?
6. When skimming through the paper/webpage did this message stay in Your mind?
7. Does this ad/webpage differ from other marketing communication messages from the same industry?
8. Do You feel that this ad/webpage is directed for You?

### **Communication/persuasion process**

#### Awareness/Familiarity with brand

1. Do You recognise easily which brand is in question?
2. How familiar are You with this brand?
3. What image You have of this brand? Would you be ready to use the products of this brand?
4. Does this ad bring forward the brand effectively?
5. What are the elements that connect this ad/webpage to the brand?
6. Do You recall any other marketing campaigns from the same brand? If yes, is the image of the brand consistent?

#### Information of Brand Attributes or Benefits

1. Do the brand/product attributes and benefits to consumer come up from this ad/webpage?
2. What are they?
3. Can You name what typical characteristics of this brand are shown in this ad/webpage?
4. What information they deliver to the receiver?

#### Creation of Brand Image/Personality

1. Tell Your own words what kind of image of the brand You get from this advertisement? (e.g. luxury, fashioned, etc.)
2. How would You describe the brand personality? (e.g. humouristic, dark, etc.)

3. What are the elements that tells You that?

Accosiation of Feelings with brand

1. What kind of feelings this ad/webpage creates in You about the product?
2. What elements enable these feelings to arise?
3. What do You believe this brand is trying to achieve with these feeling-elements?
4. Do You think that these feelings fit to the product and target group?

Linkage of Brand with Peers/Experts and Group Norms (Target group)

1. Is this product introduced belonging to some particular target group?
2. What elements reveal this?
3. Are there presented some norms or values that belong to this particular target group? (e.g. product loyalty, “manly values” etc.)
4. Do You see it fashionable to have this product?

Reminder or Inducement about Brand Trial (Call to Action)

1. Does this ad/webpage call You to some action?
2. If You were now buying the product from this product group, would you consider this as an alternative?

**Additional questions for social media part**

Interaction (social media)

1. Would You be interested on writing messages on this site so that other people can read them?
2. Do You get important additional information about the product or brand from other people’s messages?
3. Does the interaction raise interest in You to become more familiar with this site and then product?
4. Does other people comments and messages change Your image about the brand?
5. How important You see social media in contemporary marketing?
6. What do You consider the biggest benefit(s) of social media for company/consumer?
7. Do You see there any risks for company/consumer?

### 5.3 Data Collection From Target Audience

In this study the data collection is carried out by *theme interviews* as well as by *observing* test persons' reactions and behaviour when analyzing the sample campaign. Test persons are asked to take a look at different materials from one particular campaign, including traditional marketing channels as well as new media applications, and then analyze it by answering theme interview questions. In next few paragraphs the research methods are described in more detail.

#### *Theme interview*

Qualitative interview as a research method is very valid when the objective is to clarify test person's attitudes and values. When interview is well executed it helps researcher to get more deeper and diverse information that is not available when using, for example, survey studies. As the interviews are interactive events the both parties, interviewer and interviewee, creates new meanings and interpretations on the topic in question. I would like to show the readers how the new information is created by communicating and analyzing the phenomenon together with interviewee.

Interview method should be selected based on the research problem. In this study I use same questions for all of the test persons but ask additional more specific ones if needed. The order of the questions might change occasionally. Interviewees answer their own words so that there are not any ready-made alternatives to choose. Theme interview questions are presented in the following sub-chapter.

Interviewees are anonymous in this study. Like this it is easier for them to tell freely and without fear that their opinions would be open for everyone.

#### *Observing*

Observing is normally used as an independent research method or for example supporting theme interview. In this study I combine interview and observing methods. The benefit of observing is that it gives direct and instant information about the behaviour of individuals,

groups or organizations. It also allows access to natural environment of studied topic. These benefits advocate using this method also in this study.

Observing is especially valid method for qualitative research. The situations that change instantly and are hardly predictable are good to be evaluated by using observing method. Observing is not only studying of verbal communication but also gestures, expressions, positions, movements, etc. are under research in this study.

My objective is to observe from close distance how the test persons receive the messages from different channels. How they act, behave and react when marketing materials are being presented to them.

### *Data*

The data collected by theme interview and observing is gathered in April and May 2010. In qualitative research the target group is selected to this purpose, not randomly. This means that the data is selected based on the criteria set by researcher. In this study all 9 interviewees are picked from different age groups, professions and living areas.

The data collection events were all similar: before the interviews test persons are give some time to get familiar with the marketing materials they are asked to analyze during the interview. Before executing the interviews the questions were selected based on the research problem and theoretical framework. The questions were also ordered by different themes.

As the objective of this study is to compare different marketing communication channels the sample campaign was selected so that it consists of several communication formats including social media. For this study I chose Nissan's product launch campaign that has suitable print advertising as well as online marketing with interactive approach (material samples in appendices). With these two channels (print advertising in newspapers and magazines and online advertising including social media) I try to examine how they affect on recipient's image of the company, brand and/or product. In other word is there any difference if the channel is interactive, social network based mode.

#### 5.4 Validity And Reliability Of The Study

As qualitative research is always based on interpretations one can consider how well traditional evaluation criteria apply to qualitative study. Therefore examining the validity and reliability of qualitative research is not an easy task. As usually in observative studies, also in this paper author's own comprehensions on research topic are emphasized. In the next few paragraphs we go through the validity and reliability issues related this study.

##### Validity

Usually validity gets more attention as an evaluation concept than reliability when qualitative research is in question. In short, validity evaluate is the research adequate; is it made diligently, are the results and conclusions "correct" and so on. The objective of this study report is to present the progress and execution of this study to the reader as clearly as possible. In addition, the exploiting of two separate research methods, interviews and observing, has most probably made the validity more stronger.

Because this is a qualitative study, we cannot generalize results universally. This is not, however, a problem since the purpose of this study is to focus on the effect of one single marketing campaign within one single company on specifically selected individuals from different demographics. This is expected to gain more understanding concerning the exploitation of social media applications within this particular company.

In literature some authors however agree that generalizations can be made in qualitative research from the data interpretations. All in all in qualitative research the concept of statistical generalization could be replaced with the idea of theoretical or characteristical generalization. Then the key is the interpretations that are made from the qualitative data. The crucial factor is not the size of the target group and the statistics calculated from it, but more likely constancy and depth of the interpretations as well as the reasonable data collection methods.

Also in this study the data collection has been executed as strictly as possible so that the interpretations would be appropriate, justifiable, sustainable and useful in the perspectives of the target company as well as the other researchers.

## Reliability

Generally study reliability means that the research can be repeated similarly in similar circumstances so that other researchers would achieve same kind of results if the study is implemented again.

In this study, every interview session and tests person's behaviour is unique even though the interviewer used similar questions and data collection methods. This research could be repeated quite close the same, but exactly similar encounters and behaviours during the interviews cannot get back because of this dynamic characteristic of qualitative study.

The reliability of content analysis can be evaluated how relevant interview topics and question are in relation to study objectives. Therefore the interview questions were generated on the base of theoretical framework so that the primary research question, differences in company's image when using traditional marketing communication or alternatively social media, is covered extensively.

Also in this study, in reliability point of view, is essential that all interviewees understand interview questions similarly so that answers can be analysed and compared between each other without a possibility of uncertainty.

## 6. RESULTS & ANALYSIS

In this chapter we first go through the target group that took part in the interviews. After that I introduce the case company and sample campaign and in the final part interview results are presented and analyzed.

### 6.1 Target Group

In 2008 North American Technographics Media and Marketing Online Survey, Forrester Research found that 37 percent of U.S. online adults (the worldwide population of consumer-generated media was 170 million in 2008) (Baker 2009) are "critics" who post product reviews, comment on blogs or contribute to online forums. Twenty-one percent are "creators" who post original content in blogs or Web pages, and 69 percent are "spectators" who read blogs, forums and review sites. It has also been found that large numbers of bloggers publicly discuss products and brands online: 37 percent of bloggers post reviews of products frequently, and 45 percent do so occasionally. (Baker 2009)

It is commonly known (e.g. Angel & Sexsmith 2009) that the initiators of social networking has been so called "Generation Y", those who born between the late 1970s and the early 1990s. This user generation emerged as the mobile phone generation to pioneer the move from the more structured world of email into the minimally-worded directness of one-to-one messaging. Gen Y has since evolved into social networking - communicating not just individually but also in communities of people.

However, as the time has passed social networking is not just about Gen Y anymore - now older generations are also heavy social networkers. For example Facebook's largest demographic is women aged 55 and older, according to Ogilvie PR Worldwide research. (Angel & Sexsmith 2009) Thus it is not just that "everything is changing" for younger generations, rather, everything is changing for all generations. (Angel & Sexsmith 2009)

The bottom line is that a lot of people are online, a huge percentage of them are engaged in consumer-generated media and a very large percentage of them discuss the brands and



products they love - or hate. And it is not only young people doing this these days. (Baker 2009)

In this study we also concentrate on wider demographics as the target group is selected from different age, living area and profession groups. As mentioned in previous chapter, like this we get more extensive image of people's behaviour and attitudes towards marketing communication from different channels. Thus, the aim is not interview only young, "Gen Y", user group but instead focus on wider audience including persons that have not been using social media at all. In a table below the interviewees are introduced more closely.

