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Social Media and Fashion: How people can influence marketing strategies?

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<p>The aim of the thesis is to demonstrate and understand the growing influence of Social Media on Marketing Strategy. In recent years, the Internet and Social Media have invaded individuals 'life in order to become an entire part of their lifestyle. The purpose of this topic is to show the relationship between Social Media, which gather large amounts of people to a common online place, with the strategies of companies who need to adapt themselves in this new environment.</p> <p>This topic covers the factors of influence on the buying behaviour of potential consumers. The thesis will provide an overview of the relationship between consumer behaviour and Social Media. Companies can regard these as an opportunity to increase the awareness of their brand or product.</p> <p>To conclude, it is noted that consumer behaviour changed with the growth of the Social Media. Now, there is a dialogue between potential consumers and brands. This dialogue can be influence by other persons on the Internet, because of broad networking, allowing each individual to share or to receive information or a message. Social Media represent an opportunity for companies but they have to adapt their strategy in order to be efficient in this new category of channel.</p>	
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1 Introduction

Today, the Internet has become one of the most important media or channel for communicating a message, an idea or simply to get in touch with someone. It is also a tool that allows people to find what they want just by using their computers. The growing influence of the Internet today drives the changes in the society. The impact of the Internet has changed consumer behaviour, for example in shopping, or research of information. Those changes have been really important because today the Internet has a huge part in our lives. In 2013, around 8 homes out of 10 had access to the Internet in Europe. This amount of people with Internet access at their place is just one part of the iceberg. In 2014, 1.2 billion smartphones were sold in the world. It means that the Internet is provided for almost everyone that gives a large window for those media to be close to the consumer.

In 2005 and then in 2007, the term Web 2.0 has been release and used in order to define the new use and the evolution of the Internet since the beginning (“What is Web 2.0”- Tim O’Reilly- September 30th 2005). It refers to the evolution and improvement of Internet, and sees it as a platform that allows users to not just get information but also add new information and share it with their community – friends, family or colleagues – who can be interested by these additions. Web 2.0 promoted a new idea of community, it implemented the idea of a new Internet network that gathers people around the same topics in order to share their information about it. It also brings Social Media as its main example. One of the main changes thanks to Internet is also the connection between people. Arguably Social Media already appeared in 1978, with “Computerized Bulletin Board System” (created by Ward Christensen). This network allows users to share notes, from meetings through a numeric way. It was the first network allowing users to share ideas and information from one to another. The idea of implementing a community in order to share about one given topics was kept by Forums on Internet now in our days. The main advantages of what is called Web 2.0, is that users do not need high levels of informatics skills in order to use the various platforms.

1.1 Social Medias

Social media as we know them today are quite new. The main purpose of that type of platform is to implement the idea of community. It is also considered as a

communication channel that helps to spread effectively and quickly a message or an idea. Social media comprises different sorts of platforms – social networking, micro blogging, forums or social curation and to finish wikis. Over the last ten years, there has been the emergence of numerous social media with a growing influence on users.

In 2004, Facebook was created and quickly become the leader in terms of social media. In 2015, the numbers of Facebook users was about 950 millions¹. After this success, the range of social media increased. It continued with YouTube, in 2005. This platform allows people to share videos and permits everyone to watch them freely. It can be music video, movies or little web series for example. Following Facebook, in 2006, came Twitter. As its name told us, its purpose is to share small little sentences or thoughts² to their followers³. In 2010, people discovered Instagram, a social medium based on pictures. Instead of sharing sentences, people will share their pictures. In Twitter and Instagram, people can increase the visibility of their posts by using “hashtags” in order to describe with a few words their picture or topics of their sentence. Those social media are now among the main channels of communication. They allow people to share an idea or a picture quickly to a large audience. They are also based on the purpose of sharing. One person will post a picture for example and then people who liked it will share it to their own followers, and so on. That type of behaviour has also made companies change their ways of communication in order to reach their clients more easily.

Social Media have brought a whole new way to behave and to communicate between people. Thanks to them, all information travels faster and more widely. People have access to worldwide information without requiring newspapers or television. In order to follow this trend, most industries, such as newspapers, have implemented their own website in order to continue to reach consumers. In fact, the Internet has brought a new way of consuming products and services. Even though Social Media mostly refers to website such as Facebook or YouTube, blogs started to emerge at the same time. Based on the same idea as the previous Social Media listed, a blog has the same

¹ According to the « Blogdumodrateur.com »

² So called « Tweet »: little message which can be no longer than 140 characters

³ Followers: people who have signed up to stay updated about the posts of someone on Social Media

purpose; that is, sharing information that interests the person that posts it, in order to reach a group of subscribers⁴.

Since their release, those famous social media has seen the number of their users increase until reaching millions of subscribers.

1.2 Fashion Industry

The Fashion Industry can be defined as a global industry that gathers retailers of clothes, accessorizes and make-up, but also the marketing and merchandising of the products though advertising for example in specialize newspapers and also the production of those products and before that the production of the materials that are necessities ion order to create final clothes or shoes for example.

Before the mid-19th century, most clothes were handmade, but since the beginning of the 20th century, thanks to industrialisation, the industry of Fashion started to see the emergence of mass production, and so the standardization of sizes and prices. The two first markets that emerged were the European and American markets. Then with time, the Fashion Industry went global. Now, for one product, the location of the production of the raw materials can be in one country, despite the fact that the production of the product itself can be in another one. In order to increase profit and decrease the costs, a lot of companies of the industry used globalisation in order to relocate their manufacturing place and their production offices.

This industry is a multi-million dollar profit industry that responds to the need of its diversified target group. According to certain people, there exist inside the Fashion Industry at least two sub-industries that respond to their own demand and researches. They can be distinguished by the way the marketer promotes the product. The use-function⁵ remains the same but the group of consumers that the marketer wants to reach can be different with specific needs and wants.

⁴ Subscribers: people who want to stay updated on the activities of a person on Social Media (YouTube for example). The more subscribers they have the more famous they become.

⁵ Use-function: the main function that respond to the need on the market the company wants to integrate

2 Definitions

2.1 Terms used on Internet

2.1.1 Social Media

This term gathers at the same time website and online methods of communication that are used by a large amount of individuals or a group in order to share messages, ideas or information and also to develop a social network. It can be about creating a personal or a professional social network.

2.1.2 Social networking

It defines the action to contact a person we might know from a professional or a personal event. The purpose of this action is to grow our own online network.

2.1.3 Blogging

A website or a platform that host regular publication of articles about one or more given topics. Most of the time, Blogs are owned by one person, and have one precise topic which can evolve with time. The article can contain pictures and videos, depending on what the author wants to share.

2.1.4 Micro blogging

It is similar to blogging but it concerns really short articles about one subject. It can be implemented with picture and video as well.

2.2 Social Media I discuss

2.2.1 Facebook

Developed by Mark Zuckerberg in 2004, Facebook is a network that allows users to communicate with each other. It can be through private messages or also through public posts that every user of the network can see. In order to create a Facebook account, people must insert (if they want) a certain amount of data about their personal and professional life (birthday, gender, job and so on). Even though only a person with an account can see profiles on Facebook, it is still kind of public for anyone on the website.

It is a free service, so Facebook makes its own money thanks to companies that create a special page about their brand in order to catch people's interest. Also, there is a certain amount of advertising on the website. Those adverts will change according to what the user puts in its profile. Facebook sells those data about what people are interested in and what they like to companies in order to let them target profiles that might be more interested in their offers.

In 2015, Facebook reached 1.49 million active users per month in the entire world.

2.2.2 YouTube

Created in 2005 by Chad Hurley and Steve Chen, it is a platform that permits users to watch and share video content. Watching a video or downloading one on YouTube is free of charge. In order to put a video online, a person has to create an account. In 2006, Google bought YouTube for over \$1.6 billion.

YouTube arrived to the point of 4 billion views per day in 2015 and 1 billion frequent users per month.

2.2.3 Twitter

Twitter is a typical example of micro blogging. After creating an account, the user can post on the platform a small text, not more than 140 characters, called a "Tweet".

Created in 2006 by Jack Dorsey, Evan Williams, Bits Stone and Noah Glass, this social medium reached in 2015 over 310 million users.

As with the two previous examples, Twitter is a free of charge social media.

2.2.4 Instagram

Created by an American, Kevin Systrom and the Brazilian Michel Mike Krieger in 2010, Instagram is first defining as an application available on the App Store⁶ and the Android store⁷. This social medium allows users to share pictures and small videos. They can link their pictures or videos to certain keywords in order to be more visible. In order to do that, it will put “hashtags⁸” in front of words, describing the picture for example. Most of the time, the description of the picture or the video is a list of single words marked with a hashtag.

⁶ Platform implement by Apple in order to let Apple users to download application (such as games or social media version for mobile phone or tablets device. Only for Apple devices

⁷ Same purpose but implemented by Samsung

⁸ Hashtags « # »: put before a word or a group of word it implements a key word that will be linked to the post.

