MÍDIA SOCIAL - UMA REVISÃO DE LITERATURA.

SOCIAL MEDIA - A LITERATURE REVIEW.

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ABSTRACT

We have watched rapid developments for branding in social media in the last couple of years and the use of these platforms is stronger then ever these days, reaching audiences worldwide through multiplatform social media branding strategies. Social media can be an opportunity for business to: raise brand awareness, increase sales, generate brand loyalty and to overall better communicate with customers, helping build long lasting relationships. This creates a whole new perspective in the way companies are used to conduct their businesses, and also on the way we are used to communicate with others and with companies themselves. This article provides for a literature review on the evolution of social media and how it became relevant to brands as a marketing tool to generate engagement.

KEYWORDS

Social Media; Social Media Strategy; Branding; Social Media Marketing.

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RESUMO

Temos vindo a observar rápidos desenvolvimentos da marca nas mídias sociais nos últimos anos e o uso dessas plataformas é cada vez mais forte nos dias de hoje, atingindo um público mundial através de estratégias de marca de mídia social multiplataforma. A mídia social pode ser uma oportunidade para as empresas: aumentarem a consciência da marca, aumentarem as vendas, gerarem fidelização com a marca e, em geral, comunicarem melhor com os clientes, ajudando a construir relacionamentos duradouros. Isso cria uma perspectiva totalmente nova na forma como as empresas conduzem os seus negócios, e também na maneira como estamos habituados a comunicar com os outros e com as próprias empresas. Este artigo prevê uma revisão da literatura sobre a evolução das mídias sociais e como estas se tornaram relevantes para as marcas como ferramenta de marketing para gerar engajamento.

PALAVRAS-CHAVE

Mídias Socias; Estratégias de Mídias Socias; Branding; Marketing de Mídias Socias.

1 INTRODUCTION: THE BEGINNING OF SOCIAL MEDIA

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

Erik Qualman (2009) refers to social media as the age of instant communication and transparency calling it the glasshouse effect. He defines it as the tool to deal with the excess information on the Internet: a way to "filter" the information you actually are searching for. Marketers no longer need to artificially create and push brand messages, they need to listen, engage and react to the potential and current customer needs by embedding the brand in existing conversation. Marketing and business models have changed and they need to shift to fully adapt to the impact and demands of social media. Companies receive feedback from costumers using social media. Twitter, for example, is highly used to answer complaints. Whether those reviews about a product are good or bad,

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this action is changing how businesses have to operate. Companies can take the feedback as an opportunity to act and adjust it to better suit the needs of their public. People take their friends and peers opinions when it comes to choosing a restaurant, for example, rather then just using a research engine to search for it (QUALMAN, 2009).

According to Liana Evans (2010) with the hype of social media, companies think it is easy to succeed online, thinking that all they need is a Facebook page to hit their audience, but that is not enough. People will continue to share conversations and experiences without a company's involvement. The appeal for social media is cross generations; some of the fast growing demographics are those of above 40 years old.

There are different types of social media and the authors refer to: [1] social news sites (sites that allow news stories, articles, blog posts, videos and photos to the community e.g.: Digg, Reddit and NewsVine); [2] social networking (which allows community members to upload photos, create groups, add fans, invite friends to events, post comments on photos, videos, tag friends ex: Facebook, Instagram); [3] social bookmarking (sites that allow you to bookmark and share your favorite websites with an entire community ex: Delicious and Magnolia); [4] social sharing (a common feature among social media websites; social events; blogs; micro blogging; wikis; forums and message boards) (ibid.).

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

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

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

Table 1: Social media Classification. Source: Li and Bernoff (2008).

As shown on table 1, Li and Bernoff (2008) categorise different types of activities one can do in social media. Those activities are: Create, Connect, Collaborate, Reach out, Organize and Consume. These different activities all refer to different types of social media and have different purposes. For example, when one wants to organize content, one can use Digg, Del.icio.us, StumbleUpon or Pinterest and 'tag' their pictures into different categories.