Interviewee	M29	W25	W26	M26	M27	M37	M72	W62	W27
<b>Living region</b>	HKI	LPR	HKI	LPR	HKI	HKI	MLI	MLI	HKI
<b>Education</b>	Univ. of app. sci.	Univ.	Univ.	Univ.	Univ.	Univ.	Voc Sch.	Voc. Sch.	Univ.
<b>Profession</b>	Higher Officer	Stud.	High. Officer	Stud.	Stud.	Officer	Retired	Officer	High. Officer
<b>What media are you following and how much?</b>									
<i>1. Newspapers</i>	Daily	Weekly	Daily	Daily	Daily	Daily	Daily	Daily	Daily
<i>2. Magazines</i>	Weekly	Monthly	Monthly	Weekly	Monthly	Monthly	Weekly	Weekly	Weekly
<i>3. TV</i>	Daily	No	Daily	Weekly	Daily	Daily	Daily	Daily	Daily
<i>4. Radio</i>	Daily	No	Weekly	Monthly	Daily	Daily	Daily	Daily	Weekly
<i>5. Internet</i>	Daily	Daily	Daily	Daily	Daily	Daily	Daily	Daily	Daily
<b>How much you pay attention on marcoms?</b>	Moderately	A lot	A lot	A lot	Moderately	Moderately	A little	Moderately	A lot
<b>Are you familiar with social media?</b>	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes

Table 6-1. Background information of interviewees.

## 6.2 Case Company Description & Sample Marketing Campaign

### 6.2.1 Long Experience In Automotive Industry

Nissan's history goes back to the Kwaishinsha Co., an automobile factory started by Masujiro Hashimoto in Tokyo' in 1911. Hashimoto was a pioneer in Japan's automotive industry at its beginning phase and throughout its initial years of struggle. (nissan-global.com)

Jitsuyo Jidosha Co., Ltd., another predecessor of Nissan, was established in Osaka in 1919 to manufacture Gorham-style three-wheeled vehicles, designed by the American engineer William R. Gorham. Kwaishinsha Co. and Jitsuyo Jidohsa Co. merged in 1926 to form Dat Jidosha Seizo Co. That led a few years later to the establishment of Nissan Motor Co. (nissan-global.com)

The first small-size Datsun passenger car was manufactured at the Yokohama Plant in April 1935, and vehicle exports to Australia were also launched that same year. In those days Datsun cars symbolized Japan's rapid advances in modern industrialization, as evidenced by the contemporary slogan, "The Rising Sun as the flag and Datsun as the car of choice." (nissan-global.com)

As the signs of war grew stronger towards the end of 30's, production emphasis shifted from small-size Datsun passenger cars to military trucks. During the war, Nissan also manufactured engines for the army's planes and for motor torpedo boats. (nissan-global.com)

Nissan's post war development was distracted by the Yokohama Plant requisition by Occupation Forces that lasted roughly ten years. The company was also handicapped in the early postwar period by the fact that many leading auto dealerships, previously affiliated with the old Nissan network, switched to Toyota after the dissolution of Japan Motor Vehicle Distribution Co., Ltd., which had monopolized vehicle distribution during the war. Nissan resumed production of Nissan trucks in 1945 and Datsun passenger cars in 1947. (nissan-global.com)

The 1959 Bluebird and the 1960 Cedric captivated Japanese car buyers and quickened the pace of motorization in Japan. The Sunny that was launched in 1966 started the "my car" era in Japan, and was a major driving force behind the rapid growth of the small-car market. In the same year, Nissan merged with Prince Motor Co., Ltd., adding the renowned Skyline and Gloria models to its product lineup (nissan-global.com)

In those days, the advance of motorization gave rise to increased traffic accidents and contributed to the problem of air pollution. Nissan developed its first Experimental Safety Vehicle (ESV) in 1971 and has adopted a vast array of safety technologies in its production

vehicles over the years since then. (nissan-global.com)

The two energy crises of the 1970s triggered a rapid increase in exports of small Japanese cars, widely known for their excellent fuel economy and quality. In fuel economy tests executed by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency in 1973, the Sunny finished first and subsequently gained enormous popularity in the U.S. market under the advertising slogan of "Datsun saves." American automakers at that time were behind in developing small cars. (nissan-global.com)

Over the years, Nissan has gained a reputation for excellence in engineering by playing a pioneering role in many fields of advanced technology. With the aim of improving fuel economy, Nissan has developed a variety of weight-reducing materials, such as high-tensile steel sheet for body panels, and has also created sophisticated engine management systems for controlling combustion. (nissan-global.com)

Moreover Nissan began early on to develop overseas manufacturing operations, starting with the initiation of knockdown production at Yulon Motor Co., Ltd. in Taiwan in 1959. Today, Nissan operates manufacturing and assembly plants in 17 countries around the world. (nissan-global.com)

In addition to manufacturing, Nissan has also been proceeding with a program to localize R&D operations, including vehicle design and engineering, as well as business management functions at the highest level. This globalization program has resulted that decision-making has been localized through the establishment of regional headquarters in North America and Europe. Nissan North America Inc. and Nissan Europe N.V. supervise the entire scope of Nissan's local operations in their regions, including product development, manufacturing, procurement, fund-raising and mutual complementation of parts between companies. (nissan-global.com)

In 1999 Nissan and France's Renault SA signed an agreement concerning a comprehensive global alliance aimed at achieving profitable growth for both companies. This alliance has resulted a sustaining growth and in 2006 Nissan reaches 100 millionth production milestone. Today company has sixteen production sites around the world and offers products and services in more than 160 countries. With roughly 68 billion euro yearly sales, this company

employs over 175 000 consolidated workers worldwide. (nissan-global.com)

### *6.2.2 Marketing At Nissan Nordic Europe Oy*

Located in Espoo Nissan's headquarter of Nordic and Baltic operations employees roughly 180 persons in seven countries. Yearly sales of Nissan Nordic Europe (NNE) in 2008 exceeded 500 million euro. As the production is administered by Nissan global office in Japan the functions of NNE focuses then on sales and marketing activities. Marketing management is centralized in Espoo office whereas countries are responsible for local operational functions.

As in automotive marketing in general, also at Nissan the brand and marketing communication guidelines are set world-wide at Nissan head office. This leads to a use of centralized marketing methods, channels and materials and make the local processes a bit more inflexible (see next sub-chapter for example). Typically all bigger campaigns are adapted for local use from international (at least European wide) materials.

Again following the typical characteristics of automotive industry, Nissan's marketing activities are quite traditional. By allocating relatively remarkable sums to marketing communication awareness in Above-The-Line communication (TV, print, radio etc.) has been tried to keep as high as possible compared to competitors.

In the recent years, when Nissan has launched products for younger and more urban target group the perspective towards marketing actions has also changed. Whereas earlier, company's marketing messages focused more on older people with good prices and offers (presented mostly in dealership open-weekends and traditional TV and newspaper advertising), now the channels are directed more widely emphasising brand messages. Therefore, company has woken up in online reality which shows also in its marketing campaign during the last couple of years. In the next sub-chapter we go through one of them – the product launch campaign in which Nissan has applied many communication channels including online marketing and social media.

### *6.2.3 Case Campaign Description*

The campaign I study in this paper is product launch campaign of new Nissan commercial vehicle, NV200. The campaign was executed in four Nordic countries (Finland, Sweden, Denmark, Norway) and it took place in April – May 2010 depending on countries. In order to reach the target group (professionals in small & medium enterprises and private persons owning or considering of buying a van) as effectively as possible the marketing communication channels was selected in traditional manner – print advertising in local and nationwide newspapers and magazines, nationwide radio spots, Point-of-Sales promotion materials and sales events. A message in all of these materials and actions was the information of brand characteristics, benefits to customers and competitive price. The objective was to increase the awareness of this new model as well as encourage people to come for a test-drive. The samples of these materials can be found in appendices.

However, in addition Nissan decided to try a new channel which has not been used before in commercial vehicle marketing. The company realized that there is one type of online media that this people have learned to use willingly. This social media is online car marketplace with ten of thousands of “ads” made by right kind of audience. Therefore company invested in a campaign website that was promoted with the ad banners on major online car marketplaces.

The website was based on the popular TV-series Mythbuster. On this page people could “bust” the common myths that commercial vehicles normally share by seeing how Nissan’s new model is better in all of those categories (in each category was introduced unique selling points and brand benefits). On that page visitors can also write their own van stories, vote other’s stories and win weekly prizes. Message sharing was handled by visitors via Facebook or e-mail. The interactive part succeeded relatively well resulting that people wrote tens of own stories right after the site launch. The campaign lasted one and half month in total. Screen captures of the websites are presented in appendices.