3 Literature Review

3.1 Marketing

Marketing is defined in many ways, by different authors. The main definition is that the Marketing is a tool that will help companies to be competitive in the market. It is a process that gathers all actions related to understanding and anticipating the wants of potential consumers. The main objective of Marketing is to develop a sustainable competitive advantage⁹ for the company, in order to gain market share and consumers. It is about the company's product being chosen by the consumer, instead of its competitors. In order to implement objectives or goals and so on to achieve the sustainable competitive advantage for the company, it is important to study the entire environment around it. It is about the Industry, its competitors and substitute products (product that can be a another solution that can respond to the need for the industry). In order to do those analyses, there exist different tools, such as the *PESTEL Metric*. This tool focuses on the external factors that can influence Marketing Strategy.

There still exist many different definitions of the concept of Marketing. It is defined as *"an economic and social mechanism through which individuals and groups satisfy their needs and desires by the creation and the exchange of goods and services with each other"* (Phillip Kotler, 1997). As it said, Marketing is about satisfying needs of Individuals and Group by proposing goods or services with a certain value. Needs and desires are the main focus of a marketing Strategy, because it is how a company will understand and create a value close to what individuals and group research. *"Marketing is a customer focus that permeates organizational functions and processes and is geared towards making promises through value proposition, enabling the fulfilment of individual expectations created by such promises and fulfilling such expectations through support to customers' value-generating processes, thereby supporting value creation in the firm's as well as its customers' and other stakeholders' processes"* (Christian Grönood, 2009). The common point in all those definition is that Marketing is about creating value in order to satisfy potential consumer desires and presenting a good or a service.

The principle of Marketing, while dependent on an external and internal analysis of the industry, also depends on the consumer. In this case, the Consumer Behaviour of

⁹ A sustainable competitive advantage: a company's specific offers or resource that represent its main advantage toward its competitors on the market.

potential clients defines it. This part of the analysis in order to implement a Marketing Strategy is a real important stage, because it will help the company to determine the bases and the products it will put on the market.

3.2 Consumer Behaviour

In Marketing Strategy, buying behaviour is based on three main elements: Wants, Beliefs and Goals. By using these words, it is possible to determine what kind of marketing strategy will be relevant in order to respond to the customer demand. The Decision Making Process depends on how the marketer will determine what is the best offer and the best way to promote it in order to attract consumers and to retain their loyalty. Each of those three words represents a different point to reach in the mind of potential clients in order to make them buy the goods or the service that a company will offer. It has to respond to the question "Why my product/offer instead of the others'?". Even though beliefs, goals and wants define which strategy the company implements, the needs of the consumer determine those three previous states. The ultimate criterion is that the need has to be satisfied by the product, it does not influence the rest. Only the purpose of the product take care of the needs, then the price, the packaging and the others marketing decision for the product will depends on the Wants, Beliefs and Goals of the consumers.

In order to explain Buyer Behaviour – also called Consumer Behaviour - it is important to define first Human Behaviour. Those terms express the mental capacity of individuals but also their physical and social activities. This range of capacities allows each individual to behave. It is also subject to different influences. Those influences are mostly due to the society; there are some untold rules to follow in order to get along with the society codes. Those codes are also referring to Laws implemented by the society. Others influences are represented by the values of the individual, the ethic and his genetics. Those elements are studying during the fifth phases of the human life (James W. Foller, Stages of Faith – 1981).

3.2.1 Maslow Pyramids of needs

Figure 1: Maslow Pyramid of needs



Maslow pyramid - Abraham Maslow - 1943

The Maslow pyramid, developed in 1943 by Abraham Maslow, represents the different stage of the Human motivation. In Marketing, this tool can be used in order to define which stage potential clients want to reach through their needs. This pyramid represents the different levels of needs and wants of an individual. At the bottom, there are needs that an individual cannot live without. It is called the Physiological Needs, whereas at the opposite, top end, the stage called Self-actualization is more about spontaneity and problem solving.

For each stage of the pyramid, the need represented will be cover by different goods and services, in order to reach also the wants of the consumer. Another fact is that none of the stages are exclusive. By defining the needs, it is important to understand that these can take place in more than one stage of this Maslow pyramid. This pyramid shows also the hierarchy between the different kinds of needs, in the stage before is not fully reached the next one can't be satisfying. The main example is that an individual will risk everything in order to satisfy his physiological needs, that corresponding to food or water, before safety. That means that an individual will place physical needs before taking care of his own safety.

After being published, this theory and tool were subject and still are subject to a lot of critics. The one that remains is that the theory describes that if one of the need is not reached then the following one – the one on top of the concerning one – is not fully accomplished. Even though it is a theory, the hierarchy of needs can change from one person to another, depending on the culture, values and way of life. It also depends on

the person's motivations and the environment. An individual could want first of all accomplish himself at work, even before the stage about family – the Love or Belonging stage.

This tool can be helpful in positioning the goods or the service of the company in order to know which kind of need they will satisfy, but the company also has to analyse who are the potential consumers; in order to understand and so reach them through an adapted and effective marketing campaign.

In order to understand and to set the profile of the consumer, the Marketer will have to create a Target Group. This will help to gather and define a certain profile of consumers and so it will help to create a marketing strategy. Following the Maslow Pyramid, marketers are able to identify different needs of different consumers. But instead of dealing with each individual, Marketers can use a tool in order to gather in-group individuals that share the same need or want.

3.2.2 Segmentation

The main definition of Segmentation in Marketing is about gathering together potential consumers that have similarities. Those similarities can be about their buying behaviour, but also about their age, their geographical situation or their Social Professional Category¹⁰. The purpose of segmentation is to gather people from a heterogeneous market into a more homogeneous group of consumers - the so-called Segment - that has the same wants, beliefs and goals (Smith, 1956). Moreover those groups will help the company in order to create and implement a Marketing Mix strategy for each segment in order to stay close to the consumer's wants. For each part of the Marketing Mix, each segment will represent new opportunities and decisions to take in order to create an effective Marketing Strategy. The support, the message and the benefits the product would bring to the consumer will be different and will need its own Marketing Mix. Plus, it will also push the company to change the price of its product depending on those consumers groups. In order to be competitive that implies also changing the market positioning of the product or the range of products.

Segmentation also implies some advantages for the company. Those advantages are a better understanding of what the consumer wants about the type of product that will respond to one or more of their needs. It will show the preferences toward the product.

¹⁰ Categories made in order to gather people with the same level of revenue

The fact that each segment is analysed closely helps also to identify the preference that each consumer group has in common. This way, the company will be able to put on the market a product that will respond to the needs and wants of consumers. On the other hand, it is also a good means for the company to gather information about its consumers. As the creation of consumer's segment requires data in order to find a common point and the number of different groups, a company has to implement some primary research¹¹ to supplement secondary data¹², such as government surveys. In this case, all the information will also help to anticipate needs of those consumers and so works as a simulation of the reaction in front of the final product (Green & Krieger, 1991).

In the Fashion industry, segmentation represents a competitive advantage for the companies. In fact, depending on the segment the company wants to focus on, the company will respond with a specific Marketing Strategy. Because the competition is high in this market, companies need to use segmentation in order to position themselves. In this industry, we can identify several main segments that will help choosing those sectors in which the company wants to position its product. First of all, in the Fashion industry, the main and more competitive positioning involve the High Street Shops¹³. Those shops are affordable and the competition in this sector is severe. High Street Shop's clothes are made in order to meet the needs of the majority of the consumers, who are looking for good quality and affordable prices. Because those shops and companies want to attract a large amount of consumers, segmentation is used inside their own ranges of product. For those companies, segmentation will be mostly based on the amount of money consumers are willing to pay for clothes, and also their age and the purpose – or need - that pushes the consumer to buy clothes.

Even though segmentation is a tool often used before the implementation of a Marketing Strategy, it has some limits. According to Green – author of the theory of Segmentation, based on the work of Smith in 1956 – the main issue of segmentation is its lack of reliability. In fact, because the company will orientate its marketing strategy

¹¹ Primary Research: Research realized by the company itself. It can be surveys or focus groups for example.

¹² Secondary Research: Researches already made and the results already published.

¹³ High Street Shop: Clothes retailers that can be found in most of cities. A Fashion designer does not specially make clothes. It is a mass production of one clothe

based on the results of the segmentation, focusing on the wrong criteria can invalidate the whole strategy.

3.3 Marketing Mix

In order to implement its competitive advantage, a company needs to put in motion several tools in order to create its Marketing strategy.

This Marketing system depends on different variables. In one hand, it is about Dependent Variables - that means the effect on consumer. These are addressed via performance measurement and also behaviour responses. In another hand, the company needs to focus on the Independent Variables in order to understand the environment and the market of the industry. Those variables gather into the Marketing Mix that is considered as controllable factors.

Figure 2: Marketing Mix



Marketing Mix Model- J. McCarthy, 1975

One of the main points in the Marketing System is the Marketing Mix. Neil H. Borden used this term in 1964, in his article "Concept of Marketing Mix". At this time, the Marketing Mix was about 12 different elements and it is Jerome McCarthy that reduced the number to 4, followed by Phillip Kotler who democratise this theory.