2 THE EVOLUTION OF SOCIAL MEDIA - DELIVERING BRAND CONTENT

When we think of social media we often think of social media platforms such as Facebook or Twitter, which are popular amongst most people, but we cannot forget that a wide range of social media technologies also exist. These are available to do different things and enable many types of behaviour. It is also important to look at the evolution of social media and how it has affected consumers and brands through decades. Table 2 and figure 1 present a framework from two Forrester reports (OWYANG, 2009; STELZNER, 2012).

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

	Era of social relitionships	Era of social functionality	Era of social colonization	Era of social context	Era of social commerce
Start; Maturity	1995; 2003 to 2007	2007; 2010 to 2012	2009; 2011	2010;2012	2011;2013
Descriptions	Individuals assemble and connect with each other in online groups	Social networks become operating systems	Every Website is now social, even if it doesn't choose to be.	Websites deliver personalized content to visitors.	Online groups supplant brands

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

Table 2: The evolution of the social web. Source: Stelzner (2012).

Raman (2009) says social media is transforming the web into a "two way conversation". In the social media world, customers are influenced by each other on preferences for products and services. They are also influenced by new ideas; insights and different experiences form others (ibid.).
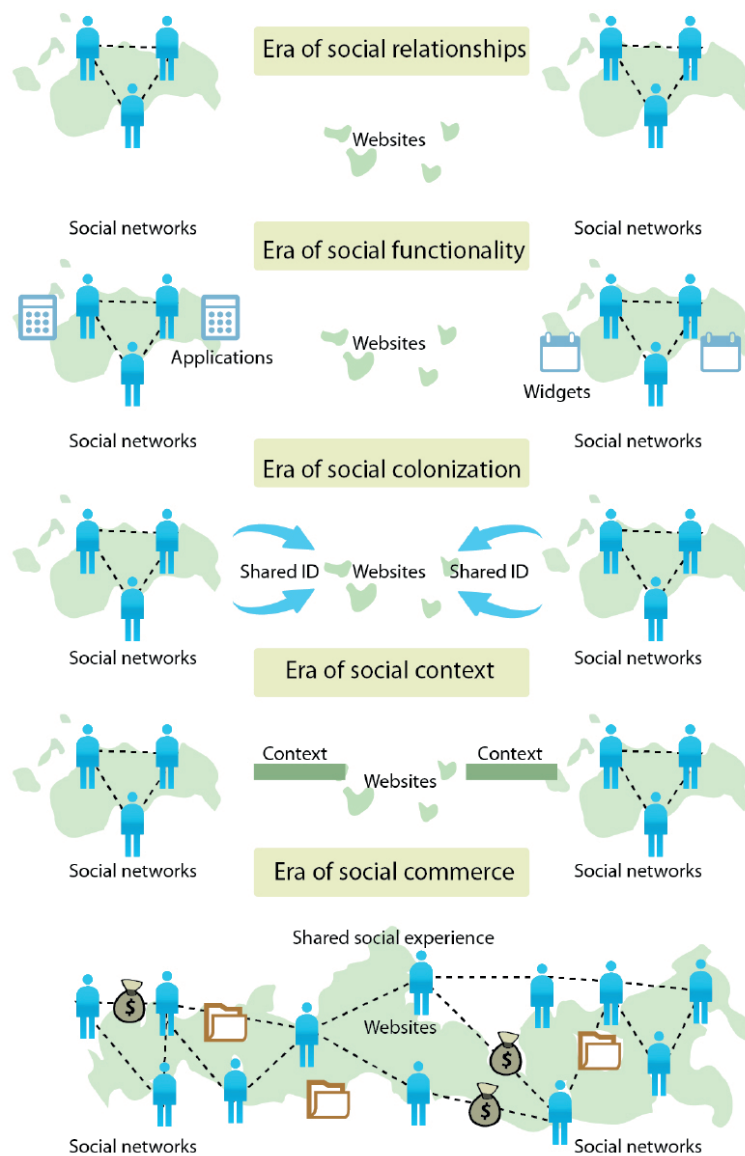
Figure 1: The five Eras of social media, Owyang (2009).