### 6.3 Target Group Experiences In Receiving Marketing Communication Through Traditional Media Compared To Social Media Channels

As earlier was anticipated, there are quite remarkable differences how people see and receive marketing messages from traditional media (print advertising in this case) and alternatively from social media. In this sub-chapter I go through the experiences this target group has when observing the campaign materials. As the interviews were executed by following the marketing communication's persuasion model (introduced in framework model in chapter 4), I will go through the results in same order. As said earlier, the objective was to clarify (by using this persuasion model) how this target group see the marketing messages from print advertising differently than from social media applications and how this effects to their image of the brand and possible purchasing behavior. To make it easier to follow the analysis of different channels (print advertising and internet) I compare each sections one by one so that first is always print advertising and right after same topic regarding social media as a marketing channel. Reader can find sample materials as an appendix.

However, before going more deeply into this persuasion model I had a few questions regarding the first impressions and image that people get immediately when the materials were revealed to them. With these questions I wanted study how people react when they see the materials first time and how these channels differs even though they are parts of the same campaign. Interviewees were first shown print advertisement and after that internet pages and web banners as a comparison.

I started with a questions regarding the elements that catches receiver's interest and how well all the necessary information come out from the presented material. In print advertisement the answers were quite consistent and predictable focusing on the biggest and clearest elements as well as the headline texts:

*Woman 26 years old: Van of the year logo because it's hanging in the middle of the ad. Also "space miracle" texts hops out...I mean the cargo space is another big thing there.*

*Man 37 years old: Prizes and awards have always been important and they've been shown often in this kind of ads. Those were the elements that caught my interest at first. If I was buying a van, I might focus on something else. As a normal person I recognized this.*

*W27: First I saw "Van of the year" text. That was somehow eye-catching element. Van of the year is of course a positive thing. Next I saw "NV200" letters. As a woman, we shall not underestimate women though, but I didn't fully get what this NV200 stands for...it made me a little bit annoyed when I didn't realize at first where it's referring to. Then when I looked further down, I saw that this ad is actually pretty sympathetic. Not as a traditional car ad. There are nice europallet figures and cartoon toolboxes that melt your heart. There is good feelings and sympathetic. And now of course I understand that this NV200 is car model...it comes out when watching this ad. As a whole it makes me happy.*

Also the necessary information regarding the product being advertised was easily recognized when print ad was in question. Interviewees did not mention any additional information that they would need to know more about:

***Interviewer: How well You recognise what product/service is being advertised?***

*W26: Pretty well because there is this "Van of the year", thus some new van is advertised.*

*M37: Very well. Image tells you quickly that it is commercial vehicle ad.*

*W27: First I saw this "Van of the year" text and that gave me an idea what is being advertised. It's a van. And there is picture as well. So I recognized it very well. But if you think a regular consumer this is a funny but not so clear advertisement. Just because this is different. Consumer needs to pay a bit more attention to get down here to price – it does not show at the first place.*

***I: Is the message clear? Is all necessary information communicated?***

*M29: Well yes, a car, spacious, awarded and price.*

*W26: For me, yes. There's all necessary like price and warranty information clearly available. And where you can get further information is also there.*

*M37: Yes, fairly well. A bit more wittined would not be bad. Those little figures in front took me a while to recognize. Spacious van is in question.*

*M27: Maybe presented a bit unclear because there are used so many element and fonts. But when inspecting a little more, it's quite clear – van of the year.*

*W27: First I would like to know what is the most important message here. Here are quite many messages as you see. This "new model" and then "awarded as a van of the year". Also price and good features are promoted. In addition there is some competition which is tried to push forward "pakumyytit.fi". In my view there are quite many messages. I think that marketer should have picked one message where to concentrate and bring it forward. Anyway I think the main idea is this "best awarded" thing...that's what they want to point out.*

When asking how well this ad stands out from the paper, receivers were slightly negative and explained that they have no need of van at the moment:

*M72: No, it doesn't stand out, because I don't have a need for a car.*

*M27: Not in that sense because I'm not planning to buy a car and I'm realized that these newspapers include quite much car ads in general.*



*W25: I do not think so, because I'm not really interest in buying a car, I don't even have a driving license. I wouldn't pay attention to this particular product.*

***I: What about if comparing to other ads from the same industry?***

*M29: Well, yes somehow. This is more juvenile.*

*W26: Well, maybe these figures here, those who are getting into the car, are not that typical in car advertising. This is made for looking funny. Normally there are nothing but the car and maybe a woman and back ground. But these are different. Right away I reflected it as a wheelchair so that something different can be fitted in as well.*

*M37: Maybe a little bit conventional...traditional in a way. Many family cars or vans are advertised bolder...searching for an effect. Clearly targeted to the consumers who knows what they want.*

*M27: There are still those side elements, those walking cones and hanging letters, details that you recognize. However, the formula is very similar as always, thus there's manufacturers logo and car in the middle and price is available as well as couple of key features.*

*W27: Yes, it does differ. Let's take this Mercedes as an example. It's very similar to those you see on Helsingin Sanomat front page every weekend. In this Mercedes ad, there is clear image of the car and how much it costs...both written big. Then there's a lot of texts and sign where you can buy this car. This Nissan is then a way different. As I already mentioned, this is more humoristic and funny in different way. I wouldn't say that Ford or Mercedes ads were funny in any way. All in all very different ad is in question.*

As a result everyone concluded that they are not probably the target group and that may have effect on their evaluations.

Instead, when moving on to social media part the answer on first impression were slightly different – user interaction and humoristic text were more important eye catchers when web site was in question:

*M72: Comment from other users raises my interest.*

*M29: Those flamemats and then this old van.*

This car catches my eye in those banners. Texts were really weird and I thought that there is such a terrible van. And on the webpage "Romuta myytit" was pretty funny, but still I recognized that compared to print advertising this was much more manly.

*M37: Well, those myths, they clearly rides with that Mythbusters theme, a well known TV format.*

*W62: That this was somehow so humoristic.*

On the other hand the information was seen pretty unclear resulting that the product in question remained hardly recognizable. However, it stood out quite well from other similar web campaigns because of the unconventional execution:

*M26: Right away you don't recognize that it's Nissan at the first place but it's somewhere there anyway.*

*M27: Not well necessarily. I would pay attention to rusty van but when looking into it more carefully you realize what brand is in question. Not if you just scroll it through.*

*W27: Van myths and "crashed" stands out. But if the objective is to advertise this NV200 model, it does not come out that well.*

***I: So the message is not that clear? Is all necessary information communicated?***

*W25: I think for me it's not that clear. However you can see it's about a car at least.*

*W26: I think this only communicates about those van myth, again it does not tell that advertiser wants to introduce it's new model. Here they just present different stories and myths that are related to vans. Thus, not very clearly.*

***I: What would You like to know more?***

*M37: Some comparisons to competitors.*

*M27: Maybe that hidden agenda to promote new Nissan vehicle could come out more clearly.*

*W27: What is the main objective? If they want that some regular consumer would leave some messages there, they should tell more what consumer is expected to do. Puffing is a bit annoying so they could say it clearly that the whole thing is related to NV200 model. There's a real product in the background that is wanted to be sold.*

Unlike with print ad interviewees considered these web pages interesting and unconventional compared to other internet campaigns from the same industry. However, they seemingly were not so familiar with internet campaigns, especially in automotive industry that they could have evaluated them more deeply:

***I: When scrolling through the sites in general did this ad banner or campaign site stay in Your mind?***

*W26: Well yes...in principle because Mythbusters is pretty good and popular program in Finland, so therefore funny and topical link.*

*M37: Users messages and comments stayed in my mind.*

*M27: If you enter the site it definitely stay in your mind...site was actually funnier than the banner implies. If I for example was skimming through date messages from Suomi24 I probably not clicked this banner.*

*W27: This is visually pretty nice and different compared to normal car advertisements. This could easily be an ad of some other product group.*

***I: In your opinion does this internet campaign differ from other internet campaigns from the same industry?***

*W26: Well, yes it differs. This kind of Mythbusters idea is definitely not used before. But still this social media side is really manly. If it somewhere appeared to cover wider target group, now it is really specified to some particular user group.*

*M27: I must admit that I haven't followed that much this industry but those users' stories and possibility to vote best I've seen before...I don't remember was it related to cars though. Myth related to vans was a good idea...for example "Hard to reverse" and then you could see how it really goes, was a good idea, I would say.*

Finally when asking do they see themselves as a target group the younger interviewees were cautiously positive even though they did consider themselves belonging to a primary group – more likely they thought that company tries to broaden their customer base by marketing in new channels.

As a result we can say that the first impressions differs a bit between the print ad and internet as a channel. The biggest difference was in the information sharing. When the print ads give just the main messages and some, most essential eye catchers, the approach with web pages are slightly more complicated – user must do a bit more work to access all necessary

information. Also for older users internet was not the most natural channel to receive marketing messages.