The Marketing Mix is a marketing strategy tool that helps companies to promote their product in the best way. As it said before, it gathers 4 elements - so called, the 4Ps. Those elements are Product, Price, Place and Promotion. Each of them focuses on a specific aspect of the implementation of a product on a market, in order to attract potential consumers.

Product: This one is about the main product, its range, how many products of the same purpose (Evian and its different shape of water bottle, for example) but it also concerns everything that surrounds the product. It includes the way the product is presented, the choice of shape or colour, for example. It concerns the packaging. In another hand, it will be about the life of the product, its maintenance and the consumer service that the good can imply when it's selling to a consumer.

Price: This element is mostly about how much the consumer will be willing to pay for the good or the service that the company offers. It is about the pricing strategy. It is also an important part of the Marketing Strategy if the company decides to be competitive through cost leadership in the market.

Place: It is about the choice of the distribution channel. Where the company will sell its product, with Direct Marketing, Middlemen, Face-to-face selling or Owned Outlet. There is the sales force that the company will need to attract potential consumer and sell its product.

Promotion: This is mostly about the way companies communicate information about their goods or services. It is the implementation of different actions in order to promote the product or the service as well as the brand.

This last element of the Marketing Mix allows companies to develop strong and targeted strategies depending on their Customer segments. This Promotion Mix is defined as the combination of tools in order to promote a product or a range of product. Those promotional methods encompass different channels, such as broadcast advertising, Direct Marketing, Personal Selling, Publicity and Public relationship. The main goals of those tools are to attract potential consumers, then to increase the number of those in order to make the awareness toward the product grow. The next step is to convert and to retain consumers. Those two last steps are concerning the fact that a brand needs to gain the loyalty of consumers in order to have a consumer base during, for example, a new launch of product.

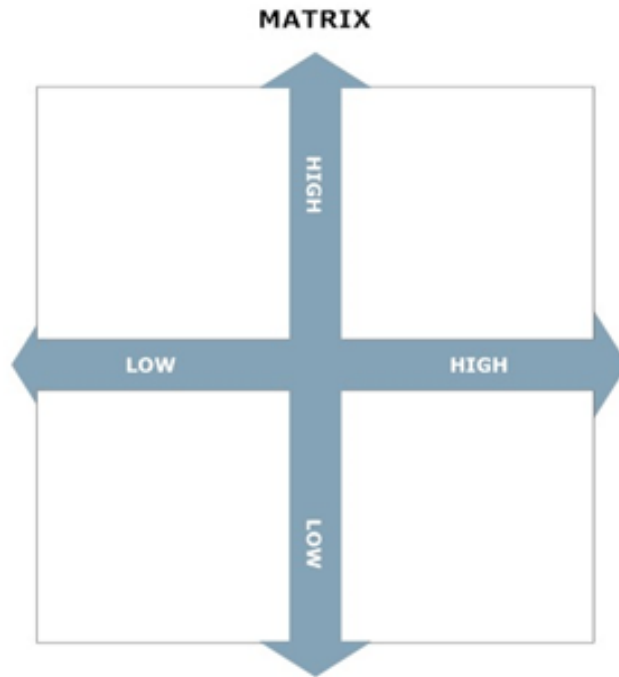
3.4 Branding

As a part of the Marketing Strategy, there is the Branding. This theory is more focused on the brand itself that will help to promote the product. The purpose of Branding is

about the creation of a unique image and name for a product or an entire company – creation of a Brand inside the consumer mind. Link to the Promotion Mix, we can also speak about Branding in terms of communication strategy. This strategy helps the company to differentiate its offer or itself in the market. It will show why consumers should choose the offer – or product – of the company instead of its competitors. It will be recognizable by everyone, even though it is surrounded by other similar goods – as it happened in the Fashion Industry-. Moreover, this strategy will attract and gain the loyalty of consumers. The buying behaviour will be determined not only by the need the product responds to, but by the emotional need the consumer can have, such as being part of a community. Branding aims to promote the product or the global brand toward potential buyers by a range of advertising supports. Through all those supports, the purpose is to create a story in the mind of the potential consumer and generate emotions when he thinks about the brand. The goal is to retain the consumer and gain his loyalty by creating a coherent campaign, through different supports in order to build a strong image that people can recognize easily. There is an association between the product and the image of the brand. Thanks to this link, companies add a value to their product, by implementing a unique identity on the market. In comparison to its competitors, a company with a strong branding strategy owns a unique image that consumers recognize; it is different from the rest of the market, even though it responds to the same need.

In Branding, the main point is to be different. To achieve the objective, companies want to differentiate. The offer stays close to competitors' product but the differentiation adjoins something that influences the buying behaviour. To implement this strategy, it is important to manage the analysis of consumer buying behaviour to identify their wants, beliefs and goals. As I said before Buying Behaviour depends on those three criteria that represent the main points that consumers care about when purchasing a product. A branding strategy depends also on the segmentation of the market. By choosing the consumer segment the branding campaign has to reach, the company can settle on a strategy orientated toward the specific consumer segment. This process is called Brand positioning. This tool is also used in Marketing Strategy, to get an overview of competitors' place on the market in relation to the company's one.

Figure 3 – Positioning Matrix



Product Positioning Matrix – P. Vengopal

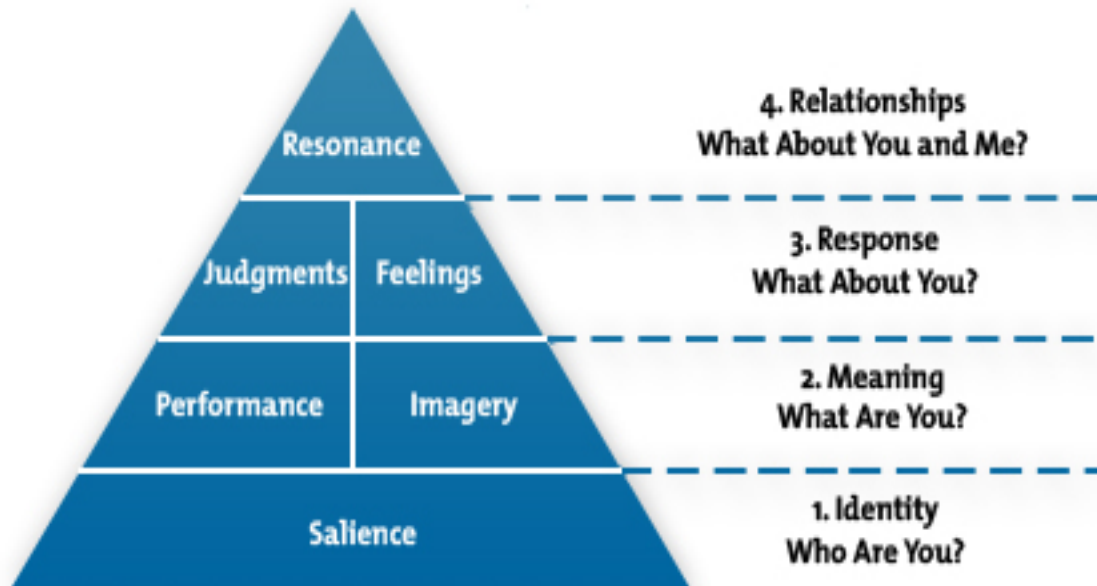
Depending on the two main factors the company will base its strategy; the principle of Brand Positioning is to determine the place of the company's product on the market, compared to its competitors. This tool helps to identify which segment is the most appropriate choice for the company strategy and it helps to determine what kind of Branding strategy the product needs, in order to attract new consumers or to convert consumers who currently buy from one of the competitors.

On the other hand, a branding strategy is based on differentiation. This principle takes care of aspects of the product that can differ from competitors' products. By using it, a company offers a singular product on the market. This differentiation strategy is effective if the consumer's segment analysis has been well conducted. Even though the product is distinct from the others, it has to stay close to the demand of the consumer on the market.

Aside from the differentiation and the product positioning, the creation of the brand requires a whole process to reach the objectives and to create an emotional connection between the product and the advertising campaign put in motion for the Branding strategy.

3.4.1 Customer-based Brand Equity Pyramid

Figure 4 – Customer-based Brand Equity Pyramid



Brand Equity Pyramid – K.L Keller - 2002

In order to implement a Branding strategy, the theorist K.L. Keller created the Customer-Based Brand Equity Model in 2002. This tool takes the shape of a pyramid and it is presented as the different steps in order to create strong brand equity. It is about the reorganization of the name and goodwill of a brand over time and it will translate through higher sales volume and profit margins against competitors on the market. The model presents a plan in order to implement an efficient strategy to increase Brand Equity. To do so, the company needs to answer the question the customer asks unconsciously. Each of the 4 questions represents a step in the Brand Equity Model. The first one is: “Who are you?”, then it is “What are you?”; the third step is “What about you” followed by the final question: “What about you and me?”. Those four questions help the company create its identity. It is about implementing the kind of image that the company will have in the eyes of a potential consumer.