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

web and it is changing the way companies manage their brand, and people manage their own personal online brand/persona.

3 SOCIAL MEDIA AND BRANDS

McKee (2010) proposes a social media model (Figure 2). The author divides social media into "The Social Media Trinity Model". The model consists of dividing social platforms into three dimensions by a particular purpose: networking, conversation and community. This is a business making and brand awareness--raising model, in which the brand is at the centre, surrounded by the community, networking and conversation (ibid.). [1] "Conversation creates opportunities which creates revenue "(ibid., p. 183); [2] "Community: Where one can communicate for a wider audience. A place with participative communication" (ibid., p. 187); [3] Networking: Where one can participate in groups relevant to the industry (LinkedIn) connecting with other professionals. Connect with friends and family and even their own brands, musicians, restaurants, etc (ibid., p. 191).

Figure 2: The social media Trinity Model. Source: Mckee, 2010.

This model aims to give power to the brand by making its presence relevant in conversation blogs such as twitter, community technologies such as Facebook or YouTube, but also in networking websites like LinkedIn. In this other model, the brand image is no longer defined by what is being said about a brand through out advertising inputs but what people are talking about it in social networks. "The brand custodians have little control over the brand – a source of worry for most of them" Raman (2009 p.2) (Figure 3). User-generated content happens through a peer review process; e.g., referrals, blogs and tagging. So, if a customer has more information and interaction with the brand he is more likely to be a potential buyer (RAMAN, 2009).
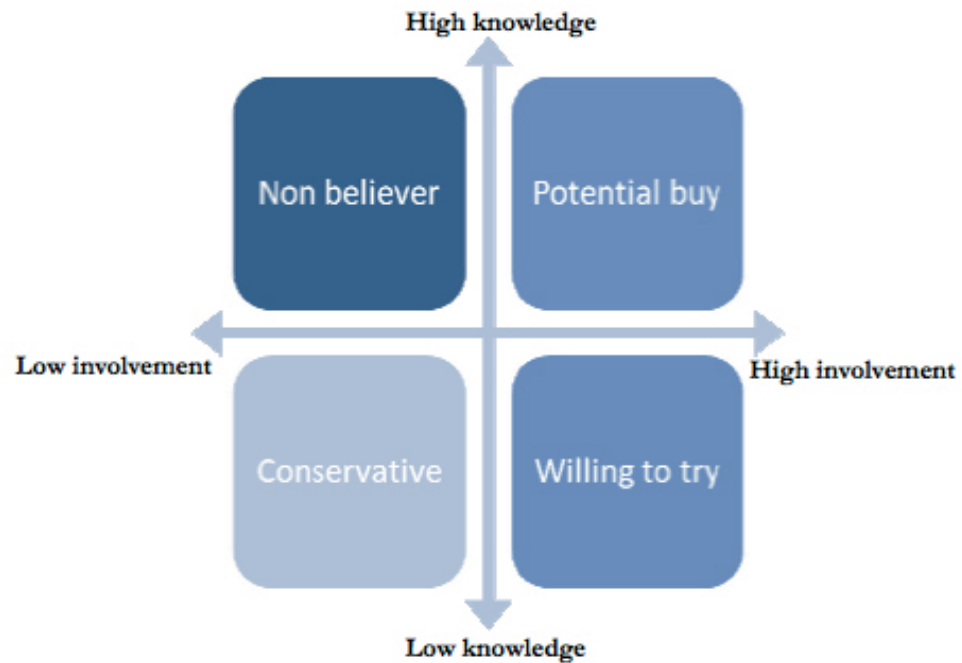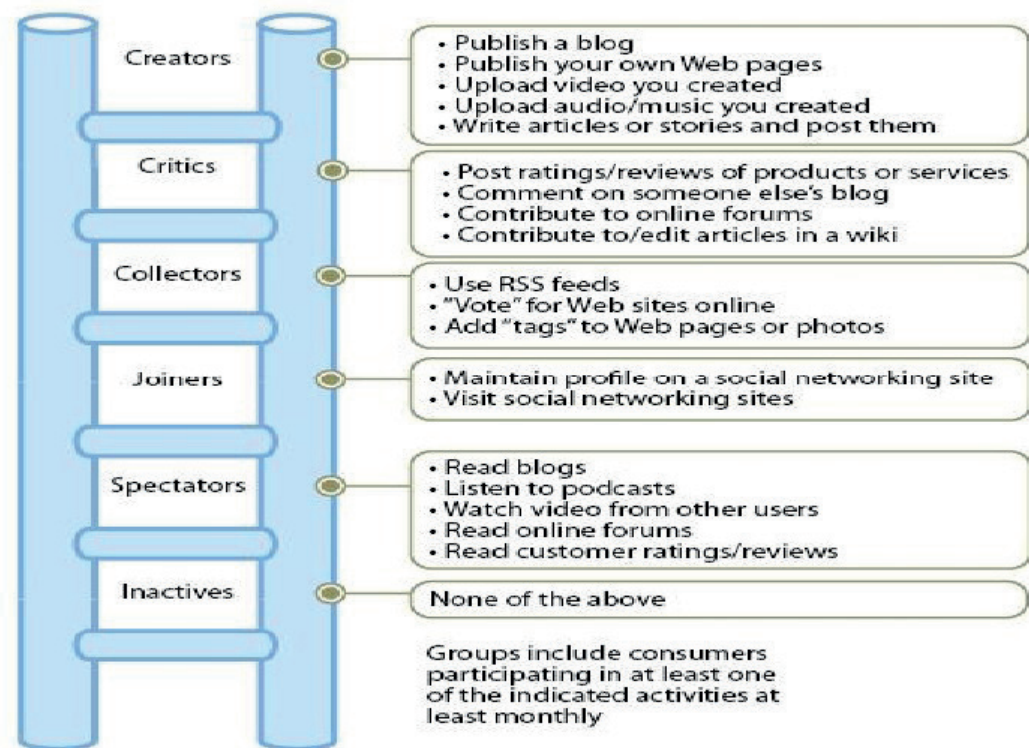