In the next phase we went more into the persuasion process of marketing communication and started with clarifying **how familiar these interviewees are with the brand** in question. It was no surprise, when car manufacturer is in question, that men knew the brand very well while women had not that much knowledge of it. Nevertheless, I wanted to study what image they have of this brand and how well these communication actions refers to this image. This is the first step in persuasion process and therefore has an effect on purchasing decision in the end. Once again I started with print ad.

***I: What image You have of this brand? Would you be ready to use the products of this brand?***

*M29: Quality image. Japanese quality and I would be ready to use the products of this brand.*

*M26: I would be ready to use these products. Image of a bit cheaper cars but recent years they've tried to increase their profile.*

*W62: The image of a good car. And I've been aboard of it sometime as well. I would be ready to use Nissan's products.*

Even though everyone has some image of the Nissan brand they did not have that strong connection on it to this particular ad:

***I: Does this ad bring forward the brand effectively?***

*W27: Not really. First of all visible branding, for example logo alignment and Nissan in general is not that visible in this ad. Of course they probably want to create new and distinctive image of Nissan. But just because consumer needs to make an effort to find a logo, I would say this ad does not bring out the brand that effectively. More likely this ad creates new images.*

*M26: Yes, this recent years' image has been tried to renew to bit more modern.*

*M37: Yes, some keywords, good payload, capacity...those are the words they try to back up this brand and core function.*

*M27: Maybe that "best awarded space miracle" and "van of the year" are emphasizing this quality and reliability.*

***I: What are the elements the connect ad to the brand?***

*M29: Well maybe the young feeling...this is a bit different car ad. Those robot figures and this visual image overall is funny. If you compare for example to Qashqai this is similar. It characterizes this brand very well.*

*W26: I think Nissan is a car for everybody. I don't think this make the image stronger. This is not only brand advertising for Nissan, but more likely brings forward some specific product group and what can you take out of it. Thus, maybe it doesn't bring forward the brand that much.*

*W27: Well, this depends on the images I have from Nissan. In this ad they are logo, picture of the car and "good manoeuvrability" in feature list because I think Nissan is good to drive. And then relatively low price.*

*I: Do You recall any other ads from the same brand? If yes, is the image of the brand consistent?*

*W26: I don't recall super-clearly, but that I remember is more likely these Nissan's normal personal car ads. Maybe there the brand is more visible because it's more familiar to that regular people. This is more focused on commercial vehicle drivers. And this is more to the point to them because they probably don't need brand shown that big.*

*M26: Best I can remember is the Qashqai campaign a couple of years ago. This is pretty consistent with it.*

*W27: There's been a Qashqai campaign on TV, if I recall well, and that was such a modern and catchy. This print ad is also more modern, so in that sense they are hand in hand with each other. However the basic image is still more traditional than this ad in question.*

If the brand recognition was relative poor when observing print ad it was not much better with internet pages:

***I: Do You recognise easily which brand is in question and what are the elements that connect site/banner ad to the brand?***

*W26: Once again, it's not the first thing I saw. Here is so much everything else so it's not the first thing that come to my mind.*

*M27: No, it didn't come out that well. In upper corner there's a car and logo. And also the logo is in the bottom but you need to search for that.*

*M26: Those boxes connects it to the print media. So if you've seen the print you would definitely connect it to same brand.*

*W62: Logo at least, I can't say anything else.*

*W27: I wouldn't recognize. Only in the bottom they say Nissan. For example they say here NV200 but Nissan, the brand is not communicated clearly. Thus, very badly. However this van picture connects the site to the Nissan's product. And then there's a picture of cabin, but nothing is telling me that this is Nissan. This van could be any other brand as well.*

Seemingly in this campaign it is relatively difficult to connect advertised product to the company and brand in question. As discussed already in theoretical part it might be so that people are not yet that familiar with interactive marketing and still see it a bit hard to refer any brand.

Next we go into **the information of brand attributes or benefits** which is also a next step in Batra's, Myers' and Aaker's persuasion model. Here I wanted to see how well brand attributes and benefits are communicated to the receiver again via print channel as well as in the internet. This is also one of the main features of succeeding communication how marketer can affect on customer's purchasing process by encouraging him/her with brand attributes.

***I: Do the brand/product attributes and benefits to consumer come out from this ad?***

*M29: Yes, it comes out, firstly this space miracle and awarded best.*

*M26: Price is surely pretty affordable and here these boxes are quite enthusiastic so this is inevitable pretty spacious. Those are the biggest benefits I guess.*

*W27: Pretty well they come out. Here they say clearly that this is a "space miracle" which means that there's a lot of space. That's surely very important feature when van is in question. "Awarded best" refers that this is provedly the best. "comfortable and well equipped cabin", "great manoeuvrability". There you go. Then there are mentioned car taxes and emissions. Those are not clear to me, because I don't know the right levels.*

When print advertising points out the brand benefits relatively well, the impression is a bit different on the web site – interviewees can clearly find the benefits but it takes much more time compared to print ad:

*M29: Not that clearly. Differs a bit from print advertisement.*

*W26: Well, they are presented pretty easily through those myths.*

*M72: Somewhat yes, but this print ad is better.*



*M26: Not product benefits, this is mostly humoristic thing so they don't come out that easily.*

As Woman 27 puts it, site requires more realization:

*W27: This is not that easy webpage for consumer. Here you somehow need to catch the idea. At least it comes out that in van you can pack more and it's nice to sit there. If consumer makes some effort then he finds out the benefits, but if you ask do the benefits come out "clearly" then the answer is no.*

Also the **brand image and personality** are seen a bit differently even though the both actions are elements of the same campaign. Not surprisingly interactive approach, mainly because of the users' comments, was considered as manly and technical. Instead, in print advertising people focused more on visual image and characterized it as youthful, humoristic and cheerful almost without an exception.

***I: Tell Your own words what kind of image of the brand You get from this ad?***

*M29: Young, urban.*

*W26: Nissan comes out in that sense that this is cheerful and nice and easy to talk with...Nissan is for everybody. Nothing like luxury. More like I would buy this with family and this is nice to drive and gives me a good feeling. Beautiful clouds in air.*

*M26: Most likely they want to have some younger atmosphere here and affordable and useful of course – two euro pallets fits well is pretty useful thing.*

*W27: Sympathetic, playful, humoristic, affordable and good quality-price-rate. On the other hand some traditional elements are there as well, for example the image of the car is pretty traditional.*

***I: How would You describe the brand personality?***

*M29: This goes more to the funny side, this is very funny.*

*W26: Every men's product, cheerful, nice and funny.*

*M26: Yes, this is definitely humoristic, at least I laughed inside to those euro pallets and these boxes as well. And this is pretty light as well, light sky and most likely sun is shining.*

*M37: Humoristic, extrovert, but still a bit conventional.*

*M27: Funny and happy even though a van is a dull and everyday product. Those characters make that. Same feeling comes from other Nissan ads. For example this Qashqai tries the same.*

On the website the humour characteristic remains but now it is seen more connected to men's world and manly values:

*W27: Same things as previously. Very masculine, manly and cold. I associate this to ice hockey for some reason. We're quite far away from "Alice in Wonderland" –type of feeling that appeared in print ad.*

*W26: Again fanny and easy to talk with. This is taken even further, in a way funny and inventive. When everyone can write, it tells that it's not only a car for minor target group but something for everyone.*

*M26: Retro van, humoristic, social and interactive idea...it's somehow on the pulse.*

*M27: I think this brings out a tuning-kind-of-image.*

***I: Again how would You describe the brand personality?***

*W26: This is a pretty personal, so it clearly tries to differentiate from others. Now there is something total-new, not the "same old shit". In practise those myths are the elements that create this.*

*M37: Humour is of course what they're looking for, so light not so traditional, bold it challenges reader to question his own beliefs which is of course a quite brave move.*

*W27: Manlikeness.*

As already discussed in Chapter 4, **feelings** that ad generate are also important indicators how the message has been taken and where does it lead. Depending on the offering and communicational purpose, marketing communication can create a plenty of different feelings. In this campaign the key word has clearly been humour and happiness. On the other hand, the need for the product clearly contributes the creation of these feelings.