The main advantage of this model is about creating a strong brand image that will stay in the consumer’s mind. In this way, it is also a way of gaining the consumer’s loyalty toward the brand and so on toward the product that the company offers on the market. Not only companies use this tool. In fact, internet celebrities also created their own brand in order to gain subscribers. The principle of Internet branding is based on the

publication of regular content but also on the loyalty of the users – either subscribers or just regular users of the Social Media involved. Those famous users of Social Media such as on YouTube or Instagram have to create their own brand in order to attract, convert and retain the attention of potential subscribers. The potential subscribers amount is large because of the global character of Social Media; everyone can have access to one YouTube channel and everyone can also post content on Social Media and then start to become known because people will share this content, and so on.

3.4.2 Digital Branding

Today, the Branding strategy of a company has to include a new channel in their advertising campaign. In traditional Branding strategies, the message was broadcast to a large audience and was a one-way message. With the Internet, Branding has to create message that brings a discussion between the brand and the potential buyer. According to Jim Kelly, CEO of United Parcel Service, with the appearance of the digital platform, the relation between consumers and companies had changed. Because Digital Branding is more about creating a conversation between consumers and the brand, it is important to define consumer segments in order to personalise messages. The main objective is to get a tailored marketing strategy for each of the consumer segments that the company wants to focus on (Deborah Konia, Branding.com, 2001).

The main obstacle to implementing a digital branding strategy is that each individual perceives the brand itself differently. The messages linked to the brand must be relevant for each of them. To achieve this goal, marketers are going to communicate through personalized support for each individual. It also means that the consumer will get the control over the content of the message. Each consumer would choose what he wants to get as information thanks to the message the company send him. With this possibility, the interaction between the consumer and the brand are deeper than ever. The consumer can give his or her own point of view and feedback about the brand. This situation can help the company and its marketers to determine precisely what the consumers want to achieve. The needs and wants of potential buyers are now well known by the company.

3.5 Social Media Marketing

In a few years, the Internet has become a huge platform that allows people to share ideas, messages and information faster and easier than ever before. With this flood of communication and sharing between people has come the idea of Social Media. Today, it is still in an expansion phase. The fast adoption of those new media creates new possibilities. By using marketing techniques, Marketers have the possibility to build around Social Media new communication skills, in order to influence the target customer segments.

Based on regular marketing theories, the Social Media Marketing will use the 4P's of the Marketing Mix but mainly focus on the P for Promotion. The purpose of this marketing is based on 5 main components. The behaviour changes of an individual are one of them. Because people are willing to change their behaviour, people will voluntarily use new products and adopt new lifestyles to fit with this new behaviour. However, marketers have also a role to play in the change of behaviour for customers. Marketers need to analyse the profile and the different target groups present in the audience in order to create a strategy that will reach them effectively. In order to respond to that, it is important to understand what each customer segment wants, orienting the positioning of the product on the market in order to attract and retain more and more consumers. Because the market is full of different segments, companies have to implement various campaigns. The main difficulty will be finding which side of the product will appeal to which Target Group of consumers. If one of the target groups is more willing to pay attention to the price, another one will be more aware about the brand itself. Social Media Marketing can be implemented using a lot of different support. Basically, there is as many Social Media Marketing options as the number of Social Media channels on the Internet. The most famous of these are Facebook, YouTube or Instagram. Those social media have the same goals: to connect individuals between individuals. The form of the message might be different depending on the target group marketers have to focus on, and also the message format. As Twitter is more about micro-blogging, with really short text (not more than 140 characters), the message cannot be the same as Facebook, which is more about social networking and so have no limits on the size of the post. For Instagram, the message cannot have the same form because users of these social media are not looking for the same things in those three main channels.

One of the main advantages of Social Media Marketing is the direct exchange with the consumer. Thanks to its activities online, the company can also provide some feedback support tools in order to get an overview about what potential customers think about the product or the brand, and what people expect from this brand. Because they are support in order to link people together, it can also have the same effect as a community. In fact, if someone likes a product, he can use Social media to talk about it, without any help or gift from the brand, to grow the interest of their “friends” (on Facebook) or followers (on Twitter and Instagram) about this. Beside the fact that companies have access to a larger audience, Social Media have changed the way people purchase and get reviews of products, Now, it is also important that clients are satisfied, in order to increase the awareness of the brand. The potential consumer has the feeling he can discuss with the brand and so it creates the feeling of being listened to and that the company and the brand take care of the needs of its clients.

Despite all the advantages Social media represent, there are also some limits that companies should take into consideration. In fact, social media provide a large audience that might not be entirely interested by what the company or the brand offers. The profitability of that kind of campaign is sometimes hard to measure and to improve. If they want to use Social Media marketing, Marketers need to implement strategies that put forward the dialogue between the brand and the potential consumer. To be effective, that kind of campaign requires that the consumer is active and involves. The measurement with statistic or number is still complicated event though Marketers are sure that Social Media Marketing is now a requirement in Marketing Strategy.

3.6 Social Medias and Influence marketing

With the emergence of Internet has come Social Media. Today, they are something that people use regularly. For companies, the main impact is that Marketers must adapt their tools to stay effective and relevant toward their targeted consumers. Inside the large amount of Marketing Theories, one that fits well with the popularity of Social Media is Influence Marketing. This theory can be applied to the use of Social Media in marketing strategies. The objective remains the same; it mean that Marketers still need to attract and the retain consumers' attention, but with new support.

Social Media and Influence Marketing are now closely linked together (Danny Brown and Sam Fiorello, 2013). About the Influence Marketing – so called Marketing of

influence - can be adjusted easily in line with Social Media Marketing in order to get along with the innovation that represents Facebook, Instagram or Twitter on the Internet. Himself bases the principle of this Marketing Theory on the idea that one person can influence a large group of people. The marketing strategy can be chosen in order to focus on those individuals, regarding the consumer segment they represent. A lot of brands will use Influence Marketing to implement Branding strategy, in order to create and gain interest and loyalty toward the range of products or more globally the whole brand. In order to pick the right people to influence a larger audience – the influencer - marketers must understand what the audience looking for, and what are the key influence points to obtain an effective strategy. In this case, they can use consumer behaviour analysis. The influence can have various forms such as famous actors or local celebrities, always depending of the targeted segment. This approach has been previously explored in 1940. At this time, it was about the definition and the recognition of who are those influencers (Lazarsfeld & Katz – *The People Choice's*, 1940). In this first approach the influencer can be define as an opinion leader¹⁴ but also as a second channel to get reviews about the product or the brand concerned. To follow those leads, Marketers have the possibility to use those influencers as a source of advertisement that will provide a testimony and a sort a guarantee in the eyes of the potential buyers. Those key individuals have access to the product and so they can test its efficacy before the larger audience.

Concerning the influencer, the company has to implement a strategy and actions that are focused on what their needs are. Moreover, marketers are going to put in motion some actions and communication plans orientated specifically toward those influencers. According to Robert Cialdini (*Influence: The Psychology of Persuasion* – originally published in 1984), the main challenges for marketers are to identify the main channel through which they will broadcast their message, as well as finding the individuals that lead people to the specific brand. According to Cialdini, this process includes 4 main factors that make the company get the influencers to believe and thereafter the larger audience too. The first factor is “Reciprocity”. This is based on the idea that individuals feel that they are indebted to the company for making them discover a new product or about the fact they are part of something organized by the company. The company mostly about unexpected gift or emotion brings the “Reciprocity” factor to the individual. If they are emotionally linked to this, they will

¹⁴ Opinion Leader: Individual or a person from a group who influence the others. The person that gives advises and supports the others.

share their feelings about the product, and have a positive point of view on it. In order to be effective the company has to bring desirable gifts or information without the individual asking for these.

The second factor is the “Social Proof”. This factor is based on people who are feeling uncertain about their choice and so they look for support and help by turning toward others. The individual seeks to be part of a community and so they try to stay close to the general opinion. In this particular case, the Segmentation tool can be applied easily because individuals gather into a community that represents the same point of view and same behaviour.

Then comes the factor of “Commitment and Consistency “. It refers to making an individual change her habits because of a product or a message (Commitment) and on the other hand, it is about keeping and staying loyal to one behaviour or one idea about a particular thing such as a product. The first element mentions the adoption of a brand new habit or product for example, that change their ways of behaviour. This commitment phase works in pair with the consistency element. In fact the main point of changing her habits is to commit; it means to stay close to the decision she made without trying to go back. And then there is the consistency, which refers to the fact that despite the moving and developing environment, individuals continue to behave as they used to do before.

To continue with the other factors of the Influence Marketing, there is the “Liking” factor. That one relates to the appreciation an individual will have for another individual. An individual will be more likely to believe someone that they appreciate or like, it involves loyalty and so the belief that people will share true and correct information. In this way, the individual is more willing to buy a product or more if the person who sells it is someone the individual likes and not a stranger. The main advantage concerns the honesty of those people who try the product. Moreover, they are similar to the audience the company tried to reach, so it is a good way to test the product on a small sample of the customer segment.

The last factors are “Authority” and “Scarcity”. First of all, people recognized by others as experts in a given domain have more influence on the buying behaviour of the audience if the product or ranges of products concern his field of competence. Being considered as an expert, his point of view is worthwhile and people will value his expertise by trusting him. The last factor, “Scarcity”, is about limited quantity of the

product available, as if it is something rare. If individuals perceive the product as something rare and of limited availability, they will be influenced in order to purchase those products. This last factor refers to differentiation that individuals want to reach. Because it's rare, people who own it have the feeling they are part of a smaller community.