Figure 3: Raman Model. Source: Raman, 2009.

Figure 4: Groundswell Model. Li and Bernoff (2008).

The authors consider the social movements of a person sharing with others, instead of relying on companies directly to get their information. Companies no longer have absolute control over the brand communication. Social media has been increasing in relevance on a brand's communication strategies.

Li and Bernoff (2008) affirm that it is highly important to understand how relationships come about in social media. Technologies have changed, but it is the impact on personal relationships that is more intense.

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

The amount of consumers that are active and co-create everything from product design to promotional messages is increasing. Garretson (2008, p.12)

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postulates that "consumers increasingly use digital media not just to research products and services, but to engage the companies they buy from, as well as other consumers who may have valuable insights".

Social media is often used as a branding tool, both for commercial brands and for people's brands. A study by Herder shows that 82% of managers in America use a form of social media tool (HERDER & LAW, 2009). According to eMarketer 57% of marketing business functions within a company use social media, followed by Internal and Collaboration business that are at 39% (EMARKETER, 2012). The users are more likely not to use a company who has unanswered questions and complaints on a social media space, because as the company ignores other costumers, it may ignore the user as well when it comes to good customer care.

This means that brands need to operate successfully in all social media spaces where the company operates, in order to answer customers promptly. It is no longer brands who hold all the power. Now consumers have a say and opinions about brands, and are willing to share it with other users on social media communities. If brands do not adapt and improve the engagement with people, the company will lose clients in the long run and ruin future chances of increasing the client numbers (ibid.).