***I: What kind of feelings this ad creates in You about the product?***

*W26: Good feelings, funny feeling, those figures create it. And those hanging things...yes, they're there for reason. And actually, the design of this car, it feels that there was a "happy face" ...it somehow reflects to those other elements. Thus, cheerfulness comes out again.*

*W62: Basically soft and kind feeling of good.*

*M26: Not much, because I'm not that interested in this product but still this is quite entertaining to watch...mostly because of these extra elements, boxes, hanging letters and of course lightness counts.*

*M27: Well, pretty neutral, so it doesn't give me any great passions to somewhere or another. If I was buying a van I would probably pay attention to this ad because this is different than those ads that always point out usefulness and traditionality of the commercial vehicles.*

***I: What do You believe this brand is trying to achieve with these feeling-elements?***

*M29: Probably younger target group and busting the conventional car advertising in commercial vehicles.*

*W26: Well, the space is the biggest thing here, plus its easy to come along with and nice. Everyone would buy it, not for some particular task but it's versatile as well.*

*M27: I would believe that they want to achieve disparity by presenting product so that it could be used for fun as well. Normally van ads brings an idea of post man that uses it at work...very practical I mean. But this gives an image of family moving into new house...more like true-to-life atmosphere comes out from this ad.*

About the question whether these feelings fit to the product and target group the interviewees were not that sure anymore:

*M26: I'm not sure on that. I'm not sure if people buying vans are interested in these elements.*

*M27: Somehow mixed feelings, because as I earlier said vans are a bit dull products, but on the other hand vans are used for many purposes and then this kind of approach is working as well. I could imagine if young people do some sport that needs carrying some bigger items as motor bikes this would suit there well.*

*W27: I think it's all okay, because this is not a sports car which is in question. I think it's a good thing that this is separated from typical serious car advertisement.*

As the humour and happiness were the key words in print advertisement the same line continued with webpage. Positive words described also this channel:

*M26: Nice feelings. Makes me even laugh a little bit.*

*W26: Fun and easiness and now especially manliness: flamemats and furdices are for me like "oh my god" and it brings my mind kind of redneck type of guy.*

User's messages were seen as the main elements generating those feelings. Some of the interviewees believed that the objective of this kind execution is to find new approach to reach wider target group. As the image was consider manly and relatively rough recipients saw this fitting pretty well to assumed target group:

*W62: Well, they are again these funny texts...I think these count more than the facts on those pages.*

*M27: Stories are those. So if I entered the page I would like to laugh and entertain myself.*

***I: What do You believe this brand is trying to achieve with these feeling-elements?***

*W26: Well, so that people would take part and leave good comments and create discussion around the product.*

*M26: Most likely that the brand stays in mind mainly because of humour.*

*M37: Differentiating from the mass and trying to achieve new kind of approach to this product group.*

*M27: Probably that younger consumers would stay on the webpage reading stories and identify to them. And if there's something negative you can find out how it should be in myth buster section.*

*W27: Clearly the attention of manly target group is desired so that they would get to know the product. Thus, they are lurking for their interest.*

***I: Do You think that these feelings fit to the product and target group?***

*W25: Yeah, If the target group would be young, the people who need van for their work, then yes. People who has sense of humour and does not take life too serious, then yes.*

*W27: Yes, because the majority of van customers are men. Even though, of course women can buy those as well.*

*M26: I don't know how they take that kind of flamemats...are they really seeing them cool or just taking it as a joke. I don't think it really matters because it's anyway positive. And I'm pretty sure that this target group is eager to share their experiences and make it bit better then others.*

Next level in Communication Persuasion model is **linkage with peers and group norms**. In the other words, how well advertisement reflects to the target group. The common opinion was that the product itself can be easily connected to some particular target group but the ad does not bring the same idea necessarily. This is most likely because of the colourful layout and cartoon-like elements presented in the ad.

***I: Is this product introduced belonging to some particular target group?***

*M29: Well, yes, these young entrepreneurs. I bet this contacts them more.*

*M72: I can make an assumption that it is introduced to belonging some particular target group...For example for a tool of little enterprise.*

*M26: I'm not totally sure what is the target group of these commercial vehicles, I'm not sure are these elements consistent with that. In a way these elements are pretty juvenile and this target group probably not. I don't know.*

*W25: In my opinion it's for persons who need vans for work, who needs capacity. Definitely it's not a family car. Because the main message is that you can fit a lot here.*

*M37: I believe so. Don't put too much on manoeuvrability but more on essentials as space and payload, the features that are needed for load carrying.*

***I: Are there presented some norms or values that belong to this particular target group?***

*W26: Facility and convenience and easiness to come along with.*

*M26: Europallets probably refers to manly values. Maybe it brings out the nature as well... "driving" is in green and sky is clear.*

*M37: Quality is wanted to be pointed out, awarded best, reliability and practicality.*

*W62: Soft values I would say, they're pointing out the clearness.*

On the webpage young people with good technical skills are seen as a main target group. Especially social media is conceived as channel that reaches younger customers.

*W26: Now this is more like technical and attracts more people that like technical features and "Mythbusters" and "Discovery Channel". More manly I would say.*

*M37: Not necessarily. Compared to print advertisement target group is a bit more aware of the possibilities of social media and most likely men are majority. I believe more in those users' messages and interactivity and also to deeper technological approach.*

*M27: The image of younger target group comes to my mind even though normally vans are conceived as the cars of older generation. This is for rurals and urbans, it's not profiled by the living area.*

*M29: Well, first of all social media is not used by elderly people. I could easily recognize from those messages that there was mostly younger professionals.*

When asking about the norms and values this target group may share the answers were more straight forward focusing more on car tuning and workman cultures.

*M29: Well, maybe those flamemats present some kind of values, maybe that kind of workman attitudes.*

*M72: I think manly values comes out mainly.*

*M37: They create an image of driving culture, laid back and youngly talking target group that considers cars as a hobby not necessity, work related thing, and they let feeling to show.*

*M27: Not in that sense. Those furdices and flames maybe...it creates kind of an image of car tuning culture.*

In a final phase the interview concentrated on clarifying the effects of social media elements on the web page. The idea was to study interviewees attitudes towards the interactive marketing and find out how they receive the messages that other users have created. Also an important factor was the influence that social media may have on company's brand. In the end interviewees evaluated possible benefit and risks that social media has on company's side as well as on the customer's side. It was no surprise that younger interviewees had a bit different opinions than the older ones.

***I: Would You be interested in writing messages on this site so that other people can read them?***



*W26: If I had some good van story, then probably yes. But it must be funny, not embarrassing or lame message.*

*M72: I would prefer not to write.*

*W62: Definitely not.*

*M27: Yes I do, if I had some personal funny story. For example when I once dropped out from side door, which was actually horrifying. That I could share there.*

*W25: Me personally not. It's not a product for me. I don't write much on the internet, I just personally don't do that.*

Even though the interviewees were a bit reluctant to write messages on this kind of webpage they still think that the interactivity raises an interest to become more familiar with the site.

*M29: Yes, I could just come to this site and read other people's messages.*

*W62: Well, this raises my interest but more in humoristic way.*

*M27: Yes, yes, this kind of objective party communication always raises my interest.*

*W25: Definitely yes. If I don't write myself, it does not meant that I wasn't interested in other people's messages. I'm super interested. It's always very important to me to see what other people have to say about the product or the brands.*

*W27: In a way yes, this is a new approach.*

Other people's messages are seen more like additional and entertaining elements than brand related information sources. They also do not think that these messages would have any major effect on brand image communicated through the page.

***I: Do You get important additional information about the product or brand from other people's messages?***

*M29: No, it's more like humoristic content.*

*W26: Quickly read through no, it more like fun that comes out.*

*M26: I wouldn't get necessarily any new information from there but it increases the interestingness. Thus, if it's interesting you easily reflects it to the whole brand.*

*M37: There were only user experiences in general. Let's say it gives information with more colourful tone of voice to the regular users.*

***I: Does other people comments and messages change Your image about the brand?***

*M72: No, it doesn't change.*

*M26: Maybe they could, I think the tone might have an effect on the brand somehow.*

*W62: I wouldn't say it change anything.*

*M27: I think it does not change because those writings do not refer to the brand. If someone is talking about some junk van you probably not connect it to the Nissan.*

*W25: Yes, if I get the trustworthy comments I know that it's not commercial purposes to try to say me something. It can change the whole image of the brand. If there is many people saying so. Yes, there is huge influence on it.*

When asked how important this interviewee group sees the social media in contemporary marketing the opinion was expectedly consistent – everyone considered it very important for present day companies. However, it was said to depend on the industry company is operating on.

***I: How important You see social media in contemporary marketing?***

*W26: Here extremely important.*

*M26: At least my target group, that is me and people in my age consider this very important.*

*M37: More and more, depending on the product itself. In commercial vehicles the target group is more narrow than for example in camera industry.*

*W62: I guess it's important because that's seems to be everywhere now. I think people want to be in everywhere, Facebook and so forth...I see it as a present day activity.*

*M27: In my opinion it's very essential and topical issue. Therefore I would say that the present day firms should be involved in it in some way or another...and it's also an easy way to reach customers.*

As a last topic interviewees were asked to outline the biggest benefits as well as the risks that social media may have for the companies and users. Many of the answers regarded to possibilities to relatively cheap executions and possibilities to reach bigger audience. Interviewees shared an opininio that companies have more benefits than risks when utilizing social media in their marketing. For consumers it is seen as an ease way to get objective information about the product.