In order to implement Influence Marketing, companies might use some non-promotional tools – or campaign – that focus on the Opinion Leader. Beside the fact they are recognized by the audience as a secondary information channel, they also can provide a point of view based on expertise that is regarded as more reliable by the people they will influence. As influencers, those individuals wear also the role of the person whose status everyone wants to reach. It will also bring some inspiration and become the aspiration for people.

3.6.1 Celebrity Endorsement

As a part of Influence Marketing, we can find Celebrity Endorsement. This tool has long existed and can adapt to any situation or new support. This sort of advertising campaign is based on the use of celebrity in order to attract the attention of potential consumers. The choice of celebrity will influence the customer. The choice is not random and has to respect some specific guideline. First of all, the celebrity has to be close to the value of the company. Because the celebrity will be the face of the brand or of the product, the individual has to stay close to the same values and behaviour. The celebrity's actions and behaviour can have a negative or positive effect on the brand depending on how potential buyers perceive the choice of the celebrity. Once he or she is chose to be the face of the brand or a product, every event where the celebrity is visible is therefore a means to advertise the company, the product and so on.

Now in our days, with the emergence of Social Media, those influential celebrities have changed. Even though popular movie stars or models are still used in Celebrity Endorsement, there has emerged a new form of popular figure thanks to Social Media. Those sorts of celebrities will be famous YouTubers or people on Instagram or Twitter that gather lots of people around their posts. Those new famous figures represent a real opportunity for Marketers. On the one hand, those Internet celebrities have created

around their content on their channel a sort of community. In fact, they gather people that have the same interest and so it creates a sort of segment that companies can analyse and reach if it fits with their brand image or product. With the social Media, it is important to analyse what is a source of influence or not. Everything is faster on the Internet and so some celebrities can be on top one day and then disappear as fast as they came.

3.6.2 Tipping Point Theory

In 2000, Malcom Gladwell published his work called "Tipping Point". The aim of the work is to determine the key elements in order to determine which individual can influence a larger audience. To achieve his goals, he defines three categories of influencer profile. Those categories are based on the Law of Few. He said "*the success of any kind of social epidemic is heavily dependent on the involvement of people with a particular and rare set of social gifts*" in order to explain how he categorises influencers' profiles.

The first category of influencer is called "*Connectors*". They are defined as people who have a lot of social connections and who serve as a link between two or more groups of people. They aim to link different persons together and encourage interactions. They play the role of a networker. They have a huge amount of connections in different social circles, with different interests. The strength of Connectors is their ability to get along with a lot different profiles. Then the second category is called "*Salesmen*". Those individuals are recognized for their great negotiation skills. It means that they can influence people by making them change their mind. Instead of creating a link between people "*Salesmen*" are able to convince one person or an entire group to change their opinion. It can be about a product or a brand but also they can push people to change their behaviour. One of their common points is their charisma. This is one of their advantages in order to make people follow their lead and their opinions. The third influencer's profile is "*Mavens*". This profile gathers those who are considered as experts in their own domain. Those individuals possess a great knowledge recognized by the audience and so people take their point of view about a given topic into consideration carefully.

The other part of the Tipping Point Theory is about the nature of the message. Malcolm Gladwell considered it as a prerequisite in order to reach effectively the mind of the targeted group. It is what the "*Stickiness Factor*" is about. The theory

recommends that the message needs to be memorable, with a powerful impact on the people who listen to it. If it is, people will be willing to care about it. The message will strike in the mind of the audience. But this is not the only factor that allows a message to be effective. It is necessary to take into consideration the environment around the message. To increase the chance to catch the attention of a group of people or the chance to influence them the theory instructs to take care about the Human Behaviour. The environment should fit in order to get the message go through to the consumer mind and so make him accept and agree to it. He has to be also in a good environmental condition in order to listen to the influencers.

4 Research Methods ¹⁵

For this subject, the research focuses on the influence of Social Media on the behaviour of the consumers and so on, how it will influence the Marketing Strategy of companies. To respond to these issues, the aim of the research is to determine how Social Media interact with buying behaviour, and in which forms they will be more effective. The primary research method seems to be relevant in this situation. That type of research permits the analysis of data that has been collected directly from the group of individuals who might be involved in this situation. Social Media are subject to various studies and analyses but the primary research brings the opportunity to target a specific aspect of the subject that might not be completely covered by previous studies. It differs about the target group of person. The support and the orientation of the studies are factors that can vary from a study to another.

In this case, the primary research method used is an online survey, diffused through Social Media – mostly Facebook – in order to reach a large amount of individuals. This survey will provide quantitative data that provides an overview of the behaviour of a large audience toward Social Medias. By using an online survey, the main advantage is to reach a larger audience. As I said previously, Internet and Social Media gather a large amount of people than connect with each other. The survey will reach more individuals and so help to get a more precise idea of the point of view of the targeted audience. In order to reach the right audience for this survey, I choose to diffuse it through my Facebook network. My choice is based on the fact that people in my network can also spread the survey into their own network, targeting the audience I want to focus on.

4.1 Audience

Even though Social Media and Internet attract people of different ages and background, this survey is more focused on a certain category of individuals that are in the centre of the influence of those media. For the sampling of the survey, the best-targeted group would be Young Adults and Teenagers. Those two categories of individuals are from the so-called generation Y. It means that they grew up or they

¹⁵ *During my year at Metropolia University, I had a Marketing Research Course with W. Simcoe about the different research methods. Also, I got an overview on this subject during my class of with M. Keaney*

evolved with the influence of Social Medias and Internet since the beginning and they are more willing to use those media at their full potential. They also have a different behaviour toward all the opportunities that Internet still brings today. They adopt innovations faster than the older generations. In addition to that, this online survey is focusing on the feminine gender.

Plus, by using an online survey, the audience can be larger than the initial group, because of the spread of information on Internet. In this situation, the sample of the survey can be widening to other group of individuals. This can represents a risk, it can false the results of the survey and do not provide all the information needed for the analysis.

Even thought the spread of message on Internet can represent a risk, the online survey represents the best option to reach a maximum amount of people in order to have precise data. To finish, the geographical zone for the survey remains international, because people may not have the same behaviour from a country to another. Because the survey is published on Facebook, people from different countries can have an easy access to it in order to respond.

4.2 Survey

Inside this survey, questions revolve around the topics of Social Media. But as those terms cover a lot of different types of website, it is important to reduce the number of Social Media mentioned inside the survey. For example, because the main idea is to study the influence of Social Media on Fashion Marketing, some types of social medias such as Wikis are not relevant in the survey. It is the same for all the professional social media such as LinkedIn¹⁶. Social Media that are included in the survey are Facebook, Instagram, Twitter and blogs. Those websites are well-known platforms for creating contact between individuals and sharing ideas or messages about one or more given topics.

About the survey itself, the length has to be sufficient to provide the data required to make an effective analysis of the situation. At first, it needs to cover the age, the nationality and habits on Internet of the person that answer to the survey. Those data are necessary in order to get a generalized profile of the audience that responds to the survey. Then a second time, the survey will focus on the use of the Social Medias. It

¹⁶ LinkedIn: Social Media that help to create professional contact. Creates a relationship between a CEO and an student for example.

will determine which are the most used, and the purpose of the use of those Social Media. Despite the link with the habits of the person on Internet, the use of Social Media has to be treated separately in order to provide an overview of the use of each of them. Put together, both parts will bring an overview about the purpose of the use of Social Media and also how they influence the behaviour of individuals, but also who really are those individuals.

4.3 Limits

Despite the fact that the survey represents the best method in order to get a large audience point of view, it has still some limits and disadvantages. Indeed, the first limit and main issue is the length of the survey. It has to cover the whole need of information to remain relevant for the analysis of data but, because it is an online survey, the date collecting depends on the aim of individuals to take time and correctly fill it. The time allowed to respond to the questionnaire cannot be longer than few minutes. People might not want to lost time with a survey. Plus, questions have to be clear and understandable, with a set of answers already given. People should not have to write their answers on their own because it can be a risk that they will start and then don't completely fill the survey. It could contain few open questions but the majority of it has to be multiple-choice closed questions.

Another limit is the sampling of the survey. Even though the targeted audience had should be reached by the channel of communication (Social Media), it might not be the exact representation of the whole audience. It is the sampling-error. The idea is that the result of the survey does not include all the individuals and will depend on the number of respondents and also their background. The same survey but filled at two separate times may not show the same results. In the case of an online survey such as the one realized for this topic, the sampling error can influence the result because it might not be representative of all Teenagers and Young Adults. Because it is an online survey, people who don't have access to Internet or who don't have an account on one of the Social Media where the survey is posted cannot give their point of view. To conclude about the limits of the survey, it has to be analysed as an overview of the situation, but also as the representation of a majority. It is not a general truth but it can have some disagreement with what the results are from the collected data.