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

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

EMarketeer (ibid.) states that as a result of globalization we now have hyper competition, which makes business branding become more relevant. A strong brand has a better chance to compete because it has added value, which is hard to achieve. This makes branding an efficient tool to differentiate from com-

petitors in the long-term. Figure 5 illustrates the relation between the current environment and brand relevance.
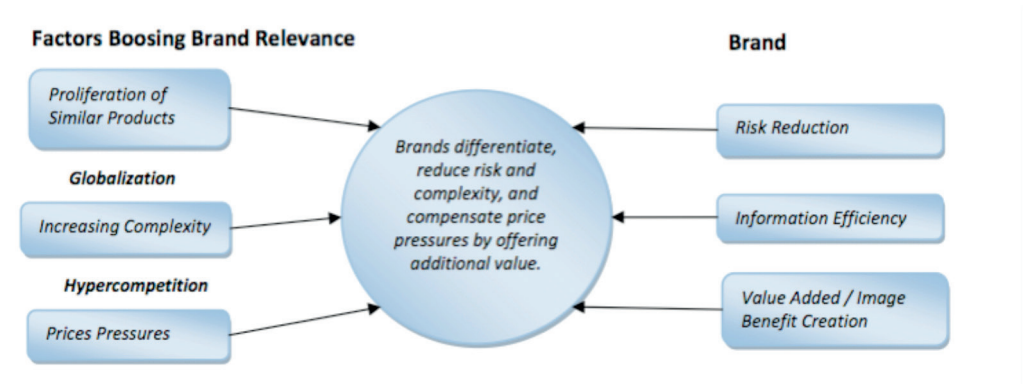

Figure 5: Brand Relevance and Brand value in a B2B environment. Source: Kotler & Pfoertsch (2007).

Figure 6 illustrates an overview of the social media ecosystem by Schultz (2007). The ecosystem is divided in three media types according to Corcoron (2009): [1] Owned media, which is controlled by the marketer (e.g. company's website); [2] Paid media, bought by the marketer (e.g. sponsorships); [3] Earned media, which is not controlled by the marketer (e.g. viral marketing and word of mouth) (Corcoran, 2009).
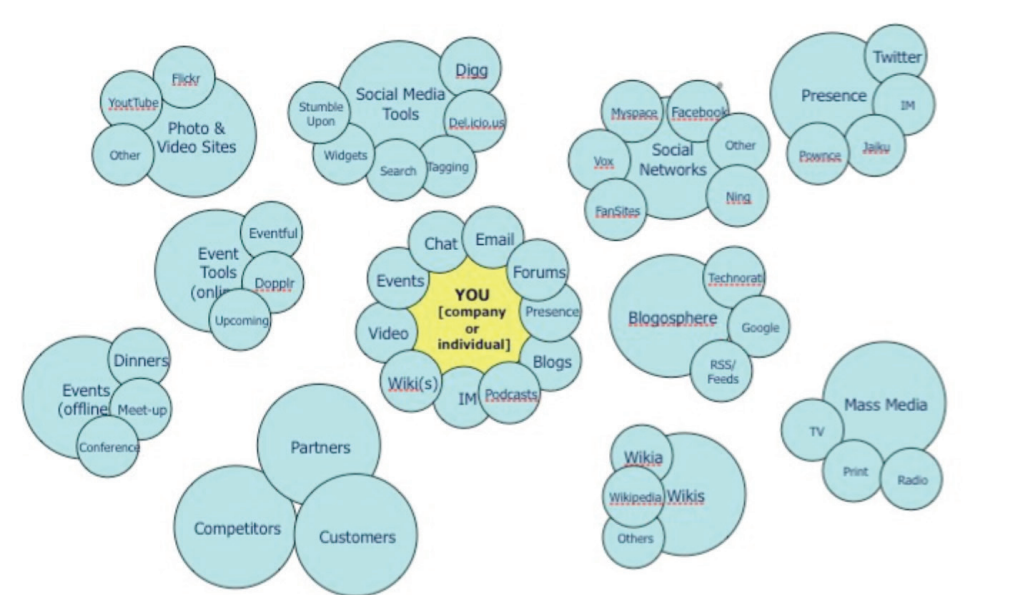

Figure 6: Social media Ecosystem. Source: Schultz (2007).