***I: What do You consider the biggest benefit(s) of social media for company/consumer?***

*M26: Well, for the company it reaches very much people and connect them with each other. And it's very cheap solution for the company. For consumer, there you can link with other people and discuss about good and bad thing about this product. Information sharing.*

*M29: For the company it's relatively cheap and by selecting some particular social media company can target the message to specific target group. For consumer it's interactive but you're not forced to it. Thus, if you don't want to follow it, you don't need to. And of course if you need additional information that's the place you get it.*

*M37: For consumer there's a possibility to get information from people in same situation as you are. For the company there's a possibility to contribute information sharing with very little investments.*

*M27: For the company it's easy, maybe totally free, and they can reach a huge load of people and they can also segment in which social media to operate. There you can get information about the consumers. Instead, for consumers it's relatively easy way to get information and it very often nice way to spend your freetime. If you're not interested in buying a van you can always read what other people have written.*

*W25: There are this kind of network externalities more people come, more people join more people become a fan or something...it creates interest, it creates buzz. Company exists in internet and I think internet is very strong channel. This is channel to learn about the product and this is benefit for both, company and customer. There is a huge community reviewing the product and people get easier interested in internet. For the customer it's different than print advertisement – here you can choose what to read. And then read the messages from other people and learn from them.*

*W27: For consumer it's good possibility to get to know the brand with own conditions and schedules. In best cases consumer can have two way conversation about the product and brands with other users or with the company if he's willing to. But it's not mandatory. In company's point of view it is awesome that interactivity can be built in low costs...even free of charge. Also the production costs are very low e.g. in Facebook. In best case you can build your brand together with your customer.*

Risks, instead, referred mostly to a bad word-of-mouth that may have an effect on brand image. For consumers the risks were seen pretty minor even though a false information was considered as a little threat.

*M29: Maybe for company that in social media people are barking and blaming the product and that may effect on the purchase decision of many potential customers. For consumer it's pretty harmless.*

*M26: There may be risks for the the company...it may bring out the wrong image of the brand. I don't know about these commercial vehicles where the target group is pretty traditional. For the consumer, I can't see any risks.*

*W62: For the consumer, because there can anyone write anything...so that can mix the opinions. For the company it's risk because there you can say whatever you want regardless of the facts.*

*M27: For the company there are many hacking possibilities...and someone may want to write foolish messages just to disturb the site. However, I would say that the risks are low. It's not big risk for consumer either because you don't need to be committed anywhere and it doesn't cost anything and it's easy and pretty harmless.*

*W25: For the company I'm not sure how much they can control the social media and the biggest threat is a negative word-of-mouth. If someone has something negative to say it has more influence than positive messages. You must be ready*

*to take critics as well and then the audience is unlimited...there might be millions of readers to see opinion whether it is right or wrong. For consumer I'm not sure is there any specific risks for the consumer.*

After observing both marketing communication channels, interviewees were asked whether they would you consider this as an alternative if they were now buying the product from this product group. Whereas with print advertisement all interviewees shared the positive image and would consider this product as an alternative, the answers referring to webpage and social media were strong and two sided: some of them do not trust webpage as a source and therefore wouldn't buy the product and some of them were even more interested after seeing the pages.

***I: If You were now buying the product from this product group, would you consider this as an alternative based on this print advertisement?***

*M29: Yes, I would go for a test drive which is already a huge criteria.*

*M37: If we assume that I was buying a van, very likely I have been comparing the product from this price range and also considered this brand as an alternative.*

*M27: Yes, I would most likely consider. I don't know if I consider because of these marketing activations but instead that Nissan is reliable brand and (their) vans have been there earlier. I have an image of good cars.*

With social media the answers varied a little bit more:

*M29: Now the purchase decision might be even closer when observing this site. This informality may bring more image value.*

*W26: I would definitely to go for a test drive but print ad would drive me personally more easily to the sales room then this website. I think it's because of the different target group.*

*M26: Definitely because of this web site...much more than print media.*

*W62: I wouldn't trust this site that much.*

*M27: Most probably yes, that myth thing was strong...because I'm not the interested in cars overall and I'm not driving that much either...so if they justify me that van is not so hard to reverse, I may be convinced.*

*W27: I wouldn't consider because this webpage annoys me.*

In the next sub chapter we move on to the results and find out what kind of conclusion we can draw from these experiences. In other words the next sub chapter refers to a main research question and try to clarify whether marketing oriented companies can take an advantage of social media applications when reforming their marketing mix.

#### 6.4 Conclusion Of Empirical Considerations

In recent years decision makers in many organization have realized the opportunities of social media in marketing and communication point of view. However these opportunities are still pretty unknown mostly due to strong traditions of conventional marketing mix. In this study I try to look behind those traditions and clarify how social media is seen as a marketing channel among the consumers. The objective was to compare social media to traditional marketing, which was print advertising in this case, and find out what kind of effects they have on brand image and purchase decision. For clarifying this I used a Communication Persuasion model from Batra, Myers and Aaker as a framework. Below is this model again including the findings from both channels used in this sample marketing campaign. Observations refer only this one campaign so the conclusions are also based on this particular campaign. In this chapter I go through each step once again and discuss what kind of conclusion we can make from them.

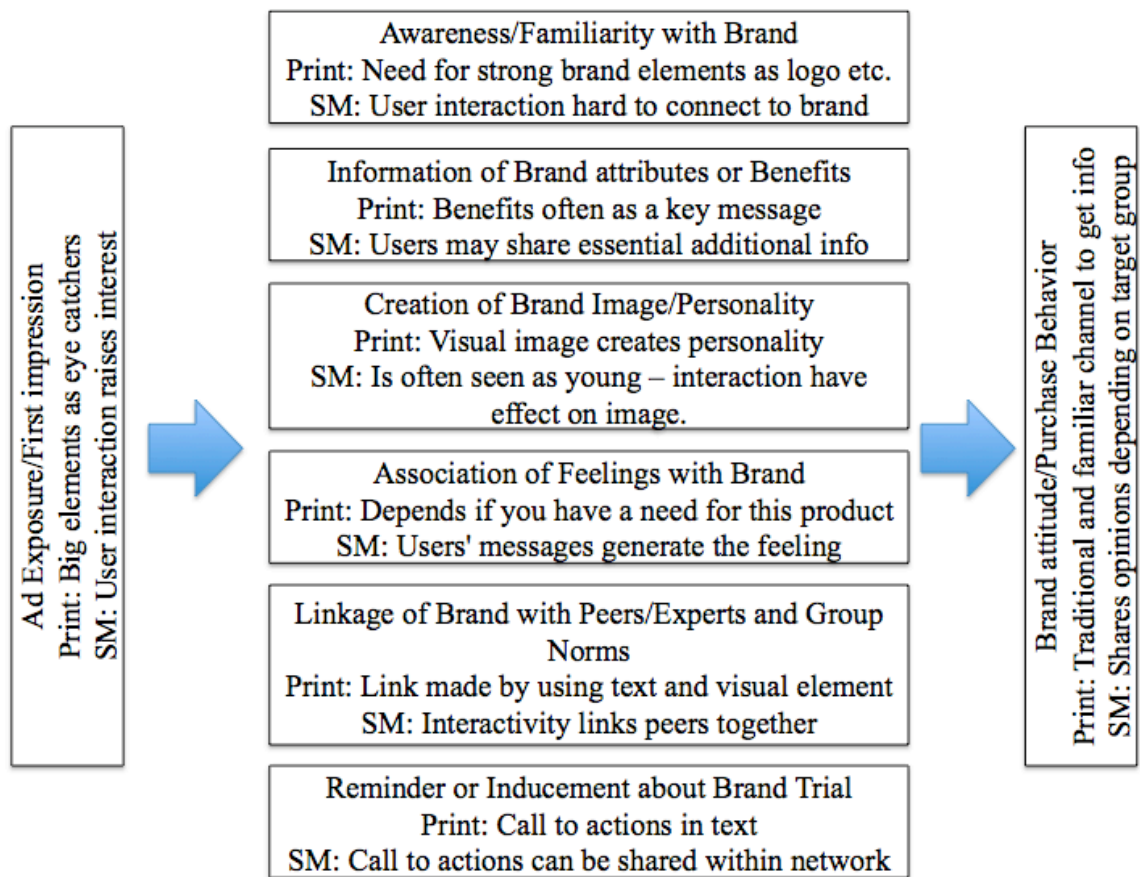


Figure 6-1. Comparison of social media and print advertisement in model of communication/persuasion process

### *First impression*

As we can see from the answers presented in previous sub chapter the big and visual elements catch receiver's attention when print advertisement is in question. This is surely not a surprise for anyone that size and impressiveness counts when people observe print ads.

Instead, with social media, the user interaction raises interest in target audience. Some of the interviewees say that the reason to enter to this site may be merely other people's comments than the product itself. Therefore social media is seen more like in a supporting role in marketing communication than a primary information channel.



### *Awareness and familiarity with brand*

With print advertisement audience saw a need for strong brand elements as logo and so on. In this particular Nissan campaign the connections to brand were seemingly little that made some of the recipients a bit confused. If the brand is easily recognizable the interest to observe this advertisement more increases.

Maybe due to little experience of marketing in social media, user interaction and user generated content were seen hard to connect to the brand. Clearly brand awareness, at least with this brand, does not yet reach social media. However, in the future social media very likely increase it's part in companies' creation of brand awareness processes. Wide networks make fast information flow possible.