4.4 Secondary Research

In order to add information about the subject, it is important to be aware of the analyses already made around the subject. In this case, the secondary research is based on articles and interviews made about the Social Media and their users. Case studies are among the possibilities to get data about a certain side of the subject that a survey cannot reveal. Those documents are mostly newspapers, and bring a new point of view, external to the point of view of users and companies. Advantages of secondary researches are the easy access of information. Plus, the amount of information can be bigger than just using primary research.

Even though it seems to be a good means to get access to the information needed, secondary research has some limits. First of all, the information provided can be biased by the point of view of the person responsible for the analysis of data. Some words used can orientate the reader in a certain direction and bring a misunderstanding of the data and so the information provided can be wrong. The sources have to be relevant and the article or support should be omniscient. For the research about the topic of Social Media, the main support is newspapers and Internet that provide online versions of published articles.

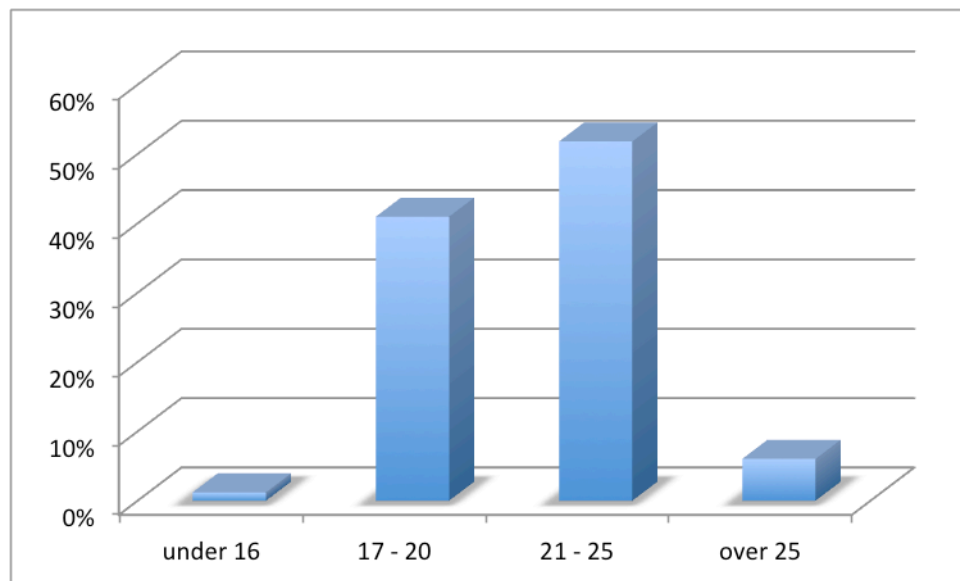
5 Results and Analysis

5.1 Survey

The audience of this survey was well targeted and so it didn't spread a lot online. At the end, 83 people answer fully to the questionnaire. All of them were women (or girls), as it was planned in the Research Methods. Because it was on Facebook, we already know that every respondent has access to the Internet and used at least one Social Media package.

First of all, the result of the survey shows that the majority of respondents are between 17 and 25 years old. 51% of them is aged between 21 and 25 years old. The second group, at 41% concerns the respondents who are between 17 and 20 years old.

Figure 5 – Age of the respondents

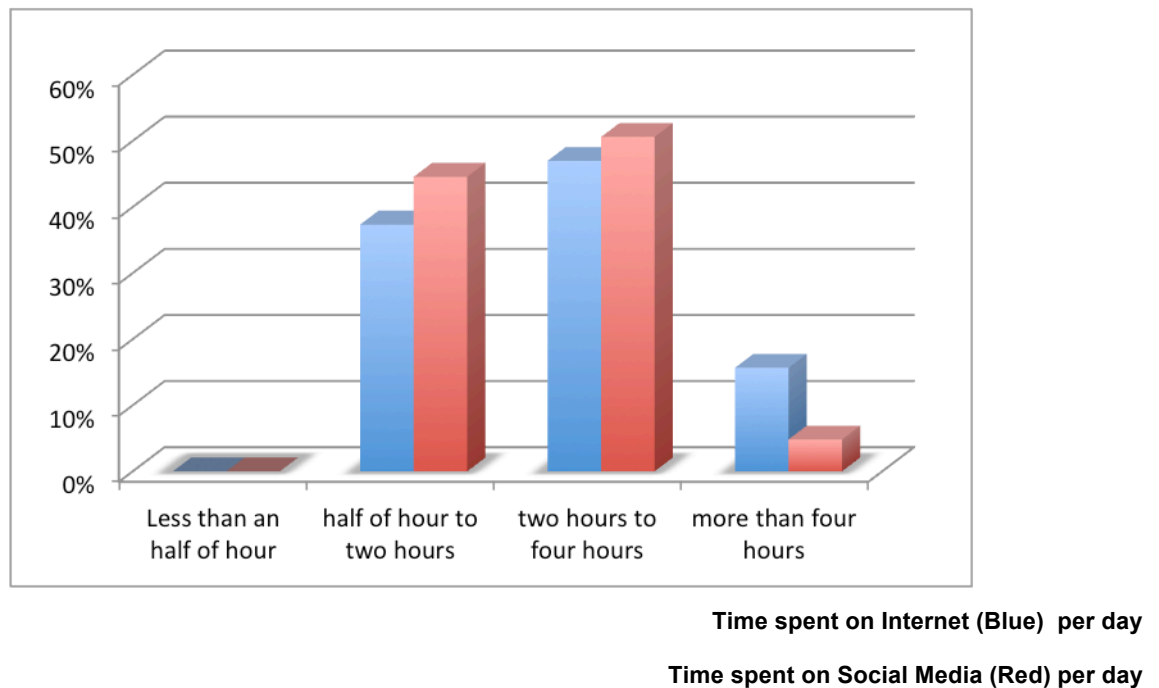


Age of the respondents

The analysis of the survey will show the point of the view of the majority, so the point of view of people aged between 17 and 25 year old. The following results will concern mostly this majority. It is a sampling error that is to be taken in consideration during the analysis.

Concerning the habits of the audience, the use of Internet is regular and customary.

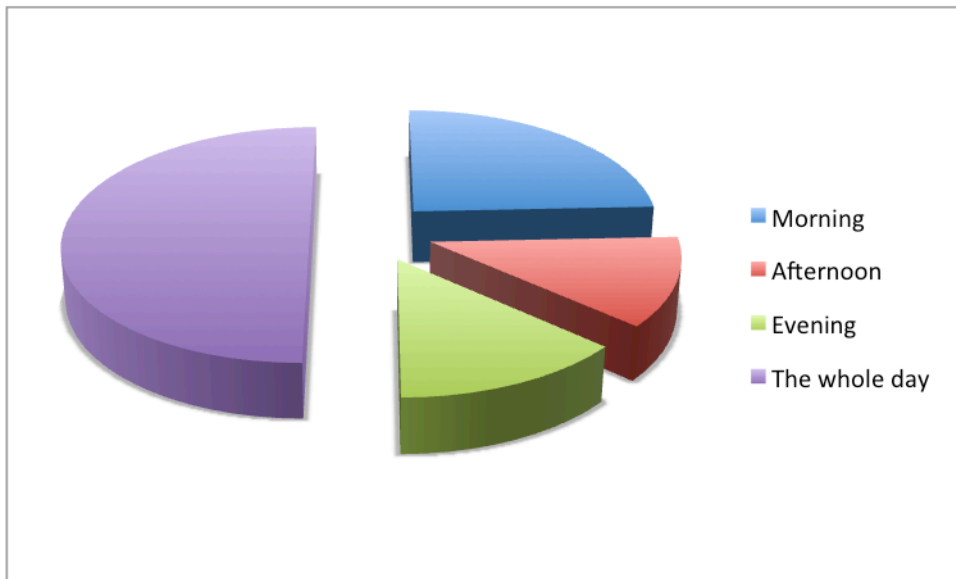
Figure 6 – Time spent on Internet and on Social Media



The Internet seems to take an important part of their time, as does the use of Social Media. The majority of the respondents spend around 2 and 4 hours in a day on the Internet (47%) and on Social Media (51%). Those results confirm the idea that the use of Internet and Social Media is a part of their lifestyle now in our days. Regarding both the internet and Social Media, we can also conclude that they are a part of the habits of the audience.

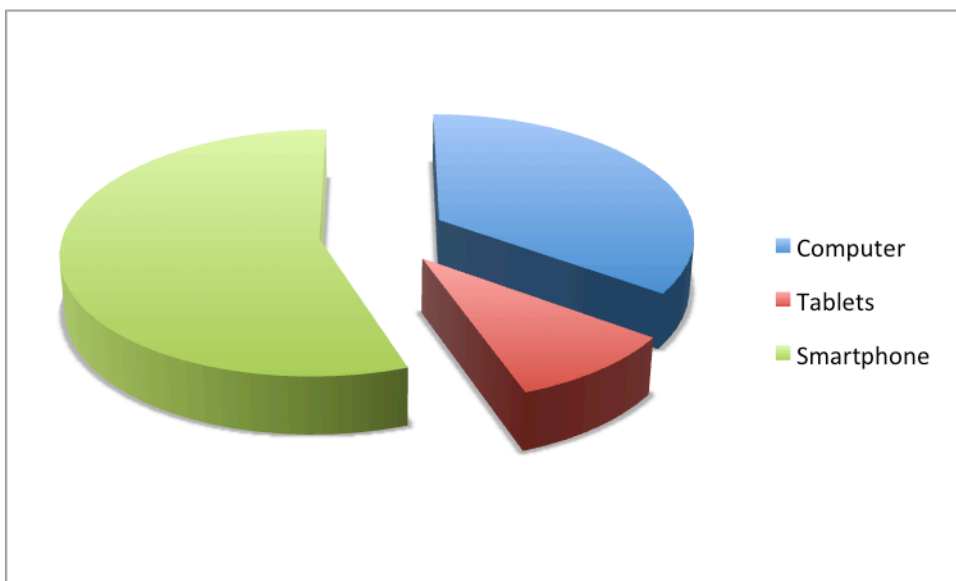
In fact the use of Social Media is constant and can take place any time. The following chart shows us which time of the day people are more willing to check their account on social media and with which support.