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Based on the already presented categorization of types of social media, Li and Bernoff (2008) determine there are five different types of social behaviours: Creators; Critics; Collectors; Joiners and Spectators. The creators publish and maintain information and messages circulating, Critics say their mind and comment on it, Collectors share the messages, Joiners connect and bring people to the information and Spectators read about it. Now the influential part is up to the consumers who comment about products and services. They also suggest that Marketers must learn to integrate these multiple platforms, understand the different types of consumers and their behaviour, because not all of them engage with social media in the same way.

Wyshynski (2009) says that the social media ecosystem has its focus on the consumer experience. The author quotes Mike DiLorenzo, director of social media marketing and strategy for the NHL (National Hockey League) "social networks are all about experiences" (ibid., p.248). The experiences begin when marketers can successfully incorporate integrated marketing communication strategies into social media and combine it with traditional media (WYSHYNSKI, 2009). Hanna et al (2011) believe that some companies create social media platforms and operate it independently, not as an integrated strategy that brings the consumers experiences to the forefront. Social media does not replace traditional media, but it can expand marketing's ability to engage with consumers and achieve attention and influence.

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

By the end of 2010 there was an increase on the amount of money spent on social media. According to the 2010 social media marketing bench, from MarketingSherpa, companies planned to increase social media budgets. Although a lot of companies do not know how to manage this increase effectively. Most marketing plans include strategies for presences on YouTube, Facebook and Twitter, even though there is no systematic approach on understanding and managing this presence as a social media strategy. Companies need to know where is the target, on which social media platforms are the targets present, what is the company message and how to spread the word about a brand (ibid.). Authors Leek and Christodoulides (2011) believe that managers need to break free from the industrial age paradigm of branding and embrace the fact that there are a number of factors beyond control. Consumers now know all about

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brands. Consumers read about the brand in numerous sources of less formal media (blogs and discussion boards). According to the author, what consumers think and say has become more important than anything marketers have to say about brands. He adds that brand managers have to 'let go' of keeping control and ownership of brands, otherwise things like what happened to Gap might happen to other brands.

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

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

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

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

Through blogs and social networks people can try to understand the companies and personalities behind them. This can be extremely helpful for smaller

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companies, because the CEO could be the one writing all the Facebook updates and tweets. Such organizations can become more responsive to audiences and consumer demands. It can provide feedback from the public. Getting data from audiences online provides is a competitive advantage (SLATER & NARVER, 1998). Brands, however, need to be supported by additional media. Providing a leader for brands to be understood internally and externally is quite important (GILMORE & II, 2002).

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

4 SOCIAL MEDIA STRATEGY

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

Christodoulides (2009) states that because of the Internet phenomenon, brand strategies have gone through significant transformations. In order to succeed in a computer/mobile mediated environment brands need to build relationships, enable interactivity and better tailor offerings for the online world. McDonald (2007) affirms that the social media presence needs to be developed strategically to coordinate the different views of the organization, its aims and activities, in order to plan the different opportunities that arise in social media and social networking.

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

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

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- Listen to what is being said about the brand/product/service/company on the internet, specially your own social media network channels;

- Respond by engaging with people who talk about your brand or organization;

- Establish relationships with people in an honest and transparent way, and then keep them in an enthusiastic and engaging way;

- Bring to your attention the insights of the people who engage with your brand/company. Evaluate that feedback and what implications it might have for your organization (BOTTLES & SHERLOCK,2011).

5 CONCLUSIONS

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

Social media is everywhere, in our everyday life, turning the borders between our work and spare time more diffuse. Everybody has access to a computer, at home or at their workplace, people can use their smartphones to log in the internet from literally everywhere they go.

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

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

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cratization of information.

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

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

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