### *Information of brand attributes and benefits*

In print advertising benefits and attributes of the brand are often raised as key messages. Therefore they should come out pretty easily from the ad, whether in text or in visual or feeling elements.

Even though other people's comments may give valid extra information in social media, they can also confuse the audience. Here again this is the reason why social media can not be the primary marketing information source for the target audience.

### *Creation of brand image and personality*

In print advertising the visual image and texts create the brand image and build up personality as well. In this particular campaign the personality of funny, humorous and easy to talk with was created by using soft color and cartoon-like characters in print ad.

As social media is relatively new innovation in marketing field it automatically makes brand image younger. This is because the social media users are still considered as younger generation. As some interviewees stated, interaction and messages, that are very often aggravated, may have a strong indirect effect on brand image. Therefore it's vital for companies to have proper plans for social media utilization.

### *Association of feelings with brand*

In this study interviewees shared an opinion that feelings depends much of the target group. In other words if you have a need for the offering in question the feeling you have are usually much stronger. In social media these feelings actualize when people share their attitudes towards the brand.

### *Linkage of brand with peers/experts and group norms*

Whereas in print advertising the linkage with peers is made through brand image and feeling associations, in social media this connection is more concrete. As we saw from the interview, target group, norms and values were more clear just because of user interaction. This target group share manly values and wants to communicate them to other users as well.

### *Reminder or inducement of brand trial*

As in print advertising call to action is very simple, whether it is there or not, in social media this is a bit more multidimensional. Users, when interacting together, share the opinions and may recommend product to the other users, in some cases this can be direct call to action. Also in social media, it's very effective way to increase the audience if there is some incentive for user. In this campaign the incentive was the van story competition where you could win humoristic prizes as flamemats and furdices.

As a conclusion for this communication process I can say that social media is more and more important element in contemporary marketing communication. Even though its current role is mainly supporting other channels, in coming years social media may be considered as a primary channel in many organization. As we could read from the interviewees comments, audience, especially younger ones, is already pretty interested in creating content for others to read and conceive social media as very important channel to learn more about the brands and products. Even though the false information, unnecessary critics and negative word-of-mouth were seen as risks for company's image as well as risks for consumers' objective information flow, the positive associations as cheapness, flexibility and possibility to fast information sharing were considered as stronger attributes and supports social media as marketing

communication channel. Based on the interviews same risks and opportunities that we went through in theoretical part could be found also from this particular Nissan campaign. All in all social media as a marketing communication channel seemingly worked well in this campaign as almost all interviewees were ready to consider this product as one alternative if they were buying a commercial vehicle.

## 7. RESEARCH IMPLICATIONS

As this study was limited to observe only one campaign, the wider generalizations could not be possible. As we saw in this study the usefulness of social media in marketing communication depends relatively much on the product in question. Therefore further research on different industries and different brands, including services, is justified.

In this study the perspective and focus were on organization's side leaving customer behaviours with little attention. Therefore a new research on that field, an extensive customer behaviour study would be rational.

As a third possible topic for further research, would be the analysis of different applications of social media. Like discussed in Chapter 2 there are number of different services available that utilizes social media and user networks as a core business. Then it would be reasonable to study how these different applications could be used in marketing point of view.

## 8. MANAGERIAL IMPLICATIONS

Reflecting to the study results I have picked four industry-free recommendations for marketing oriented companies as they currently face ongoing change in customer behavior and marketing environment. These recommendations are also applicable in Nissan. Following list is adapted from Berman's study from 2007. (Berman et al 2007)

### *Deliver experiences, not just content*

As consumer nowadays are willing to buy experiences instead of single product, these experiences will likely require new content, a new way of consuming it, and new tools to make the experience easy. For this purpose social media opens many new doors.

### *Leverage interactive marketing*

Another important expansion that marketing oriented firms should be thinking about is how best to venture into the virtual world for brand and service extensions. As this study also shows, users are leaving traditional advertising outlets and giving more time, attention and "impressions" to new media. Therefore traditional marketing is not enough anymore for companies to reach potential customers and keep their position in highly competitive markets. This however needs to be done with carefully planning so that interactive marketing is included in company's marketing strategy.

### *Invest in measurable advertising services and platforms*

As discussed earlier in this study the measuring of interactive marketing is extremely hard to measure. However, measuring and observing is very important for companies to stay on a map what audience is talking about the brand. Even though the ROI may be hard or even impossible to count in some cases, brand attitudes and tone of voice can and must be observed constantly.

### *Create flexible marketing design*

As we have discussed, nowadays companies need the ability to sense and respond rapidly. They must anticipate and move quickly to stay in sync with consumer behavior shifts. Then this requires a flexible marketing design that can be adapted within short time period.

## 9. END WORDS

I agree Angel's and Sexsmith's (Angel & Sexsmith 2009) opinion that that social media is the outgrowth and primary beneficiary of the present round of marketing revolution - the more so because this is the first time the phenomenon is global and concerns almost all consumers around the world. This means that marketers need to be especially attentive to efforts to increase the benefits of continuous consumer contact, engagement and interaction. This will favor companies who understand how to integrate a variety of individual audience members into the group of brand ambassadors – this was also seen in Nissan case.

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## APPENDICES

### **Interview questions:**

The objective of this study is to compare two different marketing communication channels (print advertising in newspapers and magazines and online advertising including social media) used in same marketing campaign and examine how they affect on recipient's image of the brand in question.

### Interviewee (background questions):

Age:

Sex:

Living region:

1. Capital area of Helsinki
2. Turku, Tampere
3. Other city of over 30.000 inhabitants
4. Other city of less than 30.000 inhabitants
5. Countryside

Education:

1. University
2. University of applied science
3. High-School graduate
4. Vocotional school
5. Primary school

Profession:

1. Managing position
2. Enterpreuner
3. Higher officer
4. Officer
5. Employee

6. Student
7. Retired
8. Farmer
9. Housewife
10. Other: \_\_\_\_\_

Media manner:

What media are You following and how much? (Daily, Weekly, Monthly, None)

1. Newspapers
2. Magazines
3. TV
4. Radio
5. Internet
6. Other (e.g. mobile): \_\_\_\_\_

In Your own opinion, how much do You pay attention on advertising and marketing communication?

1. Not at all (e.g. I don't have any idea which companies are currently advertising)
2. A little (e.g. as much as I have to pay attention while reading papers or watching TV)
3. Moderately (e.g. I know which companies are currently running marketing campaigns in different channels)
4. A lot (e.g. I pay attention to marketing communication and read/follow advertisements fully through)
5. Very much (e.g. I actively follow marketing communication in different media)

Are You familiar with online marketing? How about social media?

1. Yes
2. No

What do you consider as a social media?

*<<At this point print advertisements from different newspapers and magazines are presented to interviewee. He/She has a few minutes to observe them before questions.>>*

## **Print advertisement:**

### First impression:

- What catches Your interest in ad?
- How well You recognise what product/service is being advertised?
- Is the message clear? Is all necessary information communicated?
- Did You read text content partly or fully?
- What would You like to know more?
- When skimming through the paper did this ad stay in Your mind?
- Does this ad differ from other ads from the same industry?
- Do You feel that this ad is meant for You?

## **Communication/persuasion process**

### Awareness/Familiarity with brand

- Do You recognise easily which brand is in question?
- How familiar are You with this brand?
- What image You have of this brand? Would you be ready to use the products of this brand?
- Does this ad bring forward the brand effectively?
- What are the elements the connect ad to the brand?
- Do You recall any other ads from the same brand? If yes, is the image of the brand consistent?

### Information of Brand Attributes or Benefits

- Do the brand/product attributes and benefits to consumer come up from this ad?
- What are they?
- Can You name what typical characteristics of this brand are shown in this ad?
- What information they deliver to the receiver?

### Creation of Brand Image/Personality

- Tell Your own words what kind of image of the brand You get from this ad? (e.g. luxury, fashioned, etc.)
- How would You describe the brand personality? (e.g. humouristic, dark, etc.)
- What are the elements that tells You that?

Accosiation of Feelings with brand

What kind of feelings this ad creates in You about the product?

What elements enable these feelings to arise?

What do You believe this brand is trying to achieve with these feeling-elements?

Do You think that these feelings fit to the product and target group?

Linkage of Brand with Peers/Experts and Group Norms (Target group)

Is this product introduced belonging to some particular target group?

What elements reveal this?

Are there presented some norms or values that belong to this particular target group? (e.g. product loyalty, “manly values” etc.)

Do You see it fashioned to have this product?

Reminder or Inducement about Brand Trial (Call to Action)

Does this ad call You to some action?

If You were now buying the product from this product group, would you consider this as an alternative?

*<<At this point ad banners and campaign site, belonging to same marketing campaign, are peresented to interviewee. He/She has a few minutes to observe them before questions.>>*

**Social media/internet as a communication channel:**

First impression

What catches Your interest in site/banners?

How well You recognise what product/service is being advertised?

Is the message clear? Is all necessary information communicated?