Figure 7 – Time of the day when people check Social Media



Time of day when people check Social Media

Figure 8 – Support use by people

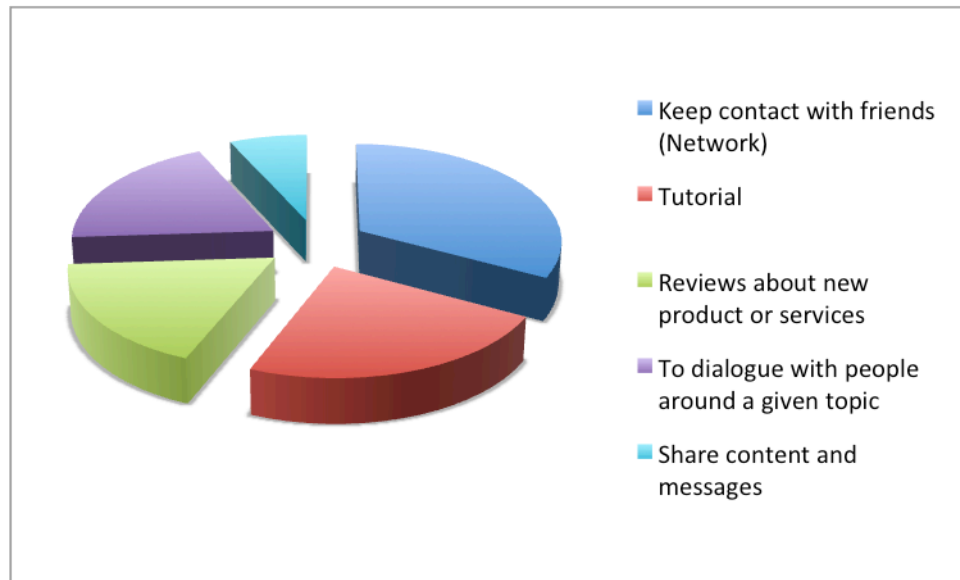


Support people use to go on Social Media

As we can see on those two charts, 45% of Young Adults and teenagers who responded to the survey are more willing to check their account on Social Media a few times through the whole day. This result corresponds to the fact that 55% of the respondents use their smartphone in order to get to their Social Media accounts. Through this survey, we notice that the majority of the audience use Social Media regularly and stay aware of notifications and new information that can appear on them. It might not be for a long period of time but the update is done quite often. Every content is checked and users are always warning about it.

The end of the survey shows the main purpose for the use of Social Media.

Figure 9 – What people are interested in on Social Media



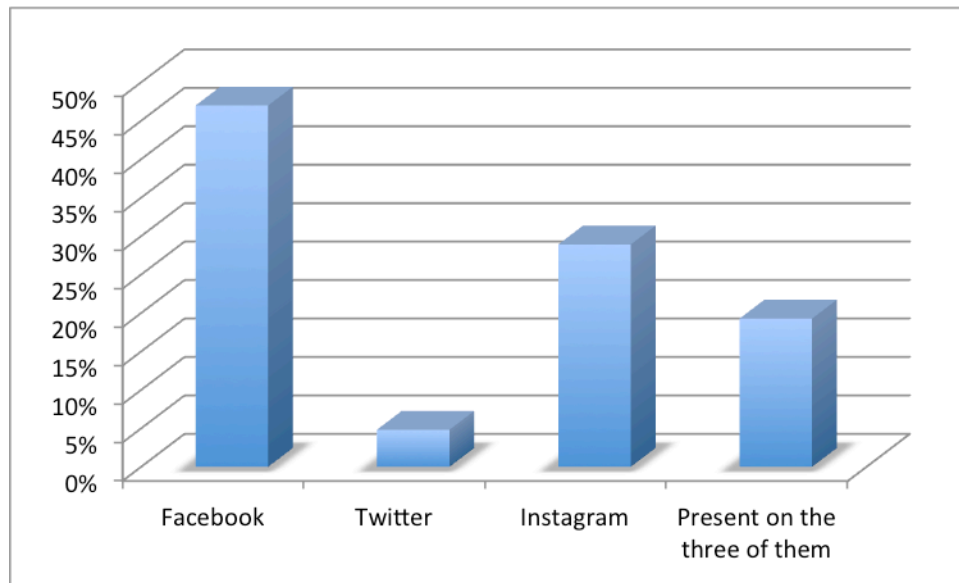
What people look for in Social Media

As we can see with the chart above, the reasons why people use Social Media are quite different. In fact, the main reason seems to be the use of Social Media as networks, in order to keep contact with people, such as friends (29%). But near this one, people also use it in order to get informed through tutorial (20%) and products or services reviews (16%). The last popular reason is to create dialogue around specific topics (17%). It appears that people consider the Social Medias' aims to be the exchange of information instead of just showing and sharing contents with a mass audience.

The survey permits to put together a certain amount of data in order to create an overview of the relationship between individuals – mostly Young Adult and Teenagers - with Social Media. The main purpose is to determine why people use them and under which conditions. The analysis of the data collected with this online survey shows us that people consider Social Media as tools in order to get information easily about specific topics and to share around a certain topic. The use is more about creating a network and keeping contact with people that might be located near them.

Event though the general use is the same, people might not use the same platform.

Figure 10 – Most used Social Media

**Most used Social Media**

Now in our days, Facebook, Instagram and Twitter represent the three most popular social media platforms. As we can see in Figure 10, Facebook (created in 2004) is still the most used, with 47%. But just behind, Instagram is preferred by 29% of the respondents. Twitter is the least used with only 5% of respondents that use it as their main social media channel. The most interesting fact is that 19% of the respondents use the three social medias at the same level. The main reason for this could be the form of the message and the main purpose of each of those channels. On the one hand, Facebook, Instagram and Twitter aim to connect people together and allow the exchange of content as well as facilitate the spread of messages and contents, but on the other hand messages might not be under the same format. For example, the content of Instagram is about sharing its pictures and short videos, in contradiction to Twitter, which is about micro blogging.

The results of the survey show that users of Social Medias looking for a way to connect with each other as well as being informed about numerous subjects. The main point is to get access to information about several topics easily, with the possibility to hear different points of view, through reviews or tutorials for example. Internet and Social Media are tools that create a dialogue between individuals.

5.2 Case Study

In accordance to the result of the survey, a lot of analysis has been realised about the relationship of Social Medias and users. Most of the time, it focuses on the celebrities that are active on Social Media and who interact with their audience. Here, the audience is the same as the survey – Young Adults and Teenagers – and put in motion the idea that Social Medias create a brand new type of celebrity.

As we said earlier, the purpose of Social Media is to create a dialogue between users, and so they need to share their messages or some contents in order to start this dialogue. As the survey put forward the fact that users look for information and points of view about certain subjects or products, the case study here is to determine who are those who provide information and how they realise their influence in front of the audience.

One of the main examples could be Kylie Jenner (from the Kardashian family), who has reached the number of 60,3 million subscribers on Instagram. According to the Financial Times, her popularity has not stopped growing yet. Even though she is popular on Instagram, Kylie Jenner is also present on Facebook and Twitter in order to reach as much users as possible. Her Twitter account reaches 15,7 million followers. The reason for her popularity can be explained by the fact she has transformed her image into a brand and so creates an emotional link between her and her audience. In this case, we can find an example of an individual influencing a mass audience. She implements a sort of emotional link between her life and her followers. By using different social media, Kylie Jenner allows people to know about her under different forms, according to the social medium she uses. On Instagram, she posts pictures about her lifestyle but also she promotes herself as a brand. In fact, by analysing her behaviour through the Brand Equity Pyramid, it appears that her presence on Instagram or Twitter increases the awareness around her and the products she shows on her diverse accounts. People know about her because the image she creates through different channels on the Internet is strong and easy to recognize.

Several celebrities use the same procedure in order to get close to their audience. Social media become a channel to promote their personal brand - their name – and help them to get well known and influential on the Internet. By using the Social Media channels, those famous people increase their influence on the buying behaviour of

their audience. It is about inspiring people by showing them what is the lifestyle of people they admire or follow on the different internet media. It becomes more real because they allow people to dialogue with them.