Did You read text content partly or fully?

What would You like to know more?

When scrolling through the sites did this ad banner or campaign site stay in Your mind?

Does this internet campaign differ from other internet campaigns from the same industry?



Do You feel that this site banner/ad is meant for You?

### **Communication/persuasion process**

#### Awareness/Familiarity with brand

Do You recognise easily which brand is in question?

Does this site/banner ad bring forward the brand effectively?

What are the elements the connect site/banner ad to the brand?

Do You recall any other internet campaigns from the same brand? If yes, is the image of the brand consistent?

#### Information of Brand Attributes or Benefits

Do the brand/product attributes and benefits to consumer come up from this site/banner ad?

What are they? (if differ from print ad)

Can You name what typical characteristics of this brand are shown on this site/banner ad? (if differ from print ad)

What information they deliver to the receiver? (if differ from print ad)

#### Creation of Brand Image/Personality

Tell Your own words what kind of image of the brand You get from this site/banner ad? (e.g. luxury, fashioned, etc.) (if differ from print ad)

How would You describe the brand personality? (e.g. humouristic, dark, etc.) (if differ from print ad)

What are the elements that tells You that?

#### Accosiation of Feelings with brand

What kind of feelings this site/banner ad creates in you about the product?

What elements enable these feelings to arise?

What do You believe this brand is trying to achieve with these feeling-elements?

Do You think that these feelings fit to the product and target group?

#### Linkage of Brand with Peers/Experts and Group Norms (Target group)

Is this product introduced belonging to some particular target group?

What elements reveal this?

Are there presented some norms or values that belong to this particular target group? (e.g. product loyalty, “manly values” etc.)

Do You see it fashioned to have this product?

#### Reminder or Inducement about Brand Trial (Call to Action)

Does this site/banner ad call You to some action?

If You were now buying the product from this product group, would you consider this as an alternative?

#### Interaction (social media)

Would You be interested on writing messages on this site so that other people can read them?

Do You get important additional information about the product or brand from other people’s messages?

Does the interaction raise interest in You to become more familiar with this site and then product?

Does other people comments and messages change Your image about the brand?

How important You see social media in contemporary marketing?

What do You consider the biggest benefit(s) of social media for company/consumer?

Do You see there any risks for company/consumer?

## Samples of campaign materials



**NV200**

**DRIVING THE NEW**

**2010 VAN OF THE YEAR**

**2010 VAN OF THE YEAR**

**PARHAAKSI VALITTU  
TILAIHME ON TÄÄLLÄ**

**NISSAN NV200**

- Suuri tavaratila - 4,2 m³
- Kaksi eurolavaa helposti kyytiin
- Mukava ja hyvinvarusteltu ohjaamo
- Erinomainen ajettavuus

ALK.  
**21 565,57 €**

Autoveroton hinta 17 180,40 €  
Autovero\* 4 400,17 €  
\*CO<sub>2</sub>-päästöillä 137 g/km

**KAKSI  
EUROLAVAA  
HELPOSTI  
KYYTIIN**

**PAKUMYYTIN  
ROMUTTAJAT**

Kirjoita pakutarinasi ja voita liekkimatot!  
[pakumyytit.fi](http://pakumyytit.fi)

**NISSAN**

**SHIFT** the way you move

Varaa koeajo lähimmältä jälleenmyyjältäsi: [www.nissan.fi](http://www.nissan.fi)

Pidätämme oikeuden hinnanmuutoksiin. Hintoihin lisätään paikkakuntakohtaiset toimituskulut (korkeintaan 600 €). Kuvan auto erikoisvarusteltu. Takuu 3 v / 100 000 km.

Nissan's campaign print advertisement

Pakumyytit

http://www.pakumyytit.fi/

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**PAKU-MYYTIN**

**ROMUTTAJAT**

**Paku** – tuo hankalasti ajettava pommi, jonka kulmikas hahmo pimentää auringon ja ajoasennon löytämiseen tarvitaan manaaja. Se on hiljainen kuin täryjyrä, ketterä kuin virtahopo ja liukkaalla se lähtee käsistä. Tämä teiden tukko ei parkkiin taivu, vaan ottaa sivupeilit kyytiin. Kerrassaan riivattu vehje. Tai sitten ei.

**Kerro oma pakumyyttisi ja voita liekkimatot!**  
Lue ja äänestä myös muiden tarinoita. »

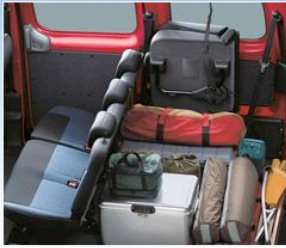
**ESITE »**

VAN OF THE YEAR 2010

**Romuta myytit klikkaamalla.**

<b>Kaheksassakymppissä lähtee paikat hampaista</b> Ei mee vaihe silmään kuin väkivalloin, ja liukkaalla se lähtee käsistä >>	MYYTTI
<b>Lisäkilkkeet maksavat maltaita</b> Pakun vakiovarusteluunhan tunnetusti kuuluu ratti ja neljä pyörää >>	MYYTTI
<b>Pikkupakuun ei mahdu kuin käsilaukku</b> Oikeisiin toihin tarvitaan iso ja ruma auto >>	MYYTTI
<b>Mukava kuin kirkonpenkki</b> Kolkko peli sisältä ja ulkoa, eikä polkimillekaan ylety >>	MYYTTI
<b>Eteenpäin näkee, taakse ei</b> Pakulla peruuttaminen vaatii yleishäilytyksen ja hemosauhut >>	<b>ROMUTETTU</b>
<b>Ei mahu porttikonkista</b> Pakun kääntäminen vaatii lentokentän ja pysäköiminen hätävilkut >>	MYYTTI
<b>Lapset taakse laittomasti</b> Turvallisuudesta ja viihtymisestä viisi, nyt tehdään töitä >>	<b>ROMUTETTU</b>
<b>Sama kattila, eri logo</b> Samalta hinnaltahan ne tulee ja sitä samaa vanhaa pa >>	MYYTTI
<b>Pyörille nostettu kontti</b> Rumahan se on kuin kansakoulu, oikea firman häpeätahra >>	MYYTTI
<b>Käryttää ja kuluttaa</b>	

**NV200 – tilaa vaikka koko pesueelle**



Combi-mallilla perhe pysyy hyvin puhevälissä, eikä nimismieskään tykkää kyttyrää.

- Erittäin muunneltavat sisätilat
- Kyytiin jopa 7 henkilöä – tai 5 henkilöä + 2,3 m3 tavaraa!
- Lukkiutumattomat jarrut ja jarrutehostin
- Kuljettajan ja matkustajan turvatyynyt sekä etuistuinten turvavöiden etukinstitimet
- ESP-ajovakausjärjestelmä ja sivuturvatyynyt (valinnainen)

**ESITE »**

**NV200**

Nissan's campaign website


Pakumyytit

http://www.pakumyytit.fi/

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**< ROMUTA MYYTTI**

**Karvaratti**  
Pakun ja ihmisen väliin tarvitaan jotain pehmeää.



**Lue ja arvostelee käyttäjien pakutarinoita** UUSIMMAT SUOSITUMMAT

« **Palaa otsikkolistaan**

**kimkan: Kuinka melkein kaadoin Hiacen**

Oli marraskuinen perjantai iltapäivä, olin tulossa töistä kotiin, lämpötila +0, liukkaasta. Tarkistin postin laatikosta, kytkin 4 WD:n ja lähdin kipuamaan mäkeen (se on jyrkkä). Ei mene, tarkistin onko 4WD kytketty? Oli se! Eikun ylös, mutta töyräällä se hyytty!!!! Pientä perää, yksi sutaisu ja kuljettajasta tuli matkustaja. Alaspäin mentiin, mutta onneksi vastaan tuli kivi johonoli mukava nojata enkä kaatunut. Viikonloppu meni ylös nostaessa, varuot vähöisiä eli kerrankin oli kivistä hvöitä. Svällinen koko iuttuun oli kaasuoolkimen alla oleva matto. ioka lensi

**Anna kritiikin ruoskan lalua! Tämän hetken keskiarvo 3**

1. Haisee  2. Siedettävä  3. Hyvä  4. Legendan ainesta

[Jaa Facebookissa](#)

**KERRO PAKUMYYTTISI JA VOITA**

Kirjoita riipaisevan hauska pakutarinasi. Viikon parhaaksi äänestetyt tarinat kirjoittaja voittaa NASA-kelpoisen reissutyynyn. Sijoille 2–5 rankat tarinat palkitaan viikoittain (2.) liekkimatolla, (3.) USB-hanskoilla, (4.) karvaratilla ja (5.) karvanopilla. Lisäksi julkaisemme osan hauskimista tarinoista bannereissa!

Otsikko: \_\_\_\_\_

Näin se tarina meni: \_\_\_\_\_

Nimimerkki: \_\_\_\_\_

Sähköposti: \_\_\_\_\_

Olen lukenut säännöt **LÄHETÄ**

Nissan's campaign website