Despite the presence of already well-known celebrities on Social Media, there are also people who are known for their presence on the Internet. This is the case of people posting videos on YouTube. Those individuals responds to the need of customer segments in order to provide them product review or tutorials about what they are interested in. This is the case of a famous YouTuber, Zoella. She started with a blog and become more and more famous with time. Today, she is present on different social media, such as Instagram (with 62,4 million followers), Twitter (with 4,74 million followers) and YouTube (with more than 10 million subscribers). She covers topics about fashion; make-up, house furniture but also she shares a lot of her private life on her second channel (with around 4 million subscribers) on YouTube. Her strong presence on Social Media allows her to spread messages in different forms and to reach a large audience. She can be considered as a Maven¹⁷. Her followers consider her as an expert and so they will take her point of view into consideration. When she will recommend a product, most people who subscribe to her account on Social Media will keep in mind what she said about it.

Those two case studies can be considered as example of the Social Media's influence on potential consumers. In fact, the free access to those different channels brings a whole new dimension to the connectivity between individuals. People feel closer to celebrities while they are sharing their every day life or events they attend to. Also, it is the creation of a dialogue that gives to the audience the feeling that they can reach the celebrities, instead of just seeing them on front cover of newspapers or behind the screen of a television.

¹⁷ It is referring to the Malcolm Gladwell theory.

6 Discussion

Now in our days, the Internet has brought a whole new dimension to the relationship between celebrities and their audience. Following those changes, new opportunities have emerged, potentially changing the strategies of companies. The industry of Fashion is one of those most influenced by those changes. Social media are now used by a large amount of people and represent potential channels in order to promote a brand or a product for companies. Even though marketing theory remains the same, the execution of the strategies of a company can submit to change in order to fit into those new communication channels.

According to the survey, Social Media users aim to connect with each other and to reach a better communication. Messages circulate faster and the information is shared easily between two or more individuals. Plus, it lets reach a large amount of persons in a small amount of time because the audience wants to stay updated about subjects they care about. Social Media represent a good means to implement a connection between an individual with influence, such as famous actors, and a large audience in order to create awareness toward some specific product. Celebrity endorsement is an example of this. Instead of using a celebrity in order to represent the product inside an advertising campaign, the product will be promoted by the celebrity, in its own environment. The celebrity will serve the promotion of the product by adding a product review. It is about using the influence and the brand awareness of one celebrity instead of focusing on the brand awareness of the product or the company. The goal here is to create a link into the mind of the potential buyer between the product and the celebrity the audience follow on Social Media. Each of the popular persons on Social Media owns its proper brand image that follows the different steps into the Customer-Based Brand Equity. The more popular they are, the more brand awareness they have and so they are more influence toward their audience.

As said earlier, the Social Media represent a huge opportunity for the Marketers. The promotion of product or brand can be under a lot of forms, such as the creation a specific range of product with the name of an Internet celebrity such as Zoella. But, even though marketing strategy has to be adapted, it is not about changing the Marketing Theory or the Marketing tools used in order to implement a strategy on the market.

By talking about the influence of Social Medias on the Marketing strategy, we are taking in consideration the several opportunities that the Internet brings to companies. The main influence on marketing strategy is the appearance of new channels of communication that allow companies to reach a larger amount of individuals at the same time. Also it helps the company to implement a sort of discussion with consumer. While using Social Media, companies can get feedback from the audience, by using forums and questionnaires, for example. What it is told about the product or the brand becomes harder to control. In such cases, the influence of famous people such as Zoella or Kylie Jenner can be helpful.

The companies and celebrities on Social Medias are in close relation. Celebrities give access to the audience that represents the target segment of the company, in order to promote a brand or a product. Despite giving this access, celebrities have to promote the company's product or brand in order to influence their audience and increase the awareness. It can be some product review or test on a video on YouTube or picture post on Instagram, or also a little comment on Facebook or Twitter. The aim is to spread the message into the whole audience of the celebrity. To be effective, the company has to choose carefully which celebrity it needs to promote its product. At the same time, the celebrity needs to do the same. Moreover, popularity on Social Media depends on the loyalty of subscribers.

The relationship between the audience and personalities on the Internet is based on the loyalty of the audience. They choose to stay updated or not about the content of an Instagram or YouTube account. They are looking for a connection with the person who owns the account. That means they want be part of the life of the celebrity. More and more famous accounts on Social Media orientate their content into something more personal. They explain their past or they share their every day life through little videos called "Vlogs¹⁸". People look for something more real and away from what they can see on Newspaper and television. By watching "Vlogs", they feel closer to the individuals. It become a source of inspiration. In this case, companies can use the Influence Marketing in order to reach their consumer segment. Because each accounts on Social medias has some main theme, the audience that follows those accounts are interested in those topics. By choosing carefully the account to work with, a company can obtain a privileged access to potential buyers. This new way of promotion and this

¹⁸ Vlogs: Video made by people in order to share their everyday life. Vlog is the contraction of Video and Blogs

new access to the targeted audience is what represents the influence of the Social Media.

Personalities of the Internet aim to influence their audience. By focusing on the “Tipping Point” Theory, people on Social Media should determine which message they will spread and also assure that the environment is ready to welcome that kind of message. Most of celebrities can be considered as “Mavens”. They are perceived as experts in their own domain and so their opinion is valuable.

Even though opportunities are real, the marketing strategy based on Social media has its limits. There exists a lack of regulation on how to use Social Media celebrities in order to promote a product. Some account will present product reviews without notifying that they are paid by a company in order to publish this review. In this case some individuals consider this form of advertising as misleading publicity. This is about the ethic of the company and the celebrity, who can either say when she owns money for a post or a review about a product or either say nothing and make her audience believe that it is her own and objective point of view.

Social media channels are present in everyday life and so represent an ideal means of promotion for the company. But because they are still new, there is a lack of regulation that represents an important limitation in the use of those as Marketing and communication channels. Because Social Media can reach a large audience, the control and the ethic issue about the use of those is hard to settle.

7 Conclusion

The researches about Social Media and Marketing strategy have highlighted the fact that marketers need to adapt their tools in order to fit into this new channel of communication. Opportunities are large, as are the risks of that kind of channel. Information travels faster on the Internet and a bad review about a company can be spread into a large audience a small amount of time. People are looking for something they can rely on and with which they can identify themselves. The influence of Social Media on human behaviour is important. It is about being part of a community that shares the same conviction and same interest. Most of the time, those communities are united around an aspirational figure. People tend to reach a level of life they see on Social Media, through posting of influencer's figures. Despite the advantage of that kind of channel and influence, Social Media represents a tool hard to control for companies. The fact that a larger audience receives the message can bring a loss of control.

Plus, the innovation is always moving and some new trends about Social Media have already appeared. New one, for example Snapchat, could replace conventional Social media such as Instagram or Twitter. This new social medium created in 2011, is based on the exchange of ephemeral short videos or pictures between just two people or more. This network is more private because you can choose who will receive the picture or the video.

Internet and Social Media are now well integrated in the everyday life of people. The question that can be asked is for how long those Social Media such as Facebook, Instagram or Twitter would stay relevant, until a new innovation arrived.

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Details of the references are given here. Use the referencing system required in your degree programme or as agreed with your supervisor. Leave one blank line between references.

Survey

- What is your age?

- Under 17 - between 17 and 20 - between 21 and 25 - over 25

- How many times do you spend on Internet (per day)?

- Less than 30min - 30min to 2 hours -2 hours to 4 hours - More than 4 hours

- How many times do you spend on Social Medias (per day)?

Less than 30min - 30min to 2 hours -2 hours to 4 hours - More than 4 hours

- You are more likely to check Social medias during:

-The morning - The afternoon -Evening -The whole day

- Which Social Media do you use the most?

-Facebook -Twitter -Instagram -The three of them

- What are you looking for on Social Medias?

-Keep contact with friends -Tutorial -Reviews about new products or services
-Dialogue with people around a given topic -Share content and message

- Which support do you use?

- Computer -Tablets -Smartphone

Results of the Survey

Respondent to the survey: 83

Age

Under 16	1	1%
17 - 20	34	41%
21-25	43	52%
Over 25	5	6%
Total	83	100%

Time spend on Internet per day

Less than 30min	0	0%
Half an hour to two hours	34	37%
Two hours to four hours	39	47%
More than four hours	13	16%
Total	83	100%

Time spend on Social Medias per day

Less than 30min	0	0%
Half an hour to two hours	37	45%
Two hours to four hours	42	51%
More than four hours	4	5%
Total	83	100%

Time of the day

Morning	18	22%
Afternoon	9	11%
Evening	10	12%
The whole day	37	45%
Total	83	100%

Most popular Social
Medias

Facebook	39	47%
Twitter	4	5%
Instagram	24	29%
Present on the three of them	16	19%
Total	83	100%

What people looking for on Social Medias?

Keep contact with friends (Network)	24	29%
Tutorial	17	20%
Reviews about new products or services	13	16%
Dialogue with people around a given topic	14	17%
Share content and messages	5	6%
Total	83	100%

Which support do they use?

Computer	29	35%
Tablets	8	10%
Smartphone	46	55%
Total	83	100